

Virginia Scholar

Newsletter of the Virginia Association of Scholars

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EDITORIAL : GETTING ORGANIZED

**EVILS DRAW MEN TOGETHER
- PROVERB CITED BY ARISTOTLE**

**IN ITS STRUGGLE FOR POWER THE PROLETARIAT HAS NO OTHER WEAPON BUT
ORGANIZATION**

- VLADIMIR LENIN

**WE MUST ALL HANG TOGETHER, OR ASSUREDLY WE SHALL ALL HANG SEPARATELY
- BEN FRANKLIN**

It just has to be true, when a Greek philosopher, a founder of the late unlamented Evil Empire, and a Founding Father of our Republic all agree on it.

The National Association of Scholars stands for individual freedom; yet it can be effective only to the degree that individuals join freely together for united action. And while the problems we face are nationwide, the solutions to them must begin locally.

Last March and April, NAS President Steve Balch made flying visits to several places in Virginia to suggest the forming of college or regional groups. At his meeting in Blacksburg with people from Ferrum, Lynchburg, Radford, and Virginia Tech, he talked cogently about the desirability of forming local organizations.

NAS has given us national visibility and a national forum in *Academic Questions* and through its Annual Meetings. It helped found the American Association for Liberal Education, an accrediting group specifically concerned that the providing of properly liberal education be seen as an essential component of higher education. NAS has other such major ventures on its agenda. It can provide much in the way of material and moral support for local chapters; but the initiatives have to come from the grass roots.

Much or most of direct concern happens at the

local level and can only be influenced by prompt action, which must mean *local* action. It is while things are fresh that there is the greatest chance to influence the outcome, not after the event.

Recall, for instance, a few years ago when Virginia Tech introduced the practice of labeling and counting members of search committees by race and gender. Some individuals wrote letters. A few faculty members on the Commission on Faculty Affairs tried to reason about it. It might have made quite a difference then if there had existed a chapter of VAS or NAS, whose officers could have issued statements and sought to persuade the media that they ought to pay some attention to what was going on. Reporters listen more readily to a

President of the South-West Virginia Chapter of the National Association of Scholars, than to a Professor Angrymouth.

Faculty alone will not be able to rein in political correctness. Alumni, tax-payers, parents of students, governing boards of colleges - those are the groups whose influence can be effective. Individual faculty cannot easily or even properly put the case to such groups; but local chapters of State or National organizations can.

Faculty Senates and College Associations, too, are likely to be more responsive to a message from

MEETING: 18 October

There will be a meeting for VAS and NAS members of South-West Virginia at Radford University on Tuesday October 18th in the New River Conference Room, basement level of Heth Hall

(see map on last page)

Interested non-members will also be most welcome.

**For further information:
Al Mandelstamm at 552-6869
or Alex Weiss at 639-3150**

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil

the local AAUP or NAS chapter than from that well-known complainer and curmudgeon, Joe Martinez. Some number of the faculty who serve on Senates and Commissions and Committees would, indeed, welcome the opportunity to introduce into discussion matters brought to them by such groups of their constituents; matters they are inhibited from broaching themselves, as individuals, for fear of the obvious repercussions.

The very existence of a visible local chapter could make quite a difference. At the moment, a tiny group of radical extremists exerts inordinate influence because these fanatics are so loudly and aggressively unreasonable: administrators know that any attitude or remark or action not congenial to gender and race activists will immediately bring upon them uninhibited public smears and abuse. Many administrators would, even if only privately, welcome the existence of some publicly visible counterbalance. If a college chapter of the National Association of Scholars were to enroll even a small percentage of the faculty, the administration would take notice.

NEXT, WE RE-INVENT THE WHEEL

"There's a growing sentiment . . . that 'grades ought to be an honest reflection of student accomplishment'"

- Robert Simoni, Chair of Biology at Stanford and member of its Faculty Senate, cited in *Science* 94:5:27, p.1255

But we Scholars have come together not just for the negative-seeming purpose of opposing the misguided anti-intellectual initiatives of others. Well before political correctness came into the picture there were issues of major concern crying out for public championing. There is the disgrace of grade inflation, for example; which is only one small part of the discarding of intellectual responsibility that goes with presuming students to be equally qualified with instructors to design curricula, set criteria for assessment, and advise governing boards of universities. Here is a short list of initiatives that have long been called for:

1. It must be said, loudly and clearly and often, that learning cannot occur unless the learners exert themselves. There are signs that the irresponsibility of the last three decades may be on the wane: thus Stanford University has made its transcripts and grading policy slightly more consonant with student performance; and Virginia Tech now allows its instructors to consider class attendance a grade-relevant aspect of a student's performance ¹. But much remains to be done that will not get done without unceasing pressure for honesty in grading

and the setting of appropriately high standards. Such pressure can only come from such groups as NAS or AAUP - until, of course, these things become again as self-evident as they ought to be and once were.

2. Administrators should be held accountable to and by faculty. Isn't it rather odd that all faculty should be exposed to anonymous assassination by students in so-called "student evaluations" even as no one bothers to ask, how faculty view the performance of the Central Administration? As a result, we find certain Presidents and Provosts described in the media as successful and effective, and given large raises by governing boards, even as they are held in low regard by a great portion of their faculty. Only the lowly Department Heads, and occasionally Deans, are exposed to assessments that include the opinions of the faculty. It is long overdue, that Vice-Presidents and Presidents join those who are held somewhat and occasionally answerable for how well they serve those they are supposed to lead and administer.

3. Budgetary details should be made available; otherwise faculty cannot participate effectively in governance. (It ought to be routine, in any case, that public institutions make public their plans and budgets in a sufficiently clear manner that lay people and media representatives can understand what is in them.) As it stands, much "consultation" with faculty is a sham because the basis of decision-making is not revealed. For example:

In the current "Phase II" discussions, one of the units at Virginia Tech was told that measures of its efficiency and cost showed it to be "an outlier, six standard deviations away" from the mean for other units. The faculty were asked to make suggestions for re-structuring that unit so as to bring it into line. It seemed only natural to ask, "What are the measures being used? Are they dollars per student? Dollars per credit hour? Credit hours per faculty member? Is the teaching done by faculty in other programs being properly credited to this unit?"

The response was, "We don't know" ².

It seems that this assertion about measured cost came to the University from the staff of the State Council on Higher Education, to be passed on without being questioned from one level to another until it reached the hapless faculty; illustrating that salient principle of academic administration: "Kick down, never up" ³.

Not only in Kafka-land must we defend ourselves without being told what the charge is.

Positive initiatives go hand-in-hand with opposition to the insidious generalities that poison the air in times like these, when money is short and good ideas no more plentiful. When someone talks about

"breaking the credit-for-contact or seat-time models of teaching and learning", he must be pressed to rephrase that into something concrete: does he mean converting colleges into correspondence schools or diploma mills? When someone talks of "An administrator planning a new curriculum", he must be pressed to explain why he would want higher education to be a place where *administrators* rather than faculty plan curricula⁴. He must be pressed to explain, from what view of learning and scholarship those suggestions stem. Such continuous pressing is sorely needed to expose the absence of Emperor's Clothes, in this case any coherent notion of what higher education is or can be about.

At root, what's wrong with education in the United States is that it is not based on any coherent view. The grade schools have tacitly accepted a role as social engineer, which however they are inherently incapable of carrying through effectively. The colleges and universities are well on the way to the same miserable end as they put more effort into "public service", affirmative discrimination, and the like.

We Scholars do have a clear sense of what we should be about: re-read, for example, the aims of the Virginia Association of Scholars declared at the

inside back cover of this Newsletter, or the National Association's in *Academic Questions*. Both our positive initiatives and our opposition to contemporary misguidedness flow naturally from an understanding of what education and scholarship entail.

NOTES

¹ To the tune of protests from students. But the Student Government Association met an unsympathetic response when they brought the matter to the Board of Visitors, whom they found to be "largely old-time alumni who thought students should be where they were supposed to be", presumably, in class

² We have this on the authority of Righteous Whistle. He tells us that a dozen or so other persons were present to hear the admission, which was also repeated by other administrators on other occasions

³ Henry H. Bauer, "A guide to successful university administration", *Vestes* (The Australian Universities' Review), 12 (1969) 19-29

⁴ Both quotes are from *U21 - Issues Affecting the Future of Virginia's Colleges and Universities* (State Council of Higher Education for Virginia), 2 #2, Fall-Winter 1993, p.3

P O T P O U R R I

To demonstrate solidarity:

Let's have some posters printed and distributed, and pass the message on to the media, that on November 16 we will have a public demonstration of support for traditional family values, the permitting of voluntary prayer in the schools, and a ban on using public funds to pay for abortions. ***All those who join us in those objectives will wear blue jeans on that day in order to demonstrate their solidarity with us.***

Should anyone object, we shall ask them: How is this different from the Blue Jeans Day called at Radford University on April 5, 1994, by the Diversity and Social Issues Committee of Residential Life, the Diversity Promotions Council of the Student Government Association and the RU Al-

ternative Alliance, to demonstrate caring "about people regardless of their sexual orientation"?

Letters about Blue Jeans Day in Radford's *Tartan* (April 8 & 15) protested the deviousness of claiming the most widely worn item of campus clothing as support for what the preponderant majority do not support. Susan Kwilecki, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, pointed out the implicit obstruction of thoughtfulness and invasion of privacy; "The business of a university . . . is cultivating and exercising the intellect, not the invasive and dishonest manipulation of political sensibility".

A couple of decades ago (A.M. & H.B. recall) there were Blue Jeans Days at Virginia Tech and at the University of Kentucky. Is Radford's a new generation (so to

speak) of gay activists?

"No" means . . . what?

One of my mother's favorite jokes began, "What's the difference between a diplomat and a lady?"

When a diplomat says, "Yes", he means "Maybe"; when he says, "Maybe", he means "No"; and if he says, "No", then he's no diplomat.

When a lady says, "No", she means "Maybe"¹; when she says, "Maybe", she means "Yes"; and if she says, "Yes", then she's no lady.

I was reminded of that by a sign that appeared on our campus a couple of years ago:

ABSOLUTELY
NO PARKING
Students, Faculty,
and Staff
ANY TIME
TOWING ENFORCED

That would seem to indicate that a mere "NO PARKING" might mean "Maybe" or "Yes"; otherwise what purpose could be served by the added "ABSOLUTELY"? (And "TOWING ENFORCED", one assumes, also does *not* mean what it says, namely that towing is enforced, but rather that the "ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING" injunction is enforced by towing offenders away.)

That sign having caught my eye, I looked more closely at other signs. There is, for example, right outside my building, one that says:

STOP
FOR PEDESTRIANS
IN CROSSWALK

yet cars do *not* stop for me when I'm trying to cross.

Then there are several signs around that say:

BICYCLES
SKATEBOARDS

ARE PROHIBITED
ON SIDEWALKS

(The whited-out space used to say "ROLLER-BLADES"). Still I have to dodge bicycles all the time on our sidewalks.

Recently there was added to the other parking signage: "PARK IN STRIPED SPACES ONLY". Trouble is, it's very hard to find any striped spaces: there are the pedestrian "zebra" crossings, but surely they're not meant; and the few striped parking spots also bear a sign, "SERVICE VEHICLES ONLY", so again I don't imagine that all of us with campus parking permits are being urged now to park in *those*.

Finally I got it: just as "NO PARKING" means "maybe" or "yes", so "PARK IN STRIPED SPACES ONLY" is intended to mean, "Park only in non-striped spaces that are bounded by white stripes" (though that would leave unused the spots at each end of every row, where it is curbs and not white stripes that bound one side of the space).

And as a final bit of evidence that "No" doesn't mean what it says, we treasure our photographs of one much-traversed stretch of our campus showing "Service Vehicles" parked at signs that clearly say, "NO PARKING". (The photos are of some historical value. After "service vehicles" had disobeyed those signs for a year or two, the yellow paint along the curbs was removed, and the "NO PARKING" signs were replaced by others that said, "PARKING FOR SERVICE VEHICLES ONLY".)

Not so long ago, we saw outside the downtown Post Office a sign, "ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING": clearly a result of effective outreach to the community by our Campus Parking Authority. And they're taking notice *on* campus, too: UUSA (University Unions & Student Activities) has been placing in various buildings signs that say, "ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING". I trust smokers will be relieved to understand that when a sign says, "NO SMOKING", it merely means, "Maybe".

These are "crimes so terrible that innocence itself is not an adequate defense"

- Harvey Silverglate, *pro bono* lawyer for student accused of harassment (editorial, "Swarthmore's confused correctness", *Wall Street Journal*, 94:1:17, p.A8)

Best foot forward! **- or in the mouth?**

Colleges are competing more and more, to attract applications from as many students as possible. How many will be attracted rather than repelled by an Undergraduate Catalog that has a box on the inside of its front cover, in bold type and outlined in bold:

The provisions of this catalog do not constitute a contract, expressed or

WHO'S IN CHARGE THERE?

"The enrollment crept up to that number unintentionally"
-Virginia Tech's Provost,
Roanoke Times & World-News
92:7:27, p.A2

implied, between any applicant or student and [. . .] University. The university reserves the right to change any of the provisions, schedules, programs, courses, rules, regulations, or fees whenever university authorities deem it expedient to do so

We particularly like the bit about expediency: here we have real truth in advertising. But when I'm offered a car with that sort of *caveat* in the fine print of the warranty, I tend to take myself to a different dealer.

Just in case students or parents haven't been sufficiently worried about what sort of place this is, the disclaimer is bordered by some seven paragraphs to warn away anyone who takes too seriously the United States Constitution's guarantees on freedom of speech, since those paragraphs detail the usual sort of Policy Statement on Sexual Harassment defined as including "verbal . . . conduct . . . [that] has the purpose or effect [i.e., has the effect even if not so intended] of . . . creating an intimidating . . . or offensive . . . environment."

To complete that attractive and attracting display, there is the non-discrimination statement that implies discrimination ² against anyone other than "employees, students, or applicants" - alumni, say, or parents of students - on the basis of anything except "race, color, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran status, national origin, religion, or political affiliation" - let us say, hair color: leaving me

free, I take it, to discriminate against white males with red hair (whose propensity to unreasonable violence is well known).

Seen on the Internet:

Date:
Thu, 24 Feb 1994 22:34:42 -0500
Reply-To: Virginia Tech Women
<VTWOMEN@VTVM1.BITNET>
Sender: Virginia Tech Women
<VTWOMEN@VTVM1.BITNET>
From:
PS208AEB@ITHACA.BITNET
Subject: hello gals!
To: Multiple recipients of list
VTWOMEN
<VTWOMEN@VTVM1.BITNET>

My name is Amy and I am interested in talking with other bisexual or lesbian women.. I myself am a bisexual and am looking for the woman who can make me smile and reflect...and my opinion is that I won't fall in love with what you look like (although it's a plus, of course :)) but with who you are as a person... so, if you feel you would like to send me some mail... type "reply" and I'll receive it. I am nervous but anxiously awaiting any replies...

Amy

A quiz:

What's the discipline?

Graduate students held a conference at the University of Virginia. Can you guess, from the following titles of some of the sessions and papers, which academic field the conference purported to represent?

Sociological Perspectives of Culture

Going for Baroque: Renaissance Institutions

Africa and the Diaspora

Bodies in Context: Anthropological Perspectives

Racial Bodies and Cultural Space
Queer Identities

Composing Gender: Music and the Lesbian Continuum

Toward predicting the obscene: morality, law, and sexuality at the end of the 20th century

Inscribing values on the body: the cultural constitution of femininity through obstetrics and gynecology

Embodied souls: a Hindu theory of sexual difference

From Barbie dolls to Venus figurines: imagining the female body in the Sahara Desert

Jewish bodies, Catholic souls, gay desires

Elizabeth Wood's Sapphonics

Lesbian listeners: Beethoven's Opus 131 String Quartet, First Movement according to a Butch-Femme aesthetic

Black female leadership in the African-American religious experience: an issue of power

'The Ruins, The Lost Cities, and The Bones': constructing historical archaeological sites as texts

Well, I'm sure you all guessed: English, of course.

One of the mysteries for me about this sort of thing is, where do these people get the wide-ranging knowledge and understanding of several disciplines that's surely needed to do justice to such topics? What magic allows graduate students to dis-course thus over several disciplines even as they are studying in a single one?

Did you know?

Tid-bits from Va. Tech

Tech's newly appointed EO/AA Director, Elyzabeth Holford, hopes "that the university will come to the point where it would not consider hiring anyone without diversity skills" (Netta S. Eisler, "New EO/AA Director speaks at Staff Senate", *Spectrum* 16 #33 [94:6:2] pp.1,8)

Anyone care to define "diversity skills"?

* * * * *

Ms. Holford would, no doubt, approve the resolution from the Minorities Committee of Student Government Association, to add to student evaluations of faculty the question, "Has anything this faculty member done in class, in his/her office or in any other professional setting, been insensitive to people on the basis of race, age, sex, political affiliation, veteran

status, disability, religion, natural [sic] origin or sexual orientation?" (*Collegiate Times* 92:3:31, p.A1).

Your editor, who has never successfully curbed his insensitivity toward people who don't understand what they're talking about, is greatly relieved that his particular category of insensitivity will not be monitored (yet!).

* * * * *

"Administrative resources have been reallocated to create a new Women's Center which . . . will offer advocacy . . . concerning women's issues" ("Provost's changes detailed", *Spectrum* 17 #1 [94:8:25] p.1 (Tech already boasted a Women's Programs Office, a Women's Research Insti-

THE 1.5-PERCENT SOLUTION

Comments on budget-cutting and "re-structuring" from our resident consultant and former Dean, Josef Martin

Virginia Scholar: Dean Martin, we appreciate your giving us the benefit of your insight into administrative matters.

Josef Martin: Thank you. When I left the Dean's job, one aim I had was to share my experience with others. Especially I hoped to help my faculty colleagues to a more realistic view of how things work, how and why they get done or not done.

I also made the excellent resolution, that I would make no public criticism of any administrative speech or action at Virginia Tech. Most administrative actions are judgment calls, not a matter of "right" or "wrong". The person with the responsibility is the only one who can exercise the judgment. I had, and have, the highest personal regard for most of the people who hold administrative office at Virginia Tech, and I was very content to leave the burdens of decision-making to them.

The dean's not a saint. No dean is. But this was unfair.

- cited in Mary Crystal Cage, "Conflict between dean and faculty members flares anew", *Chronicle of Higher Education* 94:8:17, p.A16

V.S.: So we shall hear nothing but praise from you about how things are being handled now?

J.M.: I wish! That good resolution lasted about six years. But I couldn't keep quiet after racist criteria were made an official part of hiring procedures; even the composition of search committees was to be

tute, and a Women's Studies Program).

Is it really proper for an administrative office to offer partisan advocacy services?

* * * * *

There can be too much of a good thing!

The "Advisory Council on Human Rights and Social Responsibility unanimously concurred in its [own] abolition. . . . this Advisory Council was first implemented to ensure that the Virginia Tech campus is culturally diverse and to make sure that the various groups are recognized and communicate effectively with each other and interact harmoniously. But it became evident . . . that the Advisory Council was

actually redundant with several other offices/committees on campus" (*Minutes*, University Council, 93:10:18, item 4).

May we look forward to the abolition of some more of those "several" redundant "offices / committees"? Or - see immediately above - shall we be seeing the creation of even more?

Thank you!

To the friends who helped with the mailing list and proof-reading.

¹ I do hope my mother will not be charged with posthumous sexual harassment

² See p.33 of Josef Martin, *To Rise Above Principle*

scrutinized by gender and race.

So I criticized that in an open letter here at Tech; and in my keynote address, "Diversity and Identity", at a meeting of the Association of American Colleges and American Conference of Academic Deans ¹.

V.S.: Did you get a good response?

J.M.: Many people at Tech - literally dozens of them - went out of their way to thank me for speaking up. A number of them joined VAS or NAS.

At the AAC/ACAD meeting it was very interesting. Twenty years ago or even ten, the things I said would have been regarded as the most obviously proper banalities about intellectual freedom and equality of opportunity, perfectly traditional liberal sentiments: I simply said that people should be judged and treated as individuals, not as stereotypical representatives of groups. Yet afterwards the chair complimented me publicly on my courage! And privately congratulated me that no one had walked out while I spoke!

We do live in interesting, topsy-turvy times.

V.S.: No argument there. But let's focus on what's happening in Virginia. Isn't it a good thing, that we're taking a fresh look at what we're doing, and how, and trimming down?

J.M.: Yes, of course.

And also no, of course not.

It all depends on whether there's any *genuine*, *substantive* re-thinking going on; and if so, what the quality of the thought is. As you can read in my

joint article with your editor, in this issue, some things that should be trimmed are not – which automatically means that some things that should *not* be trimmed, have to be.

V.S.: Just earlier, you said that most administrative actions are judgment calls. Are you now retreating from that?

J.M.: There's an important distinction between *policy-making* and *administration* of policy. I take the *policy* for granted, that education is the prime function of institutions of higher education; and it's not appropriate for administrators to substitute for that, their personal judgment that something else shall be given higher priority, like economic development or politically correct social engineering. Their judgment should be reserved for deciding, *given that education comes first*, how budget cuts might be made in the least damaging possible way.

Administrators should be held accountable, that they stick to that implicit mandate. When they don't, or if their judgments become egregiously poor, then that has to be pointed out. When emperors wear no clothes, and when they fiddle while the city burns, public notice must be taken of it.

V.S.: But doesn't going public do more harm than good? When Governor Wilder accused Tech and other colleges of cutting academic meat instead of administrative fat, wasn't it just as well that the truth of his accusation didn't become widely recognized?

J.M.: But who would have been to blame? Wilder for making Wilderish accusations, or the administrators who had cut meat and bone instead of fat and thereby gave him an excuse?

Your editorial in March put it very well, I thought, as to "Loyalty and Whistle-Blowing". I feel enormous gratitude and great loyalty to Virginia Tech. I've spent the most satisfying years of my life here. So I need to speak out. I'm very sad to see faculty morale at its lowest point in decades.

V.S.: You justify your reputation for making extreme statements, sir! Don't you agree that, in difficult times, things are now being handled about as well as they could be?

When cuts had to be made almost instantaneously, obviously, they were made wherever something was available for cutting, not what most should have been cut. But now the "Phase II restructuring" is being done judiciously and sensibly, isn't it?

J.M.: No, anything but.

V.S.: I can see why some people call you a curmudgeon. What do you have against the procedure? As

we understand it, each year all the Colleges return to the Central Administration a mere 1.5% of their budgets, for re-allocation. At the same time, each College can make its best case for an increased allocation from the available resources established by those returns. What could be more measured, fair, even-handed?

J.M.: There's a lot that's wrong with the 1.5-percent solution:

1. To anyone who understands how Colleges are organized and budgeted, no reversion of 1.5% could seem "mere".
2. Consequently it's an evasion of responsibility to pass such an overall demand down the line without participating in the ugly specific cutting decisions.
3. That avoidance reveals a lack of conviction about what the university's aims are.
4. It makes every Department and every individual perpetually nervous, that it or he will be the next to feel the cut. Under this scheme, the whole university is doomed to live perpetually under a pall of fear and uncertainty.

V.S.: You'll have to explain those assertions. Why isn't 1.5% mere?

J.M.: Because so many units are so small and because almost all the budget is tied up in salaries and wages.

In Arts & Sciences, for example, more than 93% of the total budget is personnel costs². Take 1.5% away from the remaining less than 7%, and you're talking about reducing the money available for operations by almost a quarter. Then realize that most of that operating budget was barely paying for supplies for student laboratories, stationery, phone, postage, copying, etc. So when you're talking about *any* cuts, you're talking about literally *crippling* operations; or else cutting personnel.

Now within the Colleges – unlike in the rest of the University – it's hard to find anyone or anything that isn't directly relevant to teaching. There never have been enough secretaries and technicians. So personnel cuts must chiefly be cuts in faculty positions.

Now, how do you cut 1.5% of your faculty positions? In the College of Arts and Sciences, that amounts to 7 or 8 positions. But since it's *dollars* you're concerned with, you also need to realize that the positions you can cut are those filled by untenured people, in other words the lowest-paid positions. So a cut of 1.5% might mean a dozen or more positions.

So where do you take those from? You have about 25 departmental units with anywhere from half-a-dozen to nearly a hundred faculty. You can't take positions from one of the small units without doing really major damage; so you tend to take them from the largest units. But they're large only because they've got so much to do. So the most immediately likely result of a 1.5%-solution is to have larger introductory classes taught by more graduate students rather than faculty; or something equally undesirable.

The only way to make cuts *at the level of Colleges and Departments* that's consistent with maintaining quality, is to consciously and deliberately scale down or eliminate some programs so that the others can be saved.

That's why I call the 1.5%-scheme an evasion of responsibility: the Central Administration refuses to participate in the ugly decisions that, they ought to know, such a scheme demands: namely to cut some programs beyond the bone. They leave it to each Dean to accept blame for where the cuts are made; but then are quite willing to accept gratitude

KRISTOL'S FIRST LAW OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Any reform that is acceptable to the educational establishment, and that can gain a majority in a legislature, federal or state, is bound to be worse than nothing

- Irving Kristol, "The inevitable outcome of 'outcomes'", *Wall Street Journal* 94:4:18

for the largesse they will disburse for grand new ventures from the re-allocation fund.

V.S.: Isn't being blamed what Deans are for? And shouldn't you at least praise your Central Administration for *not* evading responsibility when they singled out the College of Education for a cut of 20%?

J.M.: Let me take the second point first. If it was based on a detailed understanding of which 20% could be dispensed with, why wasn't the College told that instead of being asked to work out for itself where that 20% should come from? If it was *not* based on such detailed understanding, then on what basis was it decided that Education could lose 20% and the other Colleges not?

I don't call that an example of taking proper responsibility; I call it an illustration that the desire to have it both ways produces less than admirable actions. It also illustrates the sham in pretending to have everyone participating in these decisions: the 20% decision was made without input from faculty, Colleges, or Departments.

As to blaming Deans, well, on that level you

might say that getting praise for giving a hand-out from the kitty would be a fair reward for having to take the blame for making the cuts that build the kitty. But I have a much more serious point in mind, which touches on my third point, about where the university is aiming.

The Provost asks for 1.5% from the Colleges and leaves it to them to decide where to take it from. But when the Provost then disburses from the accumulated re-structuring kitty, he does so on the basis of the *specific* projects that he regards as more meritorious than those proposed by other Colleges. So A decides where to make the cuts, but B decides where to augment. That makes no sense. Unless A and B are of the same mind, B could undo what A has just done. Could *more* than undo, because all the distribution might go to a single College. The cutting decisions and the augmenting decisions ought to be made simultaneously, they ought to be *the same decision*, part and parcel of the university's focused drive to get where it wants to go.

V.S.: Well then, you'll surely applaud at least that part of "Phase II" that proposes to establish where the university wants to go: "To develop a comprehensive, consultative process for identifying broad, long-term programmatic areas for emphasis" and "To present to the university community and the Board of Visitors, through the appropriate advisory and governance channels, recommendations for institutional emphasis" ³.

J.M.: No, no, and again no.

Let me put it this way: how reprehensible that any college or university *not* have a long-range plan for programmatic emphasis *already* and *always*, quite irrespective of budget cuts. What coherence could there ever be for *any* decisions, even the smallest, if the overall ultimate priorities aren't clear and generally shared?

Do you remember the buzz-words of yesteryear, "Management by Objective"? I wondered at the time, what management *not* by objective would look like. Well, now we all know, I suppose.

V.S.: Well, OK. But surely, better late than never.

J.M.: Certainly. But can anyone seriously believe that such priorities can be arrived at by engaging the whole faculty and staff, in various groups, in the exercise?

V.S.: Why not? Don't you believe in democracy? Don't you believe in faculty governance? How else would you want it done?

J.M.: If you don't think in specifics and practicalities, you get nowhere. Tell me how many faculty or staff will agree that some other area than their own ought to be emphasized and that theirs should be phased out.

V.S.: Well. . . . You'd get some.

J.M.: Exactly. But on the whole, the outcome will not be unanimity. The largest and loudest will be heard more. But the actual *decisions* will ultimately have to be made by someone who is at a level above that of the individual programs. There's no need to have comprehensive open "consultations" first, because you know beforehand exactly what the recommendations are going to be: every unit will recommend itself for emphasis, none will recommend itself for discontinuation. So don't waste the time and effort of all those people talking about it.

V.S.: OK. Your point is well taken. But how about something *constructive*? It's all very well to say, it shouldn't be done as proposed. Do you have a better alternative?

J.M.: Actually, yes.

In the normal working of the university, each Dean ought to be in sufficiently good communication with each Department as to be clear about its aims, strengths, and weaknesses. Of course, he'll have information also from other sources than the Department itself: from acquaintances elsewhere, from the usual statistical and other compilations, from experience with external letters of evaluation of tenure candidates, from the periodic Departmental reviews by outside consultants. It ought to be part-and-parcel of normal working that the Dean treats each Department somewhat differently from all the others; unequally, if you want to put it bluntly, providing more resources to those that do well and that the university wishes to emphasize, and less to the others.

Then, in budget-cutting times, it isn't a matter of suddenly evolving a whole mission, it is more a matter of doing faster or more ruthlessly, what was being done anyway.

V.S.: But how does the university acquire such an overall mission? Who decides, which are the departments or areas that the university "wishes to emphasize"?

J.M.: Each Dean discovers that as he talks with the Provost about his College's budget requests, as well as in many other conversations that inevitably bear on hopes and priorities.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP

There are many reasons for the fall of the German Republic. . . . But if you happen to meet abroad the men who occupied the decisive positions at decisive moments, you have your answer, you need seek no further for reasons for the collapse.

- Golo Mann (1938)

*Reminiscences and Reflections:
A Youth in Germany*

(trans. Krishna Winston) NY: W. W. Norton

As to the university's overall mission, of course we do write mission statements almost continuously. But more seriously, history and traditions do exist, and no individual administrator should feel free singlehandedly to act in contradiction to those.

At Virginia Tech, the 1960s saw President Hahn move, with the Commonwealth's approval, to create a comprehensive university where a polytechnic institute had existed before. The Commonwealth has signed off on establishing the various Colleges that now exist. No change from that could or should be made without agreement on the part of the Commonwealth. Of course the *initiative* for such a change would properly come from the university's administration, in some such form as, "We can't continue all that we're now doing, here are the Colleges we propose to abolish, here's how we would do it; may we?"

Or, in happier times, "Here are the new things we want to establish. Here's what we would need to pay for them. May we go ahead?"

V.S.: OK, but without adding or removing colleges. What about the present actual circumstances?

J.M.: Well, as a matter of fact, I do think that a couple of the colleges ought to disappear, largely through merging into some of the others. But the principle is the same. Each Dean presents the Provost, *in confidence*, a plan for emphasis and de-emphasis of programs within his College. If the Provost disagrees, the Dean withdraws and brings back another; and so on until the two are in agreement. Then the Dean makes the scheme known to the Department Heads, *again in confidence*. He explains, in considerable detail, *why* he recommended as he did to the Provost; and then he gives the Department Heads a reasonable length of time to bring to him substantive objections based on the Dean's misconceptions about their Department. If the Dean is convinced that he made errors, he draws up a modified plan to take to the Provost. If the Dean sees no reason to revise his opinions, then the priorities have become fixed.

V.S.: So how does the Provost decide on each Dean's plan, let alone on how to favor which Colleges?

J.M.: Just as it is the Department Head's job to educate the Dean, so each Dean has to educate the Provost into the virtues and assets of his College. And the Provost must use that communication, and other sources, to arrive at *an informed judgment*; just as each Dean must arrive at an informed judgment among his Departments. The point is, there must be *iterations* among Heads, Deans, and Provost *in concrete programmatic detail*: so that when each Dean decides, he will know what he's doing; and when the Provost finally decides, *he* will know what he's doing.

V.S.: You make it sound awfully easy. Don't you

think you might see it differently if you had had to cope with such budget cuts yourself when you were Dean?

J.M.: As it happens, I did.

V.S.: What? Where? Isn't this the first time the Commonwealth has actually reduced its support for higher education?

J.M.: No. About 1980, Governor Robb cut 5% from our appropriations, in the middle of the academic year.

V.S.: And did you then really make the cuts in the way you described?

J.M.: Yes.

First I put two questions to the Department Heads:

1. Should the 5% cut on the College be distributed equally among all Departments or unequally?
2. If the latter, how should the decisions be made: by a committee of Department Heads, or by the Dean?

Well, of course they were unanimous that unequal should be the order of the cuts, they didn't need to have explained to them what I outlined to you earlier. Anyone with the slightest experience of these things recognizes that it's better to have some properly funded units and some not-well-enough funded, than to have *all* the units feeling continually pinched.

Equally, they knew what a waste of time it would be for them, as a whole or through a committee, to try to reach *specific* agreements. And in the process some bad feelings would be generated among them, no matter how gently they voiced their opinions that their Departments were more deserving than the others. Much better to let the Dean do it and then be cohesive as a group in criticizing him.

So I drew up a plan, and got the Provost's (reluctant) approval, and then explained the basis for my recommendations to the Department Heads.

V.S.: And weren't some of them irrevocably unwilling to accept the result? Weren't some Heads and faculty irreversibly disgruntled?

J.M.: Of course. But if we'd made the cuts equally across the board, then the morale of *all* the Heads and faculty would have been lowered. As it was, some people were very unhappy, but most were relieved of dire anticipations and could reasonably be optimistic about the future.

That's my last strike against the "1.5-percent-solution": by threatening each year to take something away *from units yet to be specified*, everyone lives in a perpetual state of apprehension. Then you may lose people you want to keep, because you never

offer them any assurances for the future. In fact, you'll lose fastest precisely the people you'd rather keep, they're the ones who can find other positions most easily.

Let me add, though, that the scheme I described worked only because the Provost was willing to accept responsibility for approving and backing the Dean's plan. We were blessed in those years with a Provost who had high academic ideals and strong convictions, and who understood that personal loyalties among administrators have to work in both directions.

V.S.: It's usually said that administrators who enact cuts, no matter how they do it, have to leave office soon thereafter. Was that your experience?

J.M.: No.

Of course, I did make some enemies, a few of them permanently; but fewer than you might expect. A couple of years after those cuts, when the Provost had me evaluated by a broad-based faculty committee, the outcome was very gratifying for me.

One result of which is that I now make myself continually and thoroughly obnoxious by insisting that there is no substitute for making decisions in as open a way as possible, that honesty always is the best policy.

V.S.: Well, thank you. We won't pretend that you've convinced us, but at least we have food for some new thought.

J.M.: Thank you for the opportunity to blow my trumpet.

Nothing astonishes men so much as common sense and plain dealing

- Ralph Waldo Emerson
Essays: First Series. Art

¹ Seattle, January 1993. The editor of the journal of the Association for Liberal Education asked to publish it, but her colleagues dissuaded her. However, it is in print in the *Proceedings of the 49th Annual Meeting of the American Conference of Academic Deans*, 1993, 27-35

² These figures are for 1990, reported by the Dean at a College Faculty Meeting (90:12:4). There's been no overt sign of improvement since then.

³ V.S. was quoting from the Provost's *Memorandum* of April 5, 1994, to Deans, Vice-Provosts, and Vice-Presidents, about "Academic Priorities and Phase II".

Part Three: Education vs.

BY JOSEF MARTIN WITH

Synopsis of Part 1: *There is no coherent policy when practice in a typical university has become a hodgepodge of competing interest groups. So when there is a shortage of classrooms, after that? He had never been quite sure. The same way America itself went wrong, he guessed. A little at a time, one turning away of the eyes after another, until all the time later, said yes when you should have said no and no when you should have said yes.*

Part 2: *The notion that research competence is a largely misleading. "Teaching" means very different things at research schools, four-year colleges, and research universities. In the latter, research is synonymous with training graduate students. A competent public system would control the relative numbers of undergraduate and graduate (research) teaching programs to the research universities and to other colleges that seek more prestige by transforming themselves into research universities.*

Though there is no conflict between "teaching" and "research" (read teaching graduate students), there *is* a fierce conflict between learning, scholarship, teaching - *academic matters*, in other words - and all the other stuff that universities busy themselves with: extra-curricular student affairs, commercial athletics, social engineering.

The public and the media seem still to believe that the primary purpose of higher education is *education*, and they suffer from the illusion that the universities and their leaders also believe that. Even SCHEV, which has every opportunity to know much better, and even legislators, whose close acquaintance with human characteristics might have helped them to know better, participate in this illusion. What the facts show, however, is that our universities' leaders are engaged in a never-ending quest for new missions to adopt, new outreaches to make, new social goals to score. Their motto has become, "A finger in every pie".

Common sense as well as traditional folk wisdom tell us how to judge what people say: by comparing it with what they *do*. Do they put their money where their mouth is? Analyze a university's budget: where is most of the *discretionary* money spent? That

HOW WE GOT TO WHERE WE ARE

But if that was when and where it had begun to go wrong, how had it got wrong after that? He had never been quite sure. The same way America itself went wrong, he guessed. A little at a time, one turning away of the eyes after another, until all the time later, said yes when you should have said no and no when you should have said yes. By more and more, where you had too much invested in the proliferation of graduate programs at other colleges that seek more prestige by transforming themselves into research universities. *The Embassy House* (Bantam, 1986) p.148

shows what's most important to those who decide, how that money shall be spent.

The actual facts of money, positions, and things talked about show universities preoccupied with public relations and "public service", with athletics, with social engineering and with students' extra-curricular activities, to a far greater extent than with learning or scholarship. Observers of the national scene have remarked, for example, on the fact that the number of "professional" university employees has grown more rapidly than the numbers of faculty or the numbers of students. Even in the last few budget-cutting years, "other professionals" increased by 4.5% while faculty numbers grew by only 1.2%¹.

That's certainly the case in Virginia. Over the last decade at Virginia Tech, for instance, the *total* number of faculty positions in the university increased by one third (more than 600 positions) while the number of *instructional* positions remained roughly the same. Another way of putting it: in 1983, only 10% of faculty-type positions were allocated to non-instructional use whereas by 1993, 25% were used in non-instructional ways².

In what non-instructional

the Rest

HENRY BAUER

ways?

- *Librarians*: Admittedly, all the positions so allocated are used to entirely good effect because the library does nothing but support teaching and learning.

- *Computing*: Here that's partly good because *some* of the computing does support teaching and learning.

- *Student Affairs*: That's almost entirely bad because little of what's done there supports learning. In fact, much of it actually distracts from and hinders learning, given their view³ that "We need to make students understand what you do outside the classroom is just as important as what you do inside the classroom".

Quite the contrary. Students understand all too well - or think they do - that outside-classroom matters are as important as, or more important than, inside-classroom or inside-brain matters. But the only good reason for going to college is to attend to some inside-brain matters that can't be attended to so well anywhere else. The Student Affairs empires are fifth columns; they help erode any sense that college is for the sort of study of academic subjects that can help individuals born into the mammalian species *homo sapiens*.

When one of us was Dean of Arts & Sciences, the Vice-President for Student Affairs asked him to meet regularly, at least once a month, with groups of "student leaders". "To what end?", we wanted to know. "Oh, to give them some insight into administration". We declined to waste our time or theirs in this way: students should be *studying*, we believed and believe.

The Student Affairs empire is typically one of the largest on

most campuses. *Caring* about students long ago degenerated into *catering* to what students want (or feel they want). Student Affairs measures its success by how greatly involved it is with students, by how greatly involved students are with it, by how many programs and offices exist, by how visible it is to parents and outsiders as well as insiders. Inevitably, then, it is an insatiable empire with open-ended goals; and thereby a hindrance to academic pursuits.

It's a zero-sum game

In many respects universities play a zero-sum game. Any time used for some other purpose than learning is used for a non-learning purpose; any money used for non-instructional purposes is money that could have been used for instructional purposes; and in Virginia's public colleges, any positions used for non-instructional purposes are positions that could support an instructor instead of an administrator, student-affairs coordinator, harassment specialist, or other such "professionals" who occupy "faculty" positions.

The Commonwealth controls university budgets not only through the total amount of money provided but also through the number of positions authorized to be filled. There are two types of permanent positions: classified and faculty. Classified positions have duties and pay defined for the whole Commonwealth Public Service: secretarial, maintenance, etc. Faculty positions are used not only for classroom teachers but also for some academic administrators and other non-instructional positions when it is desired to be free of the Commonwealth's classification system, which allows no flexibility in work-assignments or salary ranges.

The number of faculty positions authorized is determined in principle by the number and

A billion here, a billion there, and pretty soon you're talking about real money

- Sen. Everett Dirksen in Frederick Waterman, *Hemispheres* (*United Airlines Mag.*), May 1993, p. 57

types of students enrolled, for example 1 for every 22 lower-division undergraduate students or for every 4 doctoral students at a research university. But the university is free to fill those faculty positions with people who don't teach; and, increasingly, that's been happening. Thus during 1989-90, the first of the Wilder-cut years, at Virginia Tech every position that could be made vacant was taken away from academic departments. At the same time, however, such *new administrative positions were created* as a "director of alternative learning strategies" and an assistant dean of students for multicultural affairs.

Money

The budgets of academic departments were cut to the literal bone, and more: telephones were removed from some labs and offices, there was no support for faculty or graduate students to attend professional meetings, and such things as photo-copying were drastically controlled. Some faculty began to have class syllabi and notes copied commercially, making the students pay for them instead of getting them in class as free hand-outs. At the same time, as well as since then:

- Sensitivity specialists were hired to conduct workshops: in a retreat setting, calling for transportation, accommodation, and meals for dozens of people, not to speak of the five-figure sums paid to the sensitivity specialists.

- Administrators went on official business to Africa, among other places.

- Several offices in the Central Administration were refurbished:

offices which, without refurbishing, were perfectly usable, not to say already much more attractive than almost every faculty office on campus.

- Large custom-designed banners were purchased that are flown on a few days a year from the tower on the Administration Building and elsewhere.

- Outside consulting firms were hired to help with searches that traditionally have been done in-house⁴.

- Outside consulting firms were hired to advise on personnel problems in the library. (To the tune of many tens of thousands of dollars, according to Emeritus Mole. Among other services rendered by these consultants was the conducting of sessions at which library personnel were given Leggo blocks to play with and then informed what their constructions revealed about their personalities and interactions with others).

- A new program was established under which four African-American ABDs receive \$6000, plus moving and expense allowances, to teach a single summer course each⁵.

- About 125 "state legislators and other bigwigs" were taken "on a train excursion to the Tech-University of Virginia football game" at a cost of \$10,000 to the Virginia Tech Foundation⁶.

- And so on and so forth.

All those may seem like small potatoes, aggregating only a few six-figure sums per year, a fraction of a percent of the whole university budget. But those expenditures, *many of which come out of the Provost's Office and therefore are (or could have been) part of the academic budget*, are far from negligible compared with the moneys available to academic departments⁷. For example, a single six-figure sum would double the operating budget of the Department of Computer Science;

the cost of hiring an outside firm for one search would double the budget of one of the smaller academic Departments; the sums spent on psychological consultants would double the budget of a mid-size Department.

But money is also (mis)spent on a much grander scale:

- For \$540,000, to be paid off over 10 years, brand-new video equipment of "NFL quality" was bought for the football program⁸ which - like almost every other Division I program in the United States⁹ - goes into the red each year by a six-figure sum.

- A seven-figure sum was spent to purchase a villa in Switzerland; which turned out to need roof repairs costing another \$1,000,000¹⁰.

- Further millions were spent to maintain and refurbish a hotel in Roanoke. The publicly admitted costs associated with that began with \$4,000,000 pledged by the Tech Foundation¹¹ and continued over about three years with "some \$1.5 million . . . [for] maintenance and security. The operating cash 'advanced' by the private Virginia Tech Foundation, must be paid back with revenues from a reopened hotel or proceeds from selling it"¹².

... from another fund

It did not go unnoticed or unremarked by the faculty and staff that money was being spent on unnecessary things while bread-and-butter items like photocopying and telephones were becoming unavailable to faculty. So various levels of administration felt it necessary at various times to assure us that the frills and luxuries were purchased "from other funds", from non-State funds. After the Provost and the Acting Director of Tech's Office of International Development spent two weeks in Africa - at the beginning of the Fall Semester that saw the first round of budget cuts! - it was explained that "The

trip was . . . funded by the Office of International Development, overhead, and the Virginia Tech Foundation. No state money was used to fund the visit"¹³. Governor Wilder was told "that we were not allocating any university resources to the Hotel Roanoke that might be directed to instruction"¹⁴: "The truth is that no funds that could or would be applied to the university's instructional programs are being spent on the Hotel Roanoke"¹⁵.

That last statement is a fine example of *newsmanship*¹⁶: the art of conveying a false impression without actually lying. Any unrestricted funds that the university has *could* be spent on instructional purposes. To say plainly that the funds "would" not have been so spent would, however, acknowledge that it was an administrative decision to spend on the Hotel rather than on, say, the Humanities program; to say plainly that the funds "could" not have been so spent would have been an outright lie. "Could or would" is technically not a lie, but it certainly serves to obfuscate the truth of the matter.

The *real* truth is that all funds are either *restricted* to a particular purpose or not so restricted. It is *unrestricted* funds that have been used for such ventures as the Hotel Roanoke¹⁷, since the university was not given any funds specifically restricted to that end. No amount of rhetoric should obscure the fact that it is an administrative choice and decision, what to use unrestricted funds for. There is no State law that says, only State funds shall be used to instructional ends; there is no State or Federal law that prevents unrestricted funds being used to improve classrooms, provide telephones for staff and faculty, or pay copying charges for handouts to students. By making the choices they do, administrations demonstrate that they put a lower priority on those things

than on the ones for which they do spend the unrestricted funds at their disposal.

Here again, Virginia's newspapers have not acquitted themselves well. The university's disclaimer, which ought to have been to any investigative reporter a weakly transparent obfuscation, was swallowed whole - even when the Commonwealth's auditor discovered some strange shuffling of funds: "the private Virginia Tech Foundation had improperly loaned \$750,000 in public funds to its private real estate foundation subsidiary . . . to maintain the hotel"; "So now the university intends to move \$750,000 from one account to another . . . 'It's not going to be university - public - funds, if you will,' Tech spokesman Larry Hincker said. 'It will be foundation money.'"¹⁸

How intriguing! Here we have a university that is public; it can set up foundations and subsidiary foundations that are *not* public; yet the people who have control of those non-public things are public employees, who control them solely because of the positions they hold as public employees.

But the newspapers didn't go into that. Rather they repeated that "Tech had not diverted a penny [from teaching programs] to the hotel"¹⁹. Even after "Hotel funds sought - Virginia Tech will ask the General Assembly for \$5.5 million over the next two years to establish an education program at the new Hotel Roanoke conference center and to cover half of the center's operating expenses"²⁰, Tech's director of governmental relations could say that "The headline . . . 'Hotel funds sought,' . . . is not correct . . . [It] is not for the hotel. The funds would be used to establish a Center for Organizational and Technological Advancement"²¹ which just coincidentally happens to be based at the Hotel and its Conference Center and whose

payments for facilities will help the Hotel's budget. The regional newspaper agreed: "And keep in mind: Not a penny of state taxpayers' money has gone, or is being sought, for the hotel. Tech is asking for funding only for educational operations" ²².

Priorities

Quite clearly, much money is spent on non-instructional things. That happens as a result of choices and decisions. Somehow the university decides that another assistant dean of students is more important than another teacher of chemistry, or that a director of alternative learning strategies is more important than another teacher of writing. Somehow the university decides that decorative banners are more important than telephones and photocopying in an academic department. Somehow the university decides that it is more important to send administrators to Africa (unfortunately, only temporarily) than to have faculty and graduate students attend professional conferences.

WHY? How can such cockeyed priorities get established?

The easy answer, which we all tend too readily to give, is that the decision-makers are ill-intentioned or even corrupt. But that is not usually so. To the contrary, the overwhelming majority of academic and non-academic administrators are entirely well-meaning people anxious to do their jobs well. The real problem is, how those jobs have come to be interpreted: not the service of education first and foremost.

Just as we saw in Part 1 regarding the issue of rooms on campus, so too with the spending of money, time and everything else: the university is a forum in which groups vie for resources in absence of universally agreed priorities: academic programs, diversity hiring, public relations, campus beautification, extra-cur-

The veneer of morality on contemporary American universities is no thicker than a dollar bill

ricular student affairs, athletics, outreach and public service, internationalization - you name it and it's within the university's mission and equally valuable thereby. As in organizations generally, every employee tries to make his own bailiwick larger, more important, better funded.

One sign of this continual competition is the proliferation of newsletters and bulletins through which every activity tries to make itself universally visible and applauded. The mind boggles at the thought of what this costs, in time for writing and editing as well as in sheer dollars. The bumf distributed to all faculty and the Lord only knows to who else - at any rate in print runs of *thousands* - includes the following:

- **Virginia Issues & Answers**, an impressively glossy, gold-colored "public policy forum"; in the 56 pages of whose first two issues (24 and 32 pages respectively) we saw nothing that we hadn't already seen discussed *ad nauseam* in newspapers and general magazines;

- Glossy **Annual Report** of the *Division of Continuing Education*, only a few pages but with a beautiful reproduction of a Huggins painting on the front;

- **The University Abroad**, a two-color newsletter of 4 (Spring 1994) to 12 (Winter 1992) pages;

- **BiblioTech**, elegantly formatted and printed in non-standard size, as one might expect from librarians;

- **Spotlight**, a business-like black-and-white 4-page broadsheet from the Division of Performing Arts;

- **Quality Improvement in Action**, double-sided sheets from the Academic Assessment Program;

- **What's in Store**, 60-page newspaper-style magazine from Virginia Tech Services, Inc.;

- Many other Divisional and Departmental newsletters and pamphlets.

Almost all of those are redundant, given that the University publishes the *Virginia Tech Magazine* and the faculty-staff newspaper *Spectrum* (and there are also two student newspapers). But of course the purpose of most of the publication is make-work and self-advertisement, not to satisfy any anxiously waiting audience.

We like to be attended to and applauded as much as the next persons, but we don't believe it proper to use public or institutional funds for self-aggrandizement. Estimate the cost of all this bumf any way you will, the total has to be impressive.

In all seriousness we report that *we have never seen anyone keep or read an issue of any of these publications*. We invite anyone to stand at any Department's mailboxes and observe the fate of this mass of paper: 99% of it goes straight into the recycling bin. Again in all seriousness, we propose the following rule: if any unit issues such a newsletter or pamphlet, that unit's budget for the following year shall be reduced by the cost of that publication, including the personnel time used in its preparation. The savings will *not* be peanuts.

We commend this budget rule also to the Commonwealth of Virginia, which sets anything but a fine example when it comes to bumf.

CommonHealth, "Virginia's Employee Health Improvement Program", distributes the monthly pamphlet, *Health-Beat*; and a series of booklets like *What You Should Know About Self-Esteem* (16 pages, 1989 edition of the Scriptographic Booklet of 1983). The Virginia Retirement System has reached volume 18 (Spring 1994) of its 8-page

Memo to Members. From the Department of Personnel and Training, *Personnel Communiqué* is only in volume 17 this year, but its 4 pages come 6 times a year. So does the *Spotlight on Benefits* from the same Department. Now the Commonwealth has on the order of 100,000 employees ²³, so the cost of this distribution is hardly trivial. Yet in these days of on-line information technology, all that's needed is that every office or department of any size make available a terminal at which any interested employees could get their questions about any of these matters answered immediately, with the most up-to-

[U]nfortunately, we no longer look upon education as the discipline of learning but rather an act of consumption . . . [which] has taken on the therapeutic and evangelical aspects of both bad medicine and bad religion. Education is not laying on of hands, nor is it counsel for saving the disturbed: It is work, the labor of the mind

- Gerald Early
"The hysteria over
multiculturalism" (*Roanoke
Times & World-News*
91:11:4, p.A13)

date information. Of course, that would put out of work a considerable number of editors and writers, and fewer trees would have to be re-cycled into re-cyclable paper.

But have we not exaggerated the jumble and lack of cohesive purpose in our colleges? Can the situation really be so chaotic and inefficient? Are we not misinterpreting, being too simplistic?

No. Listen, for example, to President James Carrier of James Madison University: "Institutions are floundering as to their mission, what their mission should be. . . . We need an overall plan for Virginia" ²⁴.

But why does not Carrier understand what the media and the public and the legislature do - as well as most of the faculty and students who stop to think about it: that James Madison University (as all other public colleges) have a clear mandate to provide traditional college or university education, *and not anything else?* And to do so at the least possible cost?

Listen to President Carrier some more ²⁵: "I sometimes think we do have too many administrators . . . [but] I see these people doing things we didn't do before".

Precisely! That's a large part of the problem. People in our colleges are doing all sorts of things *that don't need doing, if education is any criterion.* And the more of those people there are around, the more they distract and take time - not to speak of money, positions, space - from those people who *are* engaged in educating.

We keep planting and feeding more trees, in other words, but we don't step back to see what a sorry excuse for a forest we've created. For those who make decisions regarding academe and for those who comment about it, here's a forest-level view:

Education should be the clear, single, primary purpose of colleges and universities because:

- government should be for and by all the people;
- such representative and democratic government is viable only when citizens are well educated;
- colleges and universities are the institutions that society has evolved to provide the necessary education that follows on grade schools;
- civilization is possible because of an appropriate division of labor in which each of us specializes in doing those things that we can best do;
- universities are civilization's best way to generate and trans-

mit knowledge and understanding but *they have no expertise in social engineering, nor in economic development, nor in anything else but learning and scholarship;*

- so universities should stick to academic matters and stop creating ever-new "missions" and "mission statements".

MULTI-CULTI LEARNING

Virginia Tech administrators like to junket in Africa. One result was a return visit to Tech by Walter Kamba, President Emeritus of the University of Zimbabwe. We could learn from the manner in which Africa solves problems, he told us:

"In Africa, universities have had recent budget cuts of as much as 58 percent. 'Yet, it remains operative,' he said. 'If Americans were to suffer cuts like these, the universities would almost come to a halt. It will be interesting for America to see how we operate'"

- cited in Madelyn Rosenberg, "Learning in a shrinking world", *Roanoke Times & World-News* 92:2:8, NRV 1,2

¹ Julie L. Nicklin & Goldie Blumenstyk, *Chronicle of Higher Education* 93:1:6, p.A43

² Calculated from data in the Fact Books (1983-1993) available on the university's computer under INFO: IRINFO

³ Timothy Reed, Assistant Director for University Unions and Student Activities at Virginia Tech, cited by Elizabeth Keen, *Collegiate Times (VPI&SU)* 92:11:3, p.1

⁴ For example, Schuyler, Frye and Baker of Atlanta (GA) - not even keeping the expended money within the Commonwealth of Virginia (*Spectrum* 92:6:18 p.6)

⁵ Advertisement, *Chronicle of Higher Education* 93:9:15, p.A14

⁶ Rob Eure, "Bigwigs great rail deal", *Roanoke Times & World-News* 92:11:19 p.B9

⁷ We asked the Provost's Office for details of these expenditures in a written enquiry dated February 27. After we sent by e-mail a reminder that we had not received the information, on April 27 we were told in writing that "I do not have the data at my disposal"

⁸ Scott Blanchard, *Roanoke Times & World-News* 90:9:26, pp.B4,7

⁹ Murray Sperber, *College Sports, Inc.: The Athletic Department vs. the University*

¹⁰ Madelyn Rosenberg, "Va. Tech to discount summer tuition", *Roanoke Times & World-News* 93:2:16, pp. NRV1,6

¹¹ Terry Padalino, Tech kicks off hotel project, *Collegiate Times* 93:11:9

¹² Daniel Howes, "Gainsboro flap pushes deadline", *Roanoke Times & World-News*, 92:8:23, pp.F1,2

¹³ Mary Rojas, "Provost's trip promotes international programs", *Spectrum (VPI&SU)* 90:10:25, p.1

¹⁴ Provost Carlisle, cited in *Spectrum (VPI&SU)* 90:11:8, p.1

¹⁵ Larry G. Hincker, "Tech-hotel link not understood", *Roanoke Times & World-News* 92:12:8, p.A10; "The Hotel Roanoke fits Tech's mission of research and service", *Collegiate Times (VPI&SU)* 92:12:8, p.A12.

¹⁶ Henry H. Bauer, *Beyond Vellikovsky: The History of a Public Controversy* (Univ. of Illinois Press, 1984) p.230.

GOOD READING

¹⁷ As occasionally admitted: "the board voted in favor of . . .

allocating \$50,000 for the operating budget for the Hotel Roanoke Conference Center Commission. . . . The money, from Tech's unrestricted funds, will go toward legal services, architectural services and other operating costs" - Madelyn Rosenberg, "Tech board endorses bond issue", *Roanoke Times & World-News*, ca. August 1992, pp.NRV1,2

¹⁸ Daniel Howes, "Tech to tap other fund for hotel", *Roanoke Times & World-News* 92:1:11, pp.A8,10

¹⁹ Editorial, "Tech professors feel the heat", *Roanoke Times & World-News* 92:4:22, p.A10

²⁰ Sandra Brown Kelly, *Roanoke Times & World-News* 94:1:7, p.B1

²¹ Netta S. Eisler, *Spectrum (VPI&SU)* 94:1:13, p.1

²² Editorial, *Roanoke Times & World-News* 94:1:23, p.D2

²³ Jeff E. Shapiro, "Allen's job cuts too political, group charges", *Richmond Times-Dispatch* 94:8:9, p.B1

²⁴ Cited at p.A1 in Ruth S. Intress, "Sharing only a lack of money", *Roanoke Times & World-News* 93:9:16

²⁵ Cited at p.A4 in Ruth S. Intress & Philip Walzer, "Cuts mostly miss bone", *Roanoke Times & World-News* 93:9:13

WE READ TO KNOW THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE

- ANON.

I SIT WITH SHAKESPEARE AND HE WINCES NOT. ACROSS THE COLOR LINE I MOVE ARM IN ARM WITH BALZAC AND DUMAS . . . I SUMMON ARISTOTLE AND AURELIUS AND WHAT SOUL I WILL, AND THEY ALL COME GRACIOUSLY WITH NO SCORN NOR CONDESCENSION.

SO, WED WITH TRUTH, I DWELL ABOVE THE VEIL

– W. E. B. DU BOIS

Periodicals

In our first issue, we mentioned – recommended – several periodicals as likely to interest our readers. Here are some more:

Measure was founded by Sidney Hook and is published by University Centers for Rational Alternatives, 570 Seventh Ave., Suite 1007, New York NY 10018; (212) 391-2396. Number 121 (March/April 1994) included "The politically correct Malcolm X: self-censorship in the publishing industry"; "Fessing up to sexism"; "The Antioch code of sexual etiquette". A coupon invites people to join, and invites contributions of \$25, \$50, \$100, or some other sum.

Imprimis is published by Hillsdale College (Hillsdale MI 49242), honored for putting freedom ahead of money by refusing Federal funds and the associated apron-strings. It features such thoughtful pieces as (92:7) "The ideology of sensitivity" by Charles Sykes; or (94:6) "Education: the second door to freedom" by Clarence Thomas. *Imprimis* has a circulation of over 500,000; subscriptions are available upon request to Hillsdale College.

Campus Report is a monthly from Accuracy in Academia, 4455 Connecticut Ave NW #330, Washington DC 20008; subscriptions are \$20 p.a. (3rd-class post) or \$35 (1st-class post). The August, 1994, issue (vol.IX, #7) reports on AIA's 8th Annual Summer Conference, "Taking Back the Temple". If your library subscribes to *Lingua Franca*, maybe it should balance it with *Campus Report*; and with

Universitas, newsletter of University Professors for Academic Order, "a conservative voice for academic freedom and accountability"; UPAO, 635 SW 4th St., Corvallis OR 97333 or 1800 Diagonal Rd. #635, Alexandria VA 22314.

Fraser Forum (Beverly Horan, The Fraser Institute, 626 Bute Street, Vancouver B.C. V6E 3M1, (604) 688-0221) is published 12 times a year (subscription CAN\$48; several levels of membership in the Fraser Institute are also available). We were introduced to it through getting from the Society for Academic Freedom and Scholarship (SAFS; the Canadian counterpart of NAS) a copy of *In Defence of Academic Freedom and Scholarship* (Fraser Forum, Critical Issues Bulletin III), a collection of essays, some but not all of which were presented at a conference held by the SAFS in Toronto in March 1993. The April 1994 *SAFS Newsletter* also contained a splendid essay by Ezra Levant, reprinted from the December 1993 *Fraser Forum*, pointing out that freedom can be lost in a succession of imperceptible steps, and that the racism being introduced under the guise of "diversity" must be stopped now.

The same issue of the *SAFS Newsletter* mentions that a video of the documentary "Wars over PC on Campuses" (shown last year on PBS in the U.S.) can be obtained from Manifold Productions, 800-231-0003, \$34.94 + \$5 s&h.

TV Guide: Yes; we didn't insert the wrong file into this newsletter, we do mean *TV Guide*. Not all of it, of course, but the column "OUR TIMES" that appears every second week: "A Column About Values and TV" by Harry Stein. Read it, for the reason given in the first epitaph above: "We read to know that we are not alone". We've been looking for Stein's column before everything else in *TV Guide* ever since we read its report (93:10:23-29, p.55) on PBS's "Campus Wars" broadcast: "it's becoming increasingly clear that those who value that freedom [free, open, even clamorous inquiry], who have long been on the defensive, must start stating their positions as unequivocally as their opponents". Amen! One recent column described a typically ignorant teenager who learned something from *Schindler's List*; another remarked on "All too rare on the tube: black/white friendships". Reviewing the film "Citizen Cohn", Stein commented (92:9:12-18, p.109), "though for many the blacklist seems as distant as Torquemada's Inquisition, it is increasingly clear that it can happen here. Again. . . . Indeed . . . in Hollywood, it is now those on the right who are routinely afraid to reveal their politics. Where does that leave most of us? As usual, smack in the middle. But also with the power that, in a better world, we'd recognize as an obligation: to actively oppose all who'd subject us to litmus tests or straightjacket our thinking".

By and large, *Virginia Scholar* and such periodicals as *Measure* or *Heterodoxy* reach rather small audiences of somewhat like-minded people; and that makes it relatively easy to hit the appropriate tone when writing for them. Such periodicals as *TV Guide*, by contrast, reach huge numbers of people; and most of the writing in them is accordingly bland and banal. We should treasure those people who inject thoughtful good sense into these popular media. Scan Harry Stein's pieces; and when you see one you particularly like, let the editors know that.

In the same vein and for the same sort of reason, look for John Leo's column "On Society" in

U.S. News & World Report. Leo has the happy facility to make us laugh even as we cry, as in his story from "My Sobbing Valentine Mill Valley, Calif." (94:2:21): "In a dramatic televised experiment, a hard-nosed Malibu car dealer today became the first man in California to get in touch with his feelings"

Leo has been outspokenly yet judiciously critical of political correctness for quite some time. A collection of his columns has just been published in book form as *Two Steps Ahead of the Thought Police* (Simon & Schuster).

A nice article

PCers have enjoyed success pretty much to the extent that they have sold the bill of goods, that they stand in the tradition of liberalism, tolerance, and all those good things, when in fact they are fanatics of McCarthyist or Bolshevik stripe: seeking power because *they* want to be in control. The importance of distinguishing genuine liberalism from PC distortions of it is argued with succinct clarity by Christopher Clausen in "Liberals and the academic left", *New Leader* 93:1:25, pp.15-16: "The profound differences between liberalism and the Left have been obscured by the tendency of the press and of many conservatives to label everyone who isn't a conservative a 'liberal,' even if the person so labeled is a neo-Marxist who spends most of his time attacking liberalism. . . .

"By ridiculing the ideals of detachment, intellectual integrity and individual liberty - the main rationales that a society has for respecting the freedom of academics - the academic Left may be digging itself an unmarked grave."

Books

"Academic Left" brings to mind a book of the greatest timeliness: ***Higher Superstition: The Academic Left and Its Quarrels with Science*** by Paul R. Gross & Norman Levitt (Johns Hopkins U.P., 1994). This is the first overt reaction by practicing scientists to the defamation and denigration of science that has been carried on, for some time and increasingly, by knowledge relativists among sociologists and literati, feminoids, radical eco-environmentalists, Afrocentrists, AIDS activists, and others. Predictably, those groups have felt stung and have taken recourse to their usual weapons which include - since they explicitly disavow logic and objective evidence as non-existent - devious rhetoric and innuendo. Thus one sociologist (Bennett M. Berger, "Taking arms", *Science* 94:5:13, 985-86, 989) confessed, in his unabashedly misleading review of the book, to being a relativist; and he described relativism as coming in many forms while treating realism as a single entity; yet in response to scathing letters about the review (*Science* 94:8:12, 853-55) he assumed the mantle of realist [modified, however, in characteristic fashion by calling it not realism but "'realism' (?)"]. *Higher Superstition* should be brought to the attention of every practicing scientist. Read it yourself and urge it on all your scientist friends.

The summer brought us a plethora of relevant

books about which we hope to say more in later issues. Among those well worth perusing are:

Charles W. Anderson, ***Prescribing the Life of the Mind*** (University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), a thought-provoking "Essay on the Purpose of the University, the Aims of Liberal Education, the Competence of Citizens, and the Cultivation of Practical Reason"

Jill Ker Conway, ***True North*** (Alfred A. Knopf, 1994), continuing the memoirs begun in ***The Road From Coorain*** (Knopf, 1990). Read the latter first, of course. The author grew up in Australia and made her career at the University of Toronto and at Smith College. We can learn much from honest autobiography, and this is as honest and instructive as any I've read.

Jonathan Rauch, ***Kindly Inquisitors*** (University of Chicago Press, 1993), argues the necessity of unfettered criticism for the production of reliable knowledge

George Roche, ***The Fall of the Ivory Tower*** (Regnery, 1994) argues through copious references that much if not all of the horrors into which our "system" of "higher education" has fallen, are the result of government funding and the consequent governmental interference. Occasionally the generalizations are overly broad, but the case is well made through such chapters as "The politics of funding", "Federal funding and federal control", "Mismanagement and corruption", "Soaring tuitions, soaring costs"

Katie Roiphe, ***The Morning After: Sex, Fear, and Feminism on Campus*** (Little, Brown, 1993) is a feminist who discovered at Harvard how campus feminism has become a captive of the feminoid thought-police

Christina Hoff Sommers, ***Who Stole Feminism?*** (Simon & Schuster, 1994) describes "How Women Have Betrayed Women"; in a quietly thoughtful way that exposes the disdain of logic in "gender feminism" by means of stunningly revealing quotes from the radicals.

THE VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOLARS

believes that rational discourse is a necessary foundation of academic life and of a democratic society. So we seek to foster and protect

- the free exchange of ideas;
- academic freedom: *Lehrfreiheit* and *Lernfreiheit*;
- the substance and integrity of scholarship and learning;
- respect for our intellectual heritage;
- rigorous standards of excellence in teaching, learning, and research;
- the evaluation of students strictly on the merit of their individual performance;

and we aim to

- create forums in which university life can be rationally discussed;
- provide informed comment on immediate and on perennial issues in higher education;

and we urge academic leaders to

- recognize learning and scholarship as the pre-eminent and primary purpose for which colleges and universities exist;
- behave responsibly in pursuit of that purpose;
- practice honesty with the public, with students and parents, with faculty, and with everyone else.

Further, we shall resist

- attempts to subsume academe under political goals;
- ideological corruption of teaching and scholarship;
- intimidation of students or faculty who voice unfashionable views;
- treatment of students, faculty, and others as ciphers and symbols of groups instead of as individuals worthy of individual consideration.

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