

editorial opinion

Here . . .

Get involved

Many times, lack of student understanding is shrouded by a blanket of apathy. And too often people only complain about apathy instead of taking action to correct it.

Well, as far as the Undergraduate Student Government Department of Political Affairs goes, the talking's over. In an attempt to increase student awareness of political issues, the department is sponsoring a series of student debates next semester.

"We want to increase student interest in the political world. Students don't always know how what's going on in Israel and what's going on in Nicaragua affects them," said William Bailey, chairman of USG's student debate committee.

Students are the lifeblood of this University and their opinions should be heard and more importantly represented by the student government. USG is making this opportunity available for students to voice their opinions and broaden their perspectives on many issues.

Tom Sloan, a member of the debate committee, noted that organized groups have strong opinions on current issues and many times shut out other student views. The debates will open the door to public opinion but if you choose to ignore this chance to make yourself heard, you shut yourself out and have no right to complain.

A golden rule

Offering a hand in friendship when another is in need is the greatest service a person can perform.

As University administrators and faculty struggle with programs and seminars to make Penn State attractive to minority students, two programs at the University are extending a hand in friendship to make the job easier.

The Buddy System, a three-year-old program run by the Paul Robeson Cultural Center, brings students and faculty members together in a one-to-one relationship so students can become acclimated with the University.

Director of the Center, Larry Young, said faculty interaction allows students to become familiar with University operations and also puts them in touch with sources of information.

Wayne Detwiler, assistant professor of vocational education, and his wife Kathryn, decided to be buddies at the beginning of the semester.

"Being a buddy keeps me in contact with the younger generation and helps to establish mutual understandings," Wayne said.

If buddies aren't enough, students can also turn to "The Family."

An informal support group that originated in East Halls in 1983, The Family offers what one member calls, "true friends," who help out.

Darryl King, Family member and Black Caucus President, said Family members do a variety of activities together. Briefly, they do what any other set of friends would do — go to dances, go to bars, or just sit around and talk.

The goals and ideas of both programs are worthy. Both have made positive strides in helping students adjust to the University Community.

. . . and There

Grain of SALT

Amid spectacular disclosures of back-channel arms deals with Iran and secret Swiss bank accounts for the Nicaraguan Contras, the Air Force quietly and carefully made the world slightly less safe than it was before. The United States exceeded one of the numerical sublimits contained in the 1979 Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty.

Now that the U.S. has flouted the treaty, it will be much easier for the Soviets to ignore its ceiling. In such ways does the fabric of nuclear-arms control become unraveled and the security of the U.S. become imperiled.

The Milwaukee Journal

Courage to stand against death

Although polls show that more than 80 percent of the American people favor capital punishment, Gov. Tony Anaya of New Mexico does not. The governor commuted to life imprisonment the sentences of five murderers awaiting execution.

Anaya hopes to set a precedent for other governors. We don't feel optimistic about that prospect. But we do applaud Anaya for exhibiting courage in his own state.

Greensboro News & Record, Greensboro, N.C.

Abusing power to give life

Gov. Tony Anaya has abused his constitutional power to commute death penalties by issuing mass commutations for the five men on New Mexico's Death Row.

The power of a governor over death sentences was intended to be used on a case-by-case basis to weigh whether each individual has done something to warrant the state's mercy.

Anaya has imposed his personal convictions and extended a blanket commutation to those who do not merit clemency.

He sent the wrong message to criminals: go ahead and commit your murder and mayhem, and our state's softhearted, soft-headed governor will guarantee you a life in prison with room and board provided free.

Santa Fe New Mexican

The opinions expressed by other newspapers are not necessarily those of The Daily Collegian's Board of Opinion.

The LCB fiasco:

Will rational thought take Pennsylvania out of the Dark Ages?

"Wouldn't it be terrible if I quoted some reliable statistics which prove that more people are driven insane by religious hysteria than by drinking alcohol?" — W.C. Fields

The other day I read with interest and excitement of Gov. Thornburgh's order to disband the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. I was disappointed, but not really surprised to read the following day that a union filed a suit in the Commonwealth Court to restrain the disbandment machinations pending a review of the state's Sunset Law.

The LCB debate is a classic example of politics and bureaucracy in inaction. This state-funded operation is responsible for both the sale of alcoholic beverages and the enforcement of Pennsylvania's liquor laws.

The last real piece of legislation to continue the 53-year-old agency was passed in 1975 and expired last year. A one-year extension to the LCB's life was passed last year, theoretically to allow the General Assembly time to review the laws and reform them as necessary, or to develop an argument and procedure for disbandment of the LCB.

What seemed to happen in reality was that the entire Pennsylvania legislature tried to take the argument to the people without really telling the people all the facts. Dealing with the LCB issue was delayed just long enough for the election results to be tabulated. It is now dumped on a lame-duck administration for action.

The state's Sunset Law stipulates that any state-funded agency, program or bureau that is funded on a temporary basis, that has not been refunded or whose charter is not extended by the ending date of the original funding shall have six months to cease operations beginning on the day after the final day of funding.

Thornburgh's order to begin a six-month wind down of LCB operations is both a valiant and futile last ditch effort to accomplish something he has been trying to do for years: disband the LCB.

It is valiant in its intentions and futile in its destiny. Even if the court reaches a decision quickly and approves the disbanding order, and even if no further suits are brought to bear, and even if the procedures to disband alcohol to minors is started, in January a new governor takes over. A governor who has already stated he wants the LCB to stay around.

The biggest problem with all of this is that no one has to my satisfaction provided the logical argument for either keeping or disbanding the LCB. I'd like to state some of the mythical



gical arguments that I've heard concerning both sides, shatter them and then state a few more logical suggestions toward resolving the issue:

Myth: The LCB was established by an act of legislature. It should therefore be an act of legislature that disbands it.

Fact: The Sunset Law is an act of legislature. It was designed not only to prevent automatic cutoff of monies, but to prevent unwanted bureaucracy from lingering on and using up state resources.

Myth: It is a conflict of interest for the same agency to both enforce liquor laws and promote alcohol use.

Fact: First of all, how many underage drinking violations are actually passed out by the LCB? Most are handled by local and/or state police. Second, with the exception of the few 20 percent-off sales that have popped up within the past year, the LCB doesn't do much in the way of promotion.

Fact: The prices charged for some items, and the unavailability of others, particularly wines, have caused many people I know, who have the opportunity, to skip the boutique in Maryland or New York to make other than general purchases. Therefore, if the LCB neither promotes nor enforces, what does it do?

Myth: Disbanding the LCB will increase the incidences of underage drinking and drunken driving.

Fact: The logic of this one entirely escapes me. The penalty for providing alcohol to minors is severe. Any private store owner would risk his livelihood by violating this law. If we assume the general public is so much less competent and responsible than a state employee, we have reached a very sad state of affairs.

It would also be assuming the managers of all bars and taverns that serve alcohol have been

grossly incompetent and should turn over their jobs to state employees.

As far as drunken driving is concerned, the current attitude of "ban the drink because banning driving is too inconvenient" has resulted in many reforms to the alcohol laws. Very few, if any, of these has had much effect on eliminating drunk drivers. The biggest factor in lessening the amount of these incidents will be stiffer penalties for those found guilty of the infraction.

Myth: Disbanding the LCB will produce a greater availability of alcohol to minors because there will be more stores selling it.

Fact: This one is not quite the same argument as the previous myth, however, I can use some of the same logic against it. I can also ask, "Says who?"

Current laws on the books limit the number of liquor licenses distributed in a certain area based on a per capita assessment of the area involved. Because of this, liquor licenses in State College are being sold for six-figure dollar amounts. And that's just for the license, not for the building itself. (That's right gang, we've got all the bars we can handle right now.)

Why can't the same type of limitation be applied to retail liquor stores?

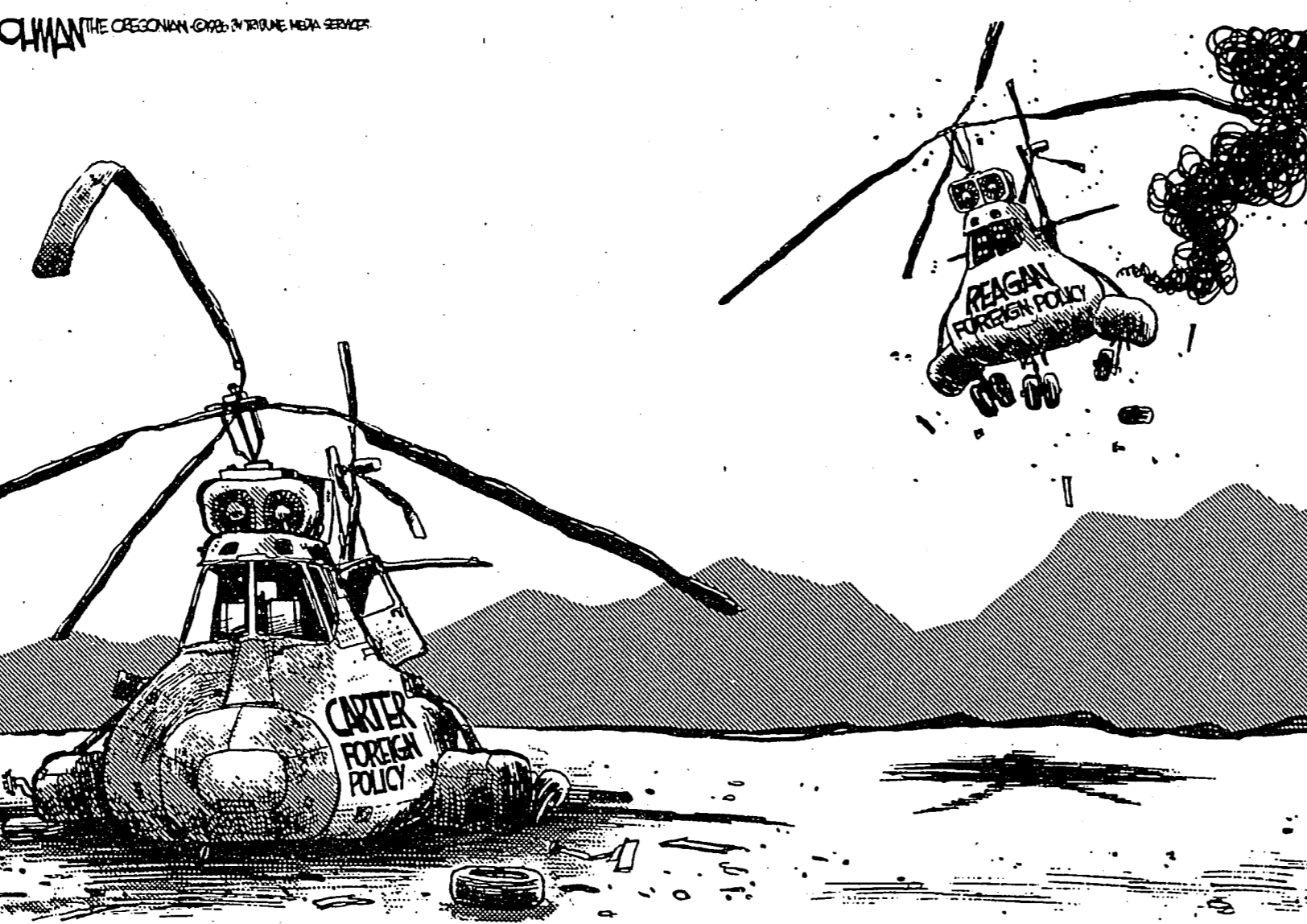
Myth: Disbanding the LCB will leave thousands of workers unemployed.

Fact: This one is conditionally true. The condition is that they have no desire to be anything but a State Store employee. The Thornburgh administration has already stated that current employees would have first crack at purchasing the defunct stores. Any group of employees who are on the ball should be able to negotiate a partnership and/or a small business loan to buy out the store they worked in.

Another good side to this would of course be the reduction of the state bureaucracy. That alone is a convincing argument.

Unfortunately, many of these suggestions and compromises will be ignored or forgotten in the political arena of a legislature. The LCB is most likely to be around for a while, doing whatever it is they do. And Pennsylvania will remain soundly in the archaic dark age that it feels so comfortable in.

Mark Johnston is a senior majoring in mechanical engineering and a columnist for The Daily Collegian. His column appears every other Monday.



Desert Two

the Collegian

Monday, Dec. 8, 1986
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courages comments on news coverage, editorial policy and University affairs. Letters must be typewritten, double-spaced and no longer than one and one-half pages. Forums must also be typewritten, double-spaced and no longer than three pages.

Students' letters should include semester standing, major and campus of the writer. Letters from alumni should include the major and year of graduation of the writer. All writers should provide their address and phone number for verification of the letter. Letters should be signed by no more than two people. Names may be withheld on request.

The Collegian reserves the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste.

Complaints: News and editorial complaints should be presented to the editor. Business and advertising complaints should be presented to the business manager. If a complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, grievances may be filed with the Accuracy and Fair Play Committee of Collegian Inc. Information on filing grievances is available from Gerry Lynn Hamilton, executive secretary.

Arms sales: Watergate again?

Is the United States facing another Watergate scandal? Is the media exaggerating what's happening with the Reagan administration? Is President Reagan fessing up to the secret White House arms sales to Iran and money transfers to Nicaraguan rebels? Should a special Congressional Committee be appointed to investigate the situation or should private counsel be hired to take a look at what's going on?

The Daily Collegian's Board of Opinion would like to know what the faculty, students, staff and area residents think about the situation.

Deadline for letters-to-the-editor and forums is 1 p.m. Monday, Dec. 8. Materials should be directed to Opinion Editor Terry

Mutchler or Assistant Opinion Editor Jim Higgins.

All authors must bring the materials to the Collegian office, 128 Carnegie Building, in person and present proper identification. (If there is more than one author, all must be present.)

Students' letters should include the semester and major of each writer. Letters from alumni should include the author's major and year of graduation. Names may be withheld on request.

The opinion editors reserve the right to edit letters for length and to reject letters if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste.

Due to the large number of letters received, publication of each letter cannot be guaranteed.

reader opinion

Fan of the fans

Dear U.C.C. Fall Concert:

Now that our Fall concert season is over, we want to take a moment to thank you for the major contribution you made to its success.

The Hooters, Robin Williams, and Steve Winwood all made a point of telling us what a wonderful time they had. Without exception, they were overjoyed by the warm, enthusiastic response they received. They were especially impressed with the Rec Hall audience's ability to express its excitement in such a friendly way with out getting out of hand. It's a positive example of Penn State spirit. Let's keep it going.

A smiling crowd is our motive from 7 a.m. to 3 a.m. the day of a show. The 130 UCC members would like to give a standing ovation to those of you who made up our audience of over 14,600.

Sincerely
University Concert Committee

Tune in

In response to an article criticizing the new music of old rock and rollers written by your saddy misguided, culturally deprived columnist Brian Schaffer, we feel obligated to enlighten Mr. Schaffer's understanding of musical talent.

Although we can't deny that Bruce Springsteen's more recent efforts have fallen short of the Boss' par, Schaffer goes on to make some swooping statements regarding other artists, in particular, Peter Gabriel and Steve Winwood (or, as he sarcastically put it, "Stevie Gabriel and Peter Winwood"), claiming they sound the same. Schaffer should try to look beyond the similarities of those voices and listen to the incredible music they are contributing to the 1980s.

Schaffer is too musically simplistic to accept that other artists have matured and are letting their maturity come forth through their music.

Furthermore, Mr. Schaffer should stretch his limitations beyond his Chuck Berry, three-chord progressions (which set the standards for rock 'n' roll in the 50s and the years to follow, but are less than substantial in keeping rock 'n' roll interesting) and listen to how rock music has evolved.

We won't hesitate to agree that rock, in general, has lost

the "kick" that it once had, but it is no longer a means of rebelling against a disordered establishment. It is now an extremely polished form of art. And it is true that many rising artists today seem to be "sappy" in their efforts, but it is incredibly naive to close your mind to the musicians who continue to write thoughtful rock music.

Oh, poor Mr. Schaffer, please take a walk to one of the record stores downtown and purchase the latest albums by Peter Gabriel and Steve Winwood. Also, take a listen to the latest contributions of other artists, such as Peter Townshend and Lou Reed.

There is so very very much music out there, Brian. Please add a few more albums to your Boston collection before writing another article about today's music scene.

Alan Friedman
Junior-Advertising

Religious Freedom

Brian Schaffer's column "Secular Humanism" is one of the better columns to appear in the Collegian this semester.

The only reason Fundamentalist Christians want to ban secular humanism is because they believe it promotes a "Godless society."

If that's what they want to believe, that's their right. But, if there are those who wish to believe and live in such a society, that's their right also.

Religious freedom is the belief that "all men are created equal" are the bases upon which this country was founded. Take either of them away, and you've destroyed the very concept of America.

I am utterly appalled when I hear about book burnings, record burning and other suppression movements to rid society of Godless beliefs.

This is not religious freedom. It is one part of society trying to force its will on the rest of society. It is also what Adolf Hitler did in Nazi Germany, what the Ayatollah is doing in Iran, and the main reason the pilgrims fled England.

It completely baffles me how America can condemn such actions in foreign countries, yet condone them on her own shores.

I'm not condemning the fundamentalists for their beliefs. But I have heard the beliefs of their religion and do not wish to be part of it. And when they try to force their beliefs on others, they've gone too far.

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