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Council has entered that shadowy twilight zone known as the "lame duck". Traditionally it is a period when a type of 'summer madness sets in; last year the closing week saw Council giving away $13,000, its entire reserves, to the library. This year was no exception. Council careened through Monday's meeting more like a wounded water-buffalo than a lame duck. (See the minutes posted in Regeman, ed.)

In one session it voted its acceptance of the Due Process report; voted in favor of sending a letter to the administration condemning the use of student markers; it voted in favor of sending a letter to the administration stating its opinion in favor of paying all students and nonstudents employed by the college no less than the federal minimum wage; it voted in favor of sending a letter to the administration stating that in its opinion, the penalties for the use, and in possession of narcotics and hallucinatory drugs are too severe and should be reconsidered; and finally, it voted in favor of sending a letter to the administration stating that it's opinion that women's curfew should be abolished by means of the three-step process.

Due Process occupied a special committee most of this semester. It was not more than the cursory going over it received Monday night. There was almost no discussion until Mr. Lensing raised several objections to the wording and the spirit of the document. He questioned the vagueness and contradictions of the use of such phrases as "undesirable conduct" (Sec. V, A) and "When misconduct results..." (Sec. V, C). Mr. Lensing said that the problem of academic freedom could not be solved by voting for or against it. "You do not", he said, "hand out academic freedom like you would a cigarette."

Due Process has yet to go up before the faculty and the Board of Trustees. It is not likely, in the face of the objections raised by Mr. Lensing and Council, and the disapproval letters simply to go on the record. Making motions and sending letters which has already been voiced by other members of the faculty and administration, that either body will pass the Due Process Document.

The desire to see the end to student markers is laudable. However, it is assumed that by stating an unfavorable opinion, Council has an alternative plan in mind. Simply saying, "we are opposed", is no solution. It also avoids the real issues which are too many for the present faculty, in classes that are too large to be handled by the present number of faculty.

Coming out in favor of the federal minimum wage for all college employees is a noble position. However, no attempt was made to discover if the administration had the funds to cover this proposition. Nor did they have any idea where this money was to come from. Mr. Livingston did make one suggestion, that money given to the college for a particular purpose (i.e., the president's salary) might well be redirected to pay college employees. May I remind our honorable chairman that this is known as misrepresentation and is generally considered dishonest?

Stating that the administration position on the use and/or possession of narcotics and hallucinatory drugs is too severe is a fine gesture. But again, stating an opinion will not change the facts. Possession and the use of drugs of this sort is still illegal in the state of New York and what the Community Council or Board of College judges will not make it otherwise. Besides, Council had a chance to formulate a position this week ago when the faculty statement on narcotics came up for their approval; they chose then to take no position except that the faculty statement was not acceptable. Opposition to a women's curfew may be a very beneficial gesture, but without the approval of the Board of Trustees it does not have a prayer of ever being acted on.

Making motions and sending letters simply to go "on the record" or against a particular issue is
that Mr. Livingston was not representing a sizable proportion of student opinion. I left the room because I could not bear to watch the hypocrisy that was being enacted before my eyes. Council was discussing an issue that was of vital concern to both the student body and the administration. While Mr. Livingston was purported to represent the student body, the administration was represented not at all, the Dean having asked permission to be excused to meet a prior commitment. Council had ceased to be a community government and had degenerated into a student meeting. As I said in the opening article, none of this would be binding on the administration, and Mr. Livingston knew it.

Ilene Rosen

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

To the Gadsby Paper:

An editor of your paper recently disturbed Council proceedings with a violent outburst directed against Craig Livingston, and then she stormed out of the room. The precipitating incident was Craig's proposal to send a letter to the administration stating Council's opinion that the regulations concerning marijuana were too strong (i.e., immediate dismissal.) Your editor declared that Craig was not representing the student body, but was presenting the opinion of one person, Craig Livingston. It is unfortunate that your editor is so blind to the opinions of the student body and the philosophy behind representative elections. Perhaps some of the editor's friends would be antagonistic towards such a "radical" letter by Council, but your editor has no right to accuse Mr. Livingston of failing to represent the student body. Not only that, but I feel that a great majority of the student body would wholly support such a letter, whether they be marijuana users or not.

Of course, this letter is entitled to her opinion, but she is not entitled to attack Craig with false accusations and insufficient data.

Christopher Eggert

(Ed. note. I thank Mr. Eggert for supplying me with the above information. I am glad that he is sufficiently informed so as to be able to state the opinion of the great majority of the student body. I would, however, like to explain my actions as stated in the first part of Mr. Eggert's letter. By "outburst" and "storming" out of the room are not entirely related. It is true that I said that I thought...
"Creeping Multiversity-ism"

In this issue of the Gadsby, for the last time (at least), I would like to mention an issue that I hope (probably in vain) people will give some thought to between now and next September.

The issue is what I call "creeping multiversity-ism". It is not one of those who mourn the passing of the "Old Bard." Although not a "very old Bardian," I think I have been here long enough (three years) to be entitled to mourn if I were so inclined, this does not mean, however, that I don't see some distressing signs on our academic horizon. One of these is "creeping multiversity-ism." There is a disturbing, but quite evident, trend at Bard towards larger and larger student bodies, fewer and fewer faculty members, and less and less contact between the two. The most obvious was the innovation of the six-point program, grand in concept but incredibly sloppy in execution, with its accompanying demon, the lecture. Granted, there are some courses that can be taught in no other way, the introduction of the lecture served as the thin ice of the wedge for the notion that all a teacher had to do was stand in front of a class for an hour or two and tell the students what they ought to know. Eventually, the idea of an interchange between faculty and students, of a situation where each was expected to be a participating and contributing member of a group effort towards learning or knowledge or truth, began to fade.

An increase in the student body, without a commensurate increase in the faculty, has led to an intensification of this process, for purely structural reasons (a seminar, to be effective, should have an absolute maximum of fifteen students).

Now the strain is beginning to be felt in the hallowed precincts of the upper college. Dual junior conferences are not unknown, and some junior and senior "seminars" are seminars in name only. A proposal has been made that one department experiment with eliminating the individual conference altogether, and replacing it with seminars of four or five students each. One gets the unsettling feeling that this is merely a test case, and if it works out "successfully" (which means for the convenience of the faculty members involved), it may be tried in other departments. I could go on and on about what is wrong with this idea, but the crux of the matter is this: one works for two years to gain admission to the upper college. One is supposed to have earned the privilege of experiencing certain educational methods, and one of these is the face-to-face, highly personalized and individually structured confrontation with one's advisor. It would be impossible to achieve the same results in a seminar, no matter how small. Thus far, "creeping multiversity-ism" has struck only at the periphery of the Bard system; now it is advancing towards one of the vital organs. One sometimes wonders if the extra tuition money we are asked to spend in order to "preserve the high quality of education here at Bard," is not being used to pay people to devise means of destroying what is truly unique and worthwhile about that education.

Jeffrey T. Mortimer