

Ethics must be part of business

By CAROL CHASE
Collegian Staff Writer

He refused corruption, and he made it to the top.

Fletcher Byrom, retired chief executive officer of Koppers Company, Inc., spoke about the role of education in determining business ethics last night at the G. Albert Shoemaker Program in Business Ethics in Kern. Byrom, who is almost 70 years old, said many people ask how he can claim to have strong moral beliefs and be a CEO.

Everyone assumes executive officers are corrupt, he said. Byrom said this is incorrect, citing himself as an example.

"If I cannot operate without not acting as a part of the corruption then I don't want to be in such a business," he said.

Ethics cannot be taught, Byrom said. But it is possible to provide guidelines of how to make proper ethical decisions.

Moral philosophy must be instituted at every level of education and should be deeply ingrained in students while in business school, Byrom said.

"And I'm not insisting that a course in ethics is going to do the job," he said.

"I do not believe you can motivate people to be exceedingly good by telling them what they cannot do."

All people inherently have their own moral code, he said.

Byrom said business schools should have interdisciplinary seminars discussing moral implications of case studies. The course should not count for credit, he said, because people

should want to gain a clear picture of morality.

Philip Cochran, University associate professor of business administration, said the University offers two ethics courses for business students. One course is required for all second-year business students. Business Administration 355 may be used as a requirement by business students.

Cochran said debate has begun in the United States over the feasibility of teaching ethics.

Ethics are inherent in people, so there is no need to teach them, he said. That presumes everyone will act according to their own set of morals regardless of what they are taught.

But if instructors presume people are good, then teaching ethics "can sensitize students to the complexities of decision that can have ethical consequences," he said.

Byrom said, "Nothing else you will learn (at the University) will be as important in your lifetime as an understanding of how you will deal with the ambiguities of decisions you will have to make."

Byrom said he always acts according to his moral beliefs.

He said in the past he has lost over \$80 million in business deals by refusing to take actions that would compromise his moral beliefs.

He could do this because he was a CEO, he said. But it might be more difficult for up-and-coming businesspeople to adhere to a strict moral code because it may mean losing their job.

Another problem people face is not knowing what is right or wrong in complicated circumstances, he said. "These (business) matters are not



Collegian Photo / Theresa Dylewski

Fletcher L. Byrom

as clean cut as moral philosophers might have you believe," Byrom told the audience.

The two-day program, held by the Penn State College of Business Administration, includes a panel discussion at 9:30 this morning in the Frizzell Room, Eisenhower Chapel. The discussion will feature business leaders from various sectors of American industry.

The program was established in 1986 by Albert Shoemaker and his wife, Mercedes. Shoemaker is the retired president of Consolidation Coal Company in Pittsburgh, and president emeritus of the University Board of Trustees.

Collegian and USEC discuss their roles

By PAMELA WEIERS
Collegian Staff Writer

Members of the Undergraduate Student Executive Council and The Daily Collegian's Board of Editors discovered a gap last night in their perceptions of the Collegian's role at the University. Members of USEC said the Collegian should cooperate with student leaders by collaborating in support or opposition of issues important to University students.

But, Collegian Editor Chris Raymond said the newspaper tries not to side specifically with either students or the University administration in its news coverage or editorial opinions.

"We view ourselves as an independent newspaper and we try to go by the same standards as a professional newspaper," Raymond said. "We don't bend to public pressure or public sentiment. We are very protective of that independent status."

The Collegian is financially independent and does not receive University funding or a student organization budget. The University buys 14,000 newspapers per day to distribute on campus as part of a contract that allows the Collegian to use office space in Carnegie Building, Raymond said.

John Zahor, president of the Organization for Town Independent Students, said he was "a little

taken aback" by the Collegian editors' contention that their role is separate from student opinion.

Both groups admitted their relations could be improved.

Student leaders asked members of the Collegian's Board of Opinion if they were aware of the impact the paper's editorial opinions has on students.

Raymond responded, "I think we acknowledge the impact of our editorial opinions... We are not going to go out there and poll students before we write an editorial."

"To get the best, most accurate information out to students, we should pool it," said Bobbi Melchiorre, president of the Association of Residence Hall Students.

The Collegian is not just a mouth-piece for student organizations, Collegian Campus Editor Carolyn Sorisio said.

"We all attend Penn State," replied Graduate Student Association President Alison Jones.

Sorisio said she thinks student organizations and the Collegian work better when they work separately.

Gary Price, Council of Commonwealth Student Government's coordinator, said the discussion established "if not a better relationship, a better understanding. We at least know now where we stand."

Pa. rewrites ethics law for officials

By ROD SNYDER
Associated Press Writer

HARRISBURG — Legislation re-writing the state Ethics Law emerged from the House Judiciary Committee Wednesday with toughened provisions on ethical conduct for public officials.

Key portions of the bill include the state's first statutory definition of conflict of interest, a prohibition on many severance agreements and an expanded definition of immediate family members prohibited from benefiting from a public official's position.

"It makes it a stronger law," said Rep. H. William DeWeese, a Greene County Democrat who chairs the Judiciary Committee.

The bill became bogged down in committee when rank-and-file lawmakers and legislative leaders wanted to review and revise it before sending it to the full House for a vote.

The bill still faces amendments on the House floor and then must go to the Senate.

The legislation defines a conflict of interest as "use by a public official or public employee of the authority of his office or any confidential information received through his holding public office or employment for the private pecuniary benefit or detriment of himself, a member of his immediate family, or a business with which he or a member of his immediate family is associated."

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The Second Mile is a private, nonprofit charitable organization devoted to fostering the welfare of children and adolescents. The organization operates a number of programs including foster care, summer camp, assistance funds, counseling, and a friend program.