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CONTROL OF FACULTY'S WELFARE FUND AT STAKE IN ELECTION

On November 28, the Board of Higher Education approved the establishment of a Faculty Welfare Fund of close to one million dollars to be administered by a Board of Trustees elected by and from the permanent instructional staffs of the City University. The elected Trustees met as a board for the first time on January 10 and voted to approve funds for a program of group life and disability insurance drawn up by Bernard Mintz, the University's Dean of Business Affairs

In effect, the Board of Higher Education presented the faculty of the City University with a fait accompli. The decision to appropriate money from the faculty welfare fund for group life and disability insurance was the Board's and not the faculty-elected trustees'. The Board presented its proposal to the trustees who, faced with the alternative of losing benefits if they did not act quickly, had no choice but to rubber-stamp the program submitted by Dean Mintz. To whom are the Welfare Trustees responsible, the Board of the faculties they purportedly represent?

The election of trustees at the various units of the City University was in several instances highly irregular and undemocratic. At Brooklyn College, which is entitled to two representatives, a nominating committee avoided an election altogether by the simple expedient of naming only two candidates. At other units, elections were rushed through with inappropriate haste. Speed, unfortunately, is not a staple of democracy. Unless there is sufficient time to inform the electorate of issues and, in this case, procedures of nomination and voting, elections are a farce.

On Friday, January 6, William Friedheim asked President Block on behalf of the Chapter to delay the election of a trustee at BMCC until classes reconvened and

to open nominations to all faculty rather than confining them to the nominating committee he had appointed. The President assented to both requests. While the delay denied BMCC an elected representative at the first meeting of the fund's trustees, it does provide for a more judicious, informed, and proper selection of a representative by our faculty.

While the Executive Board of the Chapter does not officially endorse any of the candidates, it does feel that it is important that the College elect a trustee who does not automatically turn to the Board of Higher Education for his cues and who is responsible to the faculty he represents. We hope that our trustee would request that the faculty of the City University be informed of alternative programs and then comprehensively polled as to its wishes.

Frankly, we question the wisdom of group life insurance for a faculty as young as ours. Most of us could get comparable rates outside of a group. And, of course, should we leave the group, we would lose all our benefits.

We find it distressing that Dean Mintz's office did not examine and present as a possible alternative the Board of Education's Welfare Program administered and won by the UFT as a result of collective bargaining, a program which provides for reductions on prescriptive drugs, added death benefits, supplementary hospitalization, free dental care, and extra health coverage. If the City University linked its welfare fund to that of the UFT, it could save thousands of dollars in administrative costs. Here is an alternative that was never considered. It is essential that we elect a trustee who is willing to explore all possible alternatives and is responsive to the will of the faculty which elects him.

DEPARTMENTAL ELECTIONS

We recently dispatched a communication to the President in which we passed on the guidelines suggested by the Chapter for departmental elections. The Chapter thought it advisable that only those who, in terms of type of appointment and service, had a true stake in their departments, participate in the elections. Pursuing this line of reasoning, we asked the President to limit participants and candidates to those faculty on tenure-generating lines who were contracted on or before September 1, 1966.

In an unusually prompt response, the President reaffirmed his intention to call elections for the Spring in those departments where there are sufficient numbers eligible to vote and run for office. The President wrote that he would probably hold elections "under the provisions set forth in the by-laws of the Board of Higher Education. These provide that anyone of professorial rank and those instructors who are tenured may vote in departmental elections." At our next meeting we will discuss the President's response and the advisability of any further suggestions or inquiries on the part of the chapter.

 STUDENT LITERARY MAGAZINE

"The Gauntlet: A Journal of Literary Expression and Opinion," edited by BMCC students, Pauline Hahn and David Lissandrello, is on sale in the college bookstore for fifty cents. It is an excellent publication, certainly the best we have seen out of a two year college. The administration has permitted the bookstore to sell the journal and Chapter members are urged to purchase a copy for both your own enjoyment and to support a worthy venture.

 HOLD THE LINE ON LECTURERS

If you will pardon an over-wrought metaphor, the lecturers in the City University have been condemned to an academic no-man's land. They have neither the rights nor the security of their colleagues on tenure-generating lines. Their fate and future employment hangs in balance from semester to semester. Because of their position, they cannot readily identify with the institutions at which they teach. Too many lecturers are bad for a faculty's morale.

The Chapter fully understands that because of limitations of budget and the uncertainty of scheduling from term to term, it is necessary for departments to keep at least one or two lecturers in their employ. However, we feel that there are too many lecturers at BMCC. A cursory survey shows seven in the English Department alone. In a memorandum, we pointed out to the President that we do not consider this sound academic policy. In his reply he shared our concern but indicated that temporary funds forced the situation upon him. He also pointed out that the school has "hired several lecturers out of regular instructional lines" and that as soon "as we can be assured of the long range needs for such lines, they will be assigned on a permanent basis to several departments." The college is committed to expansion next year. We do not fully understand why the administration cannot immediately open instructional lines to some of our highly-qualified lecturers. We will explore the matter further at the next Chapter meeting.

 EXAMINATION AND PROCTORING SCHEDULES

On December 19, at the Chapter's direction, the Executive Board directed a memorandum to the Office of the Dean of the College expressing concern over the abrupt change in the scheduling of final examinations. We pointed out that the sudden shift in the calendar had caused serious dislocations among both students and faculty. What distressed us most was that no one was consulted before the decision was made. We stated that, as a matter of course, the faculty should be party to decisions which vitally affect their classroom teaching. Finally, we indicated that while we assumed there was good reason for the last-minute revision of the calendar, we felt that an explanation was in order and asked for assurance that decisions affecting scheduling for the Spring Semester be made several months in advance.

continued

We had a most encouraging meeting on this matter with Dean Draper on Tuesday, January 17. He apologized and assumed full responsibility for what had happened. "The honeymoon is over," he said, no longer could the administration pass its mistakes off to the College's inexperience and youth. He explained that he would circulate examination schedules to the departmental chairmen early in the second semester. In turn, he would instruct the chairmen to consult the members of their departments and, where feasible, to incorporate their suggestions into the schedules. In this manner, the faculty would share the responsibility of scheduling with their chairmen and the administration. Hopefully, by the end of February, the Dean's Office will publish the exam calendar in its final form.

The Dean was also aware of irritations resulting from the proctoring assignments. (In one case, two proctors were assigned to police the examination of one student.) He expressed concern, however, over the fact that many proctors did not honor their early morning assignments. As a remedy he suggested that in the future, the chairmen in concert with members of their departments assign proctors for their own exams. Dean Draper felt and we shared the opinion that by "decentralizing" the assignment of proctors, each department could better see after its needs and the convenience of the faculty.

We were particularly heartened by Dean Draper's understanding of the problem and his intention to correct the situation by providing the faculty a more positive role in the processes of decision making. And we think it is a sign of strength, not weakness, when someone faces up to and learns from his mistakes.

EARLY NOTIFICATION

The administration has moved up notification of renewal and termination of contracts from April to the middle of January. THE GADFLY pressed for such a policy as early as November. We congratulate the President for a decision that was as wise as it is humane. Notice in April did not allow those separated from the faculty sufficient time to seek a position elsewhere. We temper our commendation of the President with a suggestion that he send out letters three weeks earlier so that those dismissed have the benefit of the scholarly conventions convened late in December at which many college and university departments interview and hire for the coming year.

HUAC AND THE UNIVERSITY

The House Un-American Affairs Committee has been subpoenaing membership lists of student organizations critical of the government's policy in Vietnam from various colleges and universities throughout the country. The Nation editorialized in its December 12 issue that acquiescence by institutions of higher learning "foreshadows a degrading subservience which calls into question their whole reason for being."

HUAC has consistently abused its congressional prerogatives by flagrantly violating due process. Insulated from its own libelous acts by legislative immunity, the Committee has published slanderous and unsubstantiated information injurious to the reputations of countless citizens. Their high-handed attempt to subpoena membership lists is but the latest chapter in their long history of harassment. The American Civil Liberties Union has distributed a letter to one thousand college presidents asking that they resist HUAC's attempts to muffle dissent and curb free inquiry. This, after all, is what a University is all about.

In response to the ACLU letter, the Deans of Students at the various units of the City University, including Leon Cohen of BMCC, have suggested that the membership lists of all student organizations be destroyed. Such a move would effectively limit HUAC's attempts at intimidation on the campuses of the City University. To implement the action of the Deans, the Student Activities Committee at BMCC passed a motion destroying membership lists and instructing the school to notify an organization's officers before answering to a subpoena. The names of a club's officers, unfortunately, must remain on file. Hence, those students are still vulnerable. However, if they are notified by the administration as soon as a subpoena is issued, they would have adequate time to enjoin the school from answering and, with the possible help of the ACLU, test HUAC's right to such information.

The resolution of the Student Activities Committee awaits approval by the Faculty Council. We recommend a yes vote and commend the Deans of the City University for their well-founded defense of academic freedom.

DIPPING INTO THE PORK BARREL

Six weeks ago the Board of Higher Education announced that it had voted to provide the Presidents of the units of the City University with free housing. The Board reasoned that their action was necessary if the University was to attract educators of superior caliber to fill its highest administrative posts. The Board revealed that this was but a first step toward providing housing (at reduced rates) to the faculty and subordinate administrators of the University.

The Board's decision smells of pork barrel. With the city's budget for the University as parsimonious as it is, it would seem that there are higher priorities than free housing for College presidents. Somehow the Board can squeeze out funds to support administrators in plush style but when instructors ask for compensation for lost vacation time, its cupboards are suddenly bare. Free housing will undoubtedly lure additional applicants for the College Presidencies. But are more applicants necessary? Certainly the Board need not look outside New York or its own system to attract qualified administrators to head its colleges.

The promise of faculty housing at reduced rates is nothing but a sop to the instructional staff. It was obviously intended to appease faculty and quiet any protest of the Board's gratuity to its Presidents. There will not be low cost faculty housing in the foreseeable future. The Board claims to be working out a plan with Columbia and New York Universities. On this score the Board's credibility is suspect. Columbia and NYU have not begun to solve their own housing problems and hence are ill-equipped to help the City University lodge its faculty. The Board owes us better justification for its lavish disbursement to the college Presidents.

UNIONS FOR PROFESSORS

by Israel Kugler

(The following article is reprinted from THE ACTIVIST for Fall, 1966.
Dr Kugler is President of the UFCT's New York Local.)

Teaching in our colleges and universities can hardly be called a true profession able to attract and hold the finest and most sensitive minds; to sustain that quality of education reflected in close ties between teacher and student. We do not have a genuine voice in the formulation of policy affecting the conduct of the profession; we are unable to control the conditions of teaching and learning for maximum effectiveness and creative growth.

Our colleges and universities are dominated by the corporate structure so typical of American business. The boards of trustees like the boards of directors; the college presidents and deans like the managers--determine, in the last analysis, the mode and degree of compensation, the nature of facilities, the numbers of students admitted, the size of classes, and the extent of the professional and ancillary staff. In the case of the public colleges and universities, the "power of the purse" is held by the supra-power of governmental authorities such as local and state executive and legislative bodies.

a useful myth
A myth besets our profession--that the college and university teacher is a professional on appointment, not an employee. By any test of reality, it is others, not the practicing teachers who determine the basic policies affecting the conduct of the profession. As distasteful as it might seem, the fact is that the college teacher is an employee. . . . Thus, the ideal of universities developed in Europe in the High Middle Ages--a guild or community of scholars--has never existed on the American scene. We have a vast and growing academic marketplace completely unprepared to cope with the new goal of universal higher education.

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To meet the growing need for funds to finance expansion, colleges and universities have concentrated on developing "reputations" which can attract substantial research grants from government and private organizations. . . . This development can reach the frightful state divulged in Michigan State and the University of Pennsylvania where "research" has included training in spying under the direction of the Central Intelligence Agency, guerrilla warfare strategy and tactics, and chemical and biological weaponry.

cosmos vs. local
On the current academic market, we have created the individual academic entrepreneur who has no roots in an educational institution, but who prepares himself by publications, lecture circuitry, and agreeable academic gentility to job-skip from one high-bidding college to another. These "stars" are seized by the academic pirates in college administrations to grace the faculty with "reputations" that permit these individuals to take flight from teaching. They are granted good salaries, an office and research staff, little or no teaching or committee responsibility.

[These "stars" embroidered on the faculty fabric hardly hide the fact that for the bulk of the faculty, conditions remain second-rate. Thus, the profession of college teaching lags behind the other professions in competition for the best minds,

The lesson of Berkeley is that in this development, the student has been forgotten. He is subjected increasingly to the mass lecture, often magnified by closed-circuit TV. . . . Only the most intellectually endowed can overcome the nefarious effects of this neglect. As a substitute for undergraduate contact between student and faculty in an educational ecology conducive to true learning, we also have the growing use of graduate assistants with full undergraduate teaching assignments. Substandard salaries for these graduate assistants are also too often accompanied by their complete lack of voice in curriculum development and choice of textbooks. In too many institutions the non-tenured faculty member is reduced to a state of fear-ridden docility, lest he antagonize the administrative powers that be. Competition for the precious promotions, largely limited by budgetary quotas, also serves to encourage uncreative quiescence.

Accrediting associations and state departments of education have played no significant role in correcting these abuses and raising the level of the profession. In almost all instances, these bodies have been captured and controlled by administrators largely engaged in accrediting each other's institution.

The one organization which has dominated the scene of college teaching, the AAHP is woefully inadequate. . . . To be sure, it has avowed commendable principles of academic freedom and tenure, but it lacks the ability to effectively enforce them. The most dramatic example of this is the continuing effort of the AAUP's Washington office to aid the St John's University chapter which was infiltrated and captured by administration forces. This is the chapter which despite the AAUP's excellent motion of censure, condemned the heroic strike on behalf of the summarily dismissed teachers and refuses to be critical of the St John's administration.

The AAUP is undemocratic. All key positions are determined by a closely-knit Washington office. This bureaucratic center curbs local chapters from taking an active course, lest they "prejudge" the case. . . . The Annual Meeting of the AAUP cannot adopt policy unless it is concurred in by the Council or by a subsequent Annual Meeting.

The AAUP is slothful. Its pinnacle sanction of censure takes an average of 2½ years from inception to its publication in the AAUP Bulletin. AAUP censure has become more and more meaningless. It is not accompanied by boycott or concerted withdrawal of services. . . .

It has, therefore, become the historic role of the AFT to assume leadership in the colleges and universities, ensuring quality education for all students capable of benefiting from some kind of collegiate training. The AFT, with its ties to the organized labor movement, can unite "town and gown." It can muster the necessary economic, political, and social resources that will serve to improve educational institutions as a whole, rather than the lot of the individual "star." . . .

The AFT's approach to higher education is comprehensive. It considers the university with its graduate programs, the 4 year liberal arts college, the community and junior college of co-equal importance in meeting the varied educational needs of America's youth. Librarians, teaching assistants, laboratory assistants, registrars, etc. are not relegated to a status of neglect. The AFT strives for excellence in all collegiate institutions and for proper recognition of the entire professional staff. . . .

Students must be given a responsible role in college and university evaluation. We believe in enlarged opportunity, especially for the economically deprived and disadvantaged. The AFT supports free tuition in all public colleges and universities. For those students who, despite free tuition, would be unable to go to college because of economic responsibilities to their families, the AFT advocates a system of stipends patterned after the GI Bill of Rights, aiding indigent families. . . .

Academic freedom in the highest degree is essential for both faculty and students. As citizens, they are entitled to the freedoms embodied in the Bill of Rights. Teachers must have the freedom to teach, engage in research, and publish in accordance with their professional conscience. Students must have the freedom of association, advocacy and the freedom to entertain controversial speakers unfettered by academic restrictions as long as the teaching and learning process is unhampered. The AFT opposes loyalty and disclaimer oaths for teachers and students. Such oaths tend to inhibit the free pursuit of truth and knowledge and create a climate of fear and suspicion foreign to a college or university. We, therefore, make no distinction between secular and denominational colleges, believing that religious sponsorship should not interfere with the freedom to teach and learn.

Believing strongly in freedom of association, the AFT believes that no faculty members should be required to join or refrain from joining a campus organization as a condition of employment or retention. We, therefore, do not seek a union or closed shop in colleges and universities.

The following represent some additional highlights of the AFT program for colleges and universities which will serve to make college teaching more competitive with the other professions:

SALARY: A basic salary schedule from a minimum of \$10,000 to a maximum of \$30,000.

PROMOTION: Advancement from beginning rank of Assistant Professor through Full Professor by mandatory annual increments with automatic change in title. More rapid promotions, as determined by departmental colleagues, may be made to award outstanding achievement.

TENURE: Conferred by departmental colleagues after three years of a rigorous selection and probationary procedure. Professional incompetence shall be the only grounds for dismissal under due process.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE: This should be uniform for all faculty members and include the right of representation at every step with final disposition made by an outside impartial source.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: The above programmatic points, as well as others, can best be achieved in our view, through the process of collective bargaining. Faculty members, through a secret ballot, determine whether or not a majority wishes to have the AFT represent the faculty in negotiating with the college administration. If an AFT affiliate is chosen, then the faculty is represented by a force equal to that of the administration in developing a contract. Such a binding contract represents the new position of power for the faculty. It represents not hostility, but an accommodation of divergent views. It redresses the imbalance of power between the administration and the faculty. It creates a climate of courage which will bring forth more creativity on the part of the faculty--especially the younger and non-tenured. It alone will provide that necessary control for the practicing professional--the college and university professor--over the conditions under which the profession is conducted.

CLASS LOADS

Faculty members wishing to assist in a project researching class loads at the college should contact Charlotte Croman or Mayer Rossabi who are conducting the investigation for the union. The matter will also be discussed at the Chapter meeting.

WHO ACCREDITIS MIDDLE STATES II

by William P. Friedheim

In an unprecedented move the Commission on Institutes of Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools on December 1, 1966 released for public dissemination its accreditation report on St John's University. In the past only the Association and the school seeking certification were privy to such information. The commission departed from its normal procedure and took the public into its confidence only because of the extraordinary circumstances surrounding its evaluation of St. John's. The report ordered the University to show cause by December 31, 1967 why the Association should not revoke its accreditation. MSA did not, however, remove St. John's accreditation.

The Commission's statement directing St John's to put its affairs in order followed by almost a year the dismissal without reason or due process of thirty-one members of the University's faculty. Although at the time the school was still in session, the Board of Trustees separated all but ten of that number from their classes. The Vincentians, who run the University, in several instances assigned clerical personnel and nuns of dubious academic standing to cover the classes. The Commission, in light of St John's arrogant defiance of academic due process, had no choice but to address its report to the dismissals.

A reading of the Association's statement is an intellectually numbing experience. Its tortured sophistry literally stretches the mind of a sane man. The document is no more than an unconvincing rationalization, in the face of increasing pressure from renowned educators and civil libertarians to the contrary, of the Commission's decision to place St John's on a year's probation rather than revoke its accreditation. The report reflects poorly upon both the processes of accreditation and the general state of higher education in the United States.

The report is self-damning. It bares the Association as an organization responsible only to the colleges it accredits; it is not accountable to the academic community at large. Administrators, with few exceptions, staff and direct Middle States as they do the five other regional associations which accredit colleges and universities in the United States. Of the seventeen members of the MSA's Commission on Institutes of Higher Learning, only one is of faculty status. The Commission's constituency of Presidents, Deans, Provosts, Chancellors, and similarly knighted educators goes a long way in explaining the bastardized pragmatism which characterizes its analysis of St John's.

Middle States' concept of accreditation is rather disturbing. The Report on St John's makes it clear that the Association, when it charges a "team" to visit a school and render a judgement, seeks merely to measure "educational effectiveness." What qualities make for educational effectiveness? The Commission stipulates that a school must have "worthy objectives?" Unfortunately, as the Commission's survey of St John's reveals, Middle States shies away from judgements of value. Its definition of "worthy objectives" is so elastic as to be meaningless. An overzealous concern with the means by which an institution achieves its goals flaws the approach of the Association's evaluating teams. By default, MSA leaves the definition of "worthy objectives" solely to the school they are evaluating.

In a pamphlet with the imposing title, "Accreditation of Educational Institutions Conducted by Roman Catholic Religious Communities for their Own Members," the Commission elaborates upon its prerequisites for accreditation:

Accreditation is an expression of confidence on the part of competent, representative observers that an education institution has defined its purposes and educational aims precisely (italics added), has obtained the resources and established the conditions under which, in the judgement of experienced colleagues, it should be able to achieve them and to continue to do so under varying circumstances, and appears in fact to be accomplishing them in substantial measure.

In this instance the Association did not even choose to modify "purposes and educational aims" with the adjective "worthy." If we are to take the statement at face value, the Commission only looks for precision of definition when it assesses the validity of a College's objectives. Elsewhere in its official literature, MSA merely notes that goals should be "realistic" and "appropriate." The Association, however, makes a most damaging admission in its public statement on "Membership and Accreditation" dated July, 1966. It reads in part: "The Commission on Institutes of Higher Education . . . publishes descriptions of good practice from time to time, but it prescribes no minimal criteria or quantitative standards. . . . It evaluates each applicant for membership in light of that institution's own reasons for existence." This candid revelation betrays the Association's pronouncements on standards as a farce and, even worse, irrelevant to the commission's own view of accreditation. Clarity of objectives and the machinery necessary for their realization in themselves warrant accreditation for an institution of higher learning. In essence, the MSA is not primarily concerned with ends but means. Its literature dwells almost obsessively on the mechanics of administration.

The commission weighs the acts of a college's administration, as the statement on St John's bears ample witness, by the scale of their "consequences." The consequences of an administrative decree are grave only when they lead to what the report continually refers to as loss of "educational effectiveness." And how does "educational effectiveness" elude a college's grasp? The Commission tells us that when an "episode (has) led to the resignation of faculty members, withdrawal of students, inability to recruit replacements or other untoward events," it is symptomatic of an educational institution's inability to meet "its objectives effectively." Violation of academic freedom or due process, though "reprehensible" by the Association's own admission, is beside the point, unless, of course, it deprives a university of its "educational effectiveness." As long as a college does not lose students and additional faculty, an administration can do as it pleases. If we are to believe Middle States, administrative efficiency is roughly equivalent to "educational effectiveness." Consequences are not dire if you have a "plant" to operate, a faculty to direct, and students to process. The Commission premises its report on the assumption that the summary dismissal of thirty-one faculty members dictates the removal of accreditation only if it impairs the operation of the school. By these standards it would have accredited the University of Berlin in 1935.

The composition of Middle States, dominated by administrators, contributes to its myopic view of the problem. The Association asked all the wrong questions at St John's. And, even more disturbing, it came up with the wrong answers to questions which were irrelevant in the first place. If the MSA judges an act by its consequences, it is obliged to look at more than just the dislocation of students or faculty. Did the dismissal of thirty-one professors without explanation or due process at all inhibit freedom of inquiry or speech at the University? While the question is rhetorical, it is also pertinent. Unfortunately, it did not merit consideration, or so the report leads us to believe, when Middle States examined the consequences of the dismissals. Even before it assessed consequences, the Commission asked another question: did the Board of Trustees of the university act responsibly when they dismissed thirty-one faculty members before the end of a term, relieving all but ten of their classes? What follows are some painful twists of logic:

. . . the commission can only say that it is convinced that the Board of Trustees of St John's University believed that the University faced a clear and present danger to its present existence, and that immediate and drastic action was called for, and believed further that the action was necessary to avert destruction of the institution and to prevent riots and bloodshed. Whether or not one can accept the belief of the trustees as valid in any objective sense, there is no question whatsoever that the Trustees themselves were satisfied that they faced precisely such a crisis.

The Commission inserted a disclaimer, proclaiming that the report "is making no comment on the credibility of this belief." Instead, the Association allowed St John's to establish its own standards of responsibility. The trustees believed that they were acting responsibly, hence they were acting responsibly. With this slick syllogism, the Commission actually freed itself from the anguish of passing judgement upon the decision of the trustees.

The report is not totally cynical. The Commission did not openly flaunt principles generally held dear by the academic community. It covered its tracks with a trail of platitudes and euphemisms. The report left no doubt that the dismissals were "heinous," "reprehensible," and "a violation of sound academic practice." In fact, the Commission doth protest too much. After this virtuoso display of academic idealism, the Association reasoned that these sentiments had little bearing upon their assessment of the consequences of the dismissals. Middle States avoided a judgement but implied that had it rendered a decision, it would have ruled in favor of the faculty members dismissed. While such an empty consolation might make for good public relations copy, it is of little comfort to the thirty one who lost their jobs.

Dean Akbert E Meder Jr of Rutgers, who headed and alone signed the public report of the evaluating team which visited St John's, wrote: "the commission does not believe that accreditation can depend on any single action or factor, but rather must be determined by the weight of all the evidence." The statement bears testimony to MSA's ill-conceived approach to accreditation. Academic due process and freedom are but two of the many factors the Commission had to isolate and appraise. If St John's rates poorly on academic freedom, it might well have compensated by scoring high on athletic facilities, parking accommodation, and institutional food. While the Commission hopefully assigned different values to these factors, its approach was nonetheless an inadequate measure of the central issue. Academic freedom is not computable on a shopkeeper's balance sheet. There is an organic relationship between its violation and the deterioration of the body academic. When the report diagnosed it as just one of many factors, it obscured the inter-relationship of academic freedom and the processes of teaching and learning. In so doing, the Association again evaded a direct consideration of the Trustees' highhanded disregard of due process.

The Commission conceives of academic freedom in the same terms that it does accreditation. It asks only that an institution define academic freedom and the means by which violations are to be processed. The Association points out that it is "essential" that a "disinterested party" adjudicate appeals. Basically, though, MSA views academic freedom as a question of mechanics. Even when it does prescribe what it considers "sound academic practice," MSA permits a University such as St John's to ignore its standards without loss of accreditation. Instead of enforcing its principles, MSA labors over "consequences."

St John's actions will not seriously affect either enrollment or recruitment of faculty. The Archdiocese of New York feeds the University a steady stream of students from its secondary schools. The University can always fall back upon various Catholic orders to fill faculty positions which fall vacant.

Back in February, 1966, Father Cahill, the President of St John's, responded to the "severest censure" in the history of the AAUP with the statement that it was the MSA "we have to worry about . . . and we have assurances from Middle States that they do not think this warrants any investigation on their part." In turn, the Commission's report built a case to the effect that violation of academic freedom by itself does not merit the removal of accreditation. If anything, the MSA's arguments provide a favorable case for accreditation. Why then did the Commission strap St John's with a "show cause" order? Probably to save face. In another year the whole nasty mess will fade further from the public view and, at that time, if the MSA still subscribes to the reasoning which characterizes its report, it will quietly bring St John's back into its good graces. Middle States' ideal of accreditation and, for that matter, of higher education, is mechanistic. The Association is so caught up with its evaluation of means and consequences that it has lost sight of academic excellence. Presidents and Deans dominate its councils and, hence, MSA's concerns are by nature and inclination administrative. As a result, MSA is willing to concede the definition of standards to the colleges it accredits. In the case of St John's it went so far as to allow the Vincentians to judge the responsibility of their own acts. In the process it may have sacrificed academic freedom to the perverted ethic of bureaucratic efficiency.

MSA files are closed and its reports, with the exception of St John's, secret. The Association is only responsible to the administrators who staff it and the colleges it certifies for membership. Accreditation becomes a vicious cycle as administrators evaluate one another's colleges. For their labor they are handsomely reimbursed; up to \$200 a day. An MSA evaluation can tax a college in excess of \$3000. The investment is not extravagant considering that it is a rare occasion when the MSA denies a school accreditation. At worst, MSA might allude to "institutional weaknesses" without, of course, specifying what they are.

Regrettably, no one has asked the question, "Who accredits Middle States?"

SHORT STORY

THE LANGUAGE OF THE FAN

by Roger B Dooley

OLDEST MOVIE HOUSE TO CLOSE

The Florence, believed to be the oldest operating motion picture theatre in this area, will draw the curtain across its silver screen for the last time at the end of this month, Mrs Clara Brenner, the owner, has announced. Opened in 1915 by her husband, the late Fred J Brenner, to serve what was then a new section of the city, the 300-seat theatre was patronized by generations of movie-goers before TV and changing neighborhood patterns began to take their toll. The property is to be sold to the builders of the nearby South Gate Village apartment project, for use either as a bowling alley or a parking lot. Mrs Brenner, who has lived in the building since its opening, plans to enjoy her retirement in Florida.

Even with the truth literally staring her in the face, in the clipping from this morning's theatre page scotch-taped to the box office wall, she still could not really believe it. Though he did live in a South Gate apartment, the young reporter had been kind, after all, to take that much interest, just from seeing her sitting alone here every evening. How could he be expected to understand all that the Florence had meant to Fred and her and to every one else who had lived around here?

The very name sounded quaint now, but in those days many of the neighborhood theatres springing up everywhere had been called after actresses: the Ellen Terry, the Lily, the Pearl, the Maxine, and Florence Lawrence and Florence Turner had been two of the brightest stars to emerge in the new medium. Were little girls christened any of those names any more? Mrs Brenner wondered. Or Hazel or Elsie or Maude or Ethel or any of the other favorites of her generation? Even her own name seemed to recall Clara Kimball Young rather than Clara Bow.

"Opened in 1915 . . ." It seemed not just fifty years or two wars ago but centuries, light years away, that world she had known, of hobble skirts and Turkey Trots, of rides on open-sided, inter-urban trolleys to long-vanished amusement parks, of big, solid houses full of cupolas and gingerbread and stained glass, with front verandas screened by lilac bushes or magnolia trees, where courting couples could spoon discreetly in porch swings. With her petite figure, slim in the style Irene Castle was making popular, and her hair (long enough to sit on) of a shade then called "auburn," massed low on her forehead and done in a soft bun behind, Clara Nagel had never lacked beaux. She could certainly have done better than Fred Brenner, all her relatives had agreed. Slicing his father's furniture business to put all the money into a nickleodeon!

Of course Fred had never let anyone call it that. The Florence was no converted store, but a specially-designed yellow-brick building, with the name carved in the stone pediment at the top, and its own electric marquee, where white letters on black spelled out the attractions while yellow bulbs, alternately blinking out, seemed to chase each other forever around the edge and up and down the vertical sign on which the name FLORENCE was spelled out from top to bottom. Built-in cases to display the glossy stills and vivid posters supplied by the studio exchanges flanked the outer glass doors and divided the mirrors in the tiled lobby, and the crowning glory of which was a lofty fan-shaped window, up behind the marquee, where the monogram "F" recurred at regular intervals among the symmetrically twined stems of stylized lilies and morning glories.

Like the Florence itself, to her Fred had never changed. With his square jaw, his pince-nez and his hair, however thin and gray, still parted neatly in the middle, he had to the end looked like her perfect Gibson man -- but she could see how the starched separate collars, the green visor, the office jacket and cuff protectors that had once been the signs of a trim young man gradually marked him as a spruce old fellow of an earlier generation. Though the doctors had called it heart trouble,

she knew that worry over the future of the Florence had hastened his death, five years ago --the future that she had been trying to stave off ever since.

"The last show's already begun." She slid aside the little panel in the box office window to speak to a woman who had just walked into the lobby -- a gaunt figure in a leopard-skin coat, with hair dyed brilliant red and eyes shadowed green to match her earrings and scarf.

"Mrs Brenner, don't you know me? Mabel -- Mabel McCracken! You remember, the Florence Faye Fan Club?"

"Why, Mabel!" Mrs Brenner produced an instant lie. "You look so much the same, I couldn't believe it was you."

She remembered now -- a gawky, buck-toothed teenager, with her then naturally red hair shingled in a hideous bob, all knees and elbows sticking out of the straight-line sacks of 1927. According to movie formula, the ugly duckling should return only as a glittering swan, but, even without being able to see her left hand, it was pathetically obvious to Mrs Brenner that Mabel had simply aged from plain girl to plainer woman.

"You still working the same place, Mabel?" Mrs Brenner ventured, wondering where it was.

"Oh yes! I'm secretary to the assistant auditor now." Mabel spoke with such modest pride that Mrs Brenner could only murmur, "Well, now, imagine that! And what brings you to this end of town?"

"Oh, Mrs Brenner, need you ask? This morning's paper! It always breaks my heart whenever any of the old theatres close, but I just can't bear to think of our beloved Florence being torn down."

Maybe, if more of the old customers, including Mabel Herself, had come back oftener, we wouldn't be closing, thought Mrs Brenner. Like those people who never thought of an old friend until they read of his death. But no, that wasn't fair, after all. A neighborhood movie, like a neighborhood tavern or candy store or any other small business, when it no longer served a need, had no more reason to exist. Nor for that matter, had she.

"Well, Mabel, I held out as long as I could. Longer than most."

"I thought these new big apartments would bring you lots of new customers --especially with no other theatres around."

Mrs Brenner shook her head. "All it did was drive away the last of our old ones, when their houses were torn down. If these young couples go to movies at all, I guess it must be at drive-ins."

"Oh, I know, but even so--" Mabel was determined to wax nostalgic, Mrs Brenner saw. Well, better one mourner at the wake than none at all.

"I was going to close up here, Mabel. Why don't you stop upstairs with me for a cup of coffee?"

"Oh, thank you, Mrs Brenner, that'd be lovely."

Stepping into the darkened theatre, where perhaps twenty people, mostly teenage couples, were watching a horror film, Mrs Brenner whispered to a tall, dark-haired boy at the candy counter. "I'm leaving now, Joel. When you close up, there's some fresh kuchen waiting for you upstairs."

"Good! Thanks, Mrs Brenner. The Maltese Falcon is on the late show tonight."

It was hardly worth keeping an usher anymore, she knew, but Joel was a good boy, working his way through the local university. He also served as janitor, popcorn salesman and general handyman --everything, in fact, but projectionist (he had to be a union man), but, even so, most evenings he had plenty of time to study or to read books on film history. He felt more at home here than in the house where he roomed, he said. Joel, at least, would miss the Florence.

"Oh, isn't this lovely!" Mabel exclaimed, as Mrs Brenner switched on the lights in her living room. "I wish I could get my apartment to look so home-like. Such high ceilings! And a window seat! It's all so -- so 'Edwardian!'"

"Well, Fred always liked his comfort. But it's more room than one person needs, really, the three bedrooms and all." Putting a pot of coffee on the stove and setting her kuchen on a favorite plate, Mrs Brenner felt a fresh pang at the thought of leaving this kitchen forever.

"Have you really closed the sale yet?" Mabel asked.

"Just about. I sign to final papers next Monday. I held out for a good price. I guess I was hoping they'd never meet it. It's not easy pulling up roots after fifty years -- but, the way I look at it, Fred'd rather see the Florence gone altogether than standing empty, all boarded up, or turned into a super-market or something like that."

"I suppose so. You know, what we all loved about the Florence was how nice you and he always were to us kids in the neighborhood -- the free candy at the Saturday matinees and all. You always seemed to know every one of us."

Mrs Brenner smiled. "Fred said that was just good business. We made generations of new customers that way. But I guess all you youngsters did kind of fill a place in our lives."

To be sure, there was no way for Mabel to know, and no reason to tell her now, about little Freddie, who had died in the flu epidemic of 1918; barely three -- just old enough to break Fred's heart, and hers, especially since the doctor had told them there could be no more children for them. Their generation had not been afraid of sentiment, even sentimentality; every Christmas they had continued to hang Freddie's white kid baby shoes on their little tree, and she still carried a curl of his fair hair in a locket around her neck. Impossible to imagine him as man of fifty now! They had talked for a while of adopting, as they had also thought of buying a pet, but ultimately, like many another childless couple, they had only drawn closer together. Leaving the city now would mean leaving the graves of the two people she had loved most, but she had steeled herself for a clean break with the past -- as if that were possible.

At a knock on the door, a little later, Mabel almost spilled her third cup of coffee.

"Who can that be at this time of night?"

"Just Joel, my usher. He often stops for a snack and the late show. For a boy his age, you wouldn't believe how much he knows about old-time movies. I guess he's what they call a buff."

"We were just talking about the good old days at the Florence," said Mabel presently, when Joel was settled in Fred's Morris chair with the rest of the kuchen. "Long before your time. Half the fun used to be just getting out of the house after dinner and escaping into another world for the evening. The Avalon was grander, of course, but the Florence was our second home."

"Well, Fred always said we had to show the public 'third run' didn't mean 'third rate.'" One of a national chain of "cathedrals of the cinema," the Avalon, only a few blocks away, had from its opening in 1925 automatically taken over the second-run trade for this end of the city. "We always managed to hold our own."

"Especially after your grand re-opening!" said Mabel, with a sigh. "Remember, it was really my idea to dedicate the theatre to Florence Faye."

"Why, so it was, Mabel." Mrs Brenner recalled how Mabel had pestered Fred into writing to the star. Florence Faye must have been slipping even then, because, to Fred's astonishment, she -- or her press agent -- had responded not only with an enormous signed photograph suitable for lobby display but with a strong hint that if the re-opening could be timed to coincide with the local premiere of her forthcoming film, Miss Faye herself might just be persuaded to appear. Fred, of course, had jumped at the chance, with results that led the South Side Businessman's Association to name him the 1927 Man of the Year.

"What a night that was! Look, I still have the picture." From her purse Mabel produced a yellowed newspaper photo carefully preserved in a plastic case. "Here we are -- 'Florence and Her Fans'."

The caption sounded like a comic strip, thought Mrs Brenner. Polly and Her Pals, Freckles and His Friends, Boots and Her Buddies, and now, . . . Florence and Her Fans.

"Do you know we still have that big picture of her in the basement?" said Joel.

"I came across it one day when I was trying to clean things out."

 "No! Oh, I'd love to see it," said Mabel.

"Business was better than ever after that," said Mrs Brenner. Those had been the days of two uniformed ushers, of daily newspaper ads and printed weekly programs illustrating the three double-bills with photo-mats the studios supplied, Fred had even moved down from the projection booth, and, as manager wearing his best dark suit (a tuxedo would be going too far, he felt) stood in the lobby to greet every regular by name.

"You know, every time I hear an organ, even in church," said Mabel, "I think of the way you used to play Charmaine and Diane and Jeanine and all those old theme songs."

"For the big silents, they used to send us the whole score, to play right along with the action. . . . I hope I can get a decent price for that organ. No one's touched it in years."

"Then, remember, even after talkies, when they'd flash the words on the screen and we'd all sing along with you, Now's The Time to Fall in Love and Paradise and We Just Couldn't Say Goodbye and all those old songs? Why did you ever stop that?"

"Well, for one reason, we were trying to cut costs, and I was needed more in the box office. Anyway, there just wasn't time left on the program, once we started offering bingo and dish night and bank night -- even amateur night!"

"But the depression never really hurt your business, did it?" asked Joel, who had been listening in evident fascination.

"Goodness, no! Movies were about the only entertainment most people could afford. We only charged fifteen cents when the Avalon was still charging a quarter, and that made just enough difference so more people waited to see the pictures here. Then before we knew it, we were in the war and every one had money and we all had standing room only almost every night."

"In those days when we really liked a picture, like one of Irene Dunne's or Greer Garson's, we'd follow it from downtown to the Avalon to the Florence and enjoy it most of all here, because we thought this'd be the last time ever."

Joel smiled. "Since TV, old movies never die; they don't even fade away. Thanks to Mrs Brenner here, I've seen more films from the '30's than the '60's."

"I'm surprised you even have a set," said Mabel. "Considering."

"Of course, poor Fred would never have one in the place," said Mrs Brenner. "Still, it was so quiet here without him. About all I ever watch are our old favorites."

"Oh, but they're never the same, all chopped up to fit the commercials," said Mabel. "Some of the young snips in our office were brought up on TV, so I suppose they don't know any better, but they actually laugh at some of the great pictures from our time."

"That kind probably wouldn't have appreciated them then either," said Joel. "On the other hand, TV has made a lot more serious fans like me. At school the cinema club packs them in every week just to see the old classics the right way, uncut, in a theatre. Like we could do here."

"Now, Joel," said Mrs Brenner. "We've been all over that."

"An art house?" said Mabel. "With black coffee instead of popcorn? I bet that'd bring in the apartment people."

"Oh, Mabel!" Mrs Brenner gave a faint laugh. "I've tried to keep everything in good shape but any one can see this place is fifty years old. The youngsters seem to get rougher in recent years; half the seats and walls are damaged. I guess the Florence has just had its day -- and so have I."

"Oh, Mrs Brenner!" said Mabel. "Don't say that!"

"No, Mabel, it's too late. Fred's doctor bills ate into our savings more than he ever knew. And if you knew how much I've lost ever since, just trying to keep open! I'll need every cent I can get out of it. . . . Anyway, what would I know about running an art house, starting a whole new policy at my age?"

"I could handle that for you," said Joel. "We could start with a Bogart festival. He still packs them in everywhere."

"Joel feels like I do about the Florence," said Mabel. "And do you know who else'll hate to see it go? Florence herself."

"Florence Faye? My goodness, Mabel, what would she care even if she's still alive? You know the theatre was called the Florence long before her time. We might just as easily have dedicated it to Florence Vidor."

"But she doesn't know that to this day."

"Mabel, you don't mean to tell me you've kept in touch with Florence Faye all these years?"

"I certainly have," said Mabel. "They say movie fans are fickle -- maybe they are nowadays; who could be loyal to the types that pass for stars now? But we really idolized our stars. When someone's career started fading, like Florence's did with the talkies, that was just when we faithful ones rallied around her stronger than ever."

"Well, now, I never knew that."

"Oh, yes. Lots of silent stars still have their fans. I'm Florence's last one, I guess. She writes me a nice long letter about once a year, usually every Christmas."

"Have you ever met her?" asked Joel.

Mabel looked wounded. "Of course I've met her! Twice in the past twenty years I saved up and spent my vacation in Hollywood, and she was perfectly lovely to me both times. The second time I stayed at her house. Joel, do you think you could find that big picture of her that was unveiled that night?"

"Sure, I guess so. Why?"

"I just thought it might be nice to hang it up in its original place for these last few weeks, just for old times' sake. I'll bet lots of your old customers'll be dropping by. I'd like to take a picture of it to send to Florence."

"Well, if it'll please you or Florence Faye," said Mrs Brenner, "I guess it can't do any harm at this point."

The picture, a silver-framed portrait still, blown up to twice life-size and inscribed, in fairly legible writing, "To all my dear friends at the Florence Theatre -- May I always continue to please you as much as you have pleased me by this wonderful honor!", showed Florence Faye at her most soulfully seductive. The hands sinuously twined under her chin, the pout of her cupid's bow lips, the pearl bandeau in her dark, marcelled bob, and especially the plucked eyebrows delicately contracted above smoldering eyes in that look of noble anguish that was exclusively hers -- all made clear why studio publicists had hopefully dubbed her, "America's Leading Lady." All the big stars had been given such labels then, Mrs Brenner was reminded: America's Sweetheart, the Brooklyn Bonfire, the Orchid of the Screen.

"I bet she really had something," said Joel, as he hung the carefully cleaned picture in its original place of honor over the middle door of the auditorium. "Not the way they always make the old-time stars look on TV."

Mabel was right; the picture did attract a number of curious passers-by. Even a few more customers than usual showed up on Saturday evening. The last show had begun, and Mrs Brenner was totalling the meager receipts for the week when she became aware that someone had been standing for some time in the lobby gazing at the portrait of Florence Faye. Mabel again, she thought; really, enough nostalgia was enough. But, glancing up, she saw a stout, gray-haired woman in her sixties, wearing a mink coat but dressed in the quietest of tastes. The thought that crossed her mind seemed absurd; the profile was distinctly double-chinned, and yet those famous anguished eyebrows -- Mrs Brenner thought she detected a glitter of tears in the dark eyes, as, feeling her gaze, the woman turned with a smile.

"You must be Mrs Brenner. I hope you don't mind my dropping in on you unannounced like this."

"Miss Faye!" Mrs Brenner scrambled down from her stool, opened the box office door and stepped into the lobby, blushing not so much in confusion as in guilty knowledge of the truth.

"How sweet of you to recognize me! Oh, I know I look my age, but I'm proud of it. I'd hate to be the subject of one of those 'How Does She Do It' articles."

Mrs Brenner smiled. "It's so nice of you to come all this way just to say goodbye to the Florence."

"It's the least I could do for the one and only theatre ever named in my honor. When Mabel told me my picture would still be hanging here right to the end, I thought she might be just saying that to please me. It's such a short flight by jet, I had to see for myself."

"See, Mrs Brenner?" With a triumphant smile, Mabel herself walked into the lobby. "I knew Florence wouldn't let us down! I thought I'd let her surprise you."

"Well, she certainly did. But why don't we go upstairs where we can talk more comfortably?" Mrs Brenner stepped into the auditorium long enough to tell Joel.

"Florence Faye in person? This I've got to see. Keep her there till I come up, will you?"

A feast or a famine, thought Mrs Brenner. After weeks with no visitor but Joel and now two at once! But Florence Faye seemed as appreciative as Mabel of the coffee.

"Mabel tells me there's been some talk of turning this into an art house, for revivals?" she said presently.

"Oh -- that was just a wild dream of Joel, the boy who works here. He's a regular bug on old movies. At this stage of the game, I could never undertake anything like that, even if I could afford it."

"I don't think it's such a wild dream at all," said Florence Faye. "New York has at least half a dozen theatres that show nothing but film classics the year around -- besides all their museums. It stands to reason that a city like this, with a university, ought to be able to support one. . . . Suppose some one were willing to put up the money to get it started, would you be interested then?"

Mrs Brenner stared at her. "Miss Faye! You don't mean that you -- Why would you take such a gamble?"

Florence Faye smiled. "All of us retired stars who made our money before the big income tax and invested it have their hobbies. Colleen Moore has her doll house, Corinne Griffith has her ball team, and mine is real estate."

"You mean you'd buy this property?"

"Not necessarily. I could come in as a silent partner for a percentage of the gross. We could work out the details. The point is, this is a well-built little theatre. Restoring it wouldn't cost a fraction of what it would to build a new one this size."

"Well, I still don't know. I wonder what Fred would think."

"He must have been a good businessman, wasn't he?" said Florence Faye. "Give it a year. If it fails -- and I don't know why it should -- it'll be a deductible loss for me and you'll be no worse off. You can still sell to the builders, probably at a higher price than they're offering now. If it succeeds --"

"Lines around the block again!" said Mabel.

"Oh, I know, it all sounds wonderful -- but at my age how could I ever manage that myself? Maybe I'd just better --"

"Joel, who else?" said Mabel. "You know he's dying to try it, and I bet he'll make a go of it, too."

"If necessary, I could find some one to help break him in," said Florence Faye. "To help publicize the opening and so on."

"Well . . . I suppose Fred himself would have switched policies long ago, only without him I just didn't have the heart. It's taken you girls to get me moving again -- especially you, Mabel. . . . I wonder if maybe you could come and stay here with me while all the work is going on?"

"Oh, Mrs Brenner! I'd love to -- just as long as you want me."

"And you, Miss Faye -- I guess I don't have to tell you what you're doing for me."

"And for myself! Don't worry, Mrs Brenner, I wouldn't risk a cent if I didn't think it would pay off."

Mrs Brenner was almost afraid to believe the truth. "And everything would look just the way it did originally?"

"Why not? Art nouveau is very much in again, you know -- and I must say it holds up better than that ghastly 1920's modernistic."

"Art nouveau" Mabel echoed, quite carried away. "Why not use that for the name? The Art Nouveau theatre -- period films in an authentic period setting!"

"Mabel!" Florence Faye looked at her in mock reproach. "Of course I don't insist that picture be kept in the lobby, but, after all, it was the name that brought me here both times."

She was so kind, Mrs Brenner was tempted to tell her the truth. But one of the qualities Fred had appreciated most in her was knowing when to keep her mouth shut.

"Why certainly, Miss Faye," she said. "I wouldn't dream of letting this theatre ever be called anything but the Florence."