



UFCT EMCC

ELECTIONS AND THE BY-LAWS

By holding departmental elections two years ahead of the timetable established by the by-laws of the Board of Higher Education, President Block has indicated that he is willing to translate his rhetoric about democracy at EMCC into fact. We find this heartening. The Gadfly congratulates those elected to the Departmental Personnel and Budget Committees and the Chairmen-elect who are:

Christopher Collins-English; Mary Jacobs-Health and Physical Education; Marvin Kushner-Data Processing; Howard Serlin-Accounting; Michael Shmidman-Social Science; and Paul Zahn-Mathematics.

Of course there is not a one to one equation between elections and democracy. If the procedures, for example, allow for only a limited electorate, they are open to question. The President fell back upon the by-laws to structure the procedures which governed our departmental elections. Frankly we have some serious misgivings about the by-laws.

We find the by-laws' definition of the electorate rather arbitrary. Should non-tenured instructors, as specified by the by-laws, be denied the vote? Their vote would certainly be no less informed than that of a non-tenured Assistant Professor. We would think that all of those on tenure generating lines have an equal stake in their departments and hence an equal claim to the franchise.

We cannot quite fathom why the by-laws grant the vote to administrators who solely as a matter of bureaucratic necessity hold paper appointments in departments in which they do not teach. President Block argued at the faulty meeting of April 5 and in a letter the same day to the chapter that "an administrative person is in his or her position at the pleasure of the President and may be returned to the instructional department at any time." Although the President concludes from this that "they must, therefore, not be denied a voice in departmental affairs," we find this statement a most eloquent argument for the fact that they should indeed be denied that voice. If their status is "at the pleasure of the President"--and we agree wholeheartedly that it is--then such "administrative persons" can be expected to represent the "pleasure of the President" and not the interest of the department from the department's point of view.

There are departments in this college topheavy with administrators with faculty rank. Many of them cannot be returned to the departments because they never belonged to them in the first place. They were hired as Directors and Deans and what-have-you and given a professorial position. If this is merely a necessary expedient because there are no administrative lines, then they should at least be denied a vote in departmental affairs.

(continued)

Forty-six per cent (thirty out of sixty-five) of those eligible to participate cast their ballots in the election last week for officers of the chapter. The results:

President	
William Friedheim.....	29
Write-in.....	1
	Total 30
Vice President	
Roger Dooley.....	26
Abstentions.....	3
Invalid ballot.....	1
	Total 30
Secretary	
Verdelle Garnett.....	28
Abstentions.....	2
	Total 30
Treasurer	
Mark McCloskey.....	19
Leigh Marlowe.....	11
	Total 30

President Block pointed out that at New York Community College, despite the fact that he was eligible to vote in a departmental election, he waived the right because of his administrative status. Unfortunately, the precedent was lost on many administrators in the recent elections. Their votes were not crucial in deciding any of the elections but in the future they could be.

The by-laws delegate the power of veto over departmental elections to the President. The most recent number of Action documents how Harry Eideonse ruthlessly abused this power by overthrowing elections and manipulating departmental politics during his tenure as President of Brooklyn College. The faculty of Queens College for many years suffered similar indignities. Too many Presidents and Deans have used the by-laws to shield practices that are as undemocratic as they are capricious. Of course we do not see our own President as such a tyrant. We assume that he subscribes to both the spirit and substance of democracy. What upsets us is the fact that the by-laws should in any way sanction the arbitrary overturning of any election by any administrator. The very fact that there are Presidents who will exercise their powers with discretion is an empty consolation. It does not detract from our contention that the by-laws are not democratic in the full meaning of the word.

The by-laws are not sacrosanct. Nor are they by definition democratic. Yet administrators, including those at BMCC, defer to them with a reverence normally accorded only to the Bible and the Constitution. The by-laws do not allow for full democratic control by the faculty over its own affairs. Before we have academic democracy in the full sense of the word at BMCC, we must go well beyond the limits established in the by-laws.

PERSONNEL AND BUDGET COMMITTEES

Several departments recently elected Personnel and Budget Committees. This was an important step in extending the control of the faculty over two matters that vitally concern it: employment and tenure. These committees were democratically selected. Democracy, however, implies responsibility; the P & B Committees must be responsible to the constituencies they serve. In particular, we feel that they are obligated to spell out the reasons for granting or denying tenure to the faculty members who fall under their charge. An elected P & B Committee is only of value if its deliberations are (within reason) open and its decisions informed and responsible. The UFCT fully realizes that these committees will have to separate some of their colleagues from the faculty. Decisions such as these cause a great deal of anguish. However, to protect themselves and those faculty members whose services they may terminate, those serving on these committees must clearly detail all the factors and considerations that prompt their decision. Inasmuch as the deliberations of the P & B Committees vitally affect the careers of all members of the faculty, those elected owe their colleagues at least this much protection against possibly arbitrary and personal actions.

We trust that in most cases those elected to serve on the P & B Committees will prove worthy of the faith their peers have placed in them. Once again we extend to them our congratulations.

NOMINATING COMMITTEES

Recently the President appointed a nominating committee to select candidates for a faculty-wide election. Nominations were never open to the faculty at large. We find this disturbing and think that the President has established a very dangerous precedent. Hand-picked nominating committees and procedures that limit the selection of candidates do not bode well for the future of democracy at BMCC. We hope that this will not be a continuing practice at the college.

HORROR STORY

What follows are two unsolicited tales of woe.

In February, two gentlemen, independent of one another, telephoned me, both claiming that the Chairman of the English Department, then Dr Gerald Cohen, had hired them for the Spring semester, only to terminate their services after the first day of classes. Their stories tended to reinforce one another. Except for minor details, they were essentially the same.

Since both gentlemen are presently seeking positions in the New York City area, they have for their own protection quite understandably requested that I do not reveal their names. They have, however, granted permission to tell their stories.

I will refer to the two gentlemen as Dr X and Mr Y not because I wish to embellish the tale with the trappings of a cloak and dagger mystery but rather to protect their anonymity.

Dr X was to teach a full load. He had been given a schedule and rosters for all of his classes. He actually taught one day when Dr Cohen informed him by letter that he had been relieved of his courses. When Dr X telephoned me a few days later, he was understandably distraught. He had given up a part-time job and leads to several fulltime positions in order to teach at BMCC. He now found himself without a position and little hope, with the semester already underway, of finding a university position for the remainder of the academic year. Dr X claimed that he had a firm verbal commitment from Dr Cohen which was clearly the case in view of his teaching one day. Dr X was led to believe that a letter from the President would follow, as a formality, in the mail. He felt that the chairman had betrayed his trust.

The particulars of Mr Y's case are substantially the same. Dr Cohen hired him to teach three classes and held out the possibility of a fourth course. On several occasions, Mr Y telephoned Dr Cohen to elicit information about his schedule. On every occasion Dr Cohen refused to talk to Mr Y. Finally, Dr Cohen did answer the phone and told Mr Y that a letter containing the information he requested would be in the mail that day. As it turned out, Dr Cohen used the letter to inform Mr Y that he would not be teaching any courses at BMCC. Like Dr X, Mr Y found himself unemployed at a date too late to find a position elsewhere.

Both Dr X and Mr Y asked that the union intervene on their behalf. Subsequently, on two occasions I met with Dean Draper. He said that the college had made it clear that the employment of both instructors was conditional upon registration. Since the classes did not materialize, he continued, the college did not need their services. I pointed out that this could not be true at least in Dr X's case for he had received the rosters of his classes and had actually met with one of them. In addition, two instructors in the English Department had absorbed Dr X's and Mr Y's students and their courses had swelled to almost twice their normal size, indicating that the classes in question had indeed materialized. Dean Draper explained away the matter of Dr X's rosters as a bureaucratic mixup. He insisted that both men should have realized that the college had not made a firm commitment to employ either of them. (Dean Draper made no comment when it was pointed out to him that he had interviewed Dr X and indeed made such a commitment.) Hence, neither should have ceased trying to find a position elsewhere. At this point I again pressed the matter of the class rosters. One would naturally assume that his position was secure, I suggested, if the college issued rosters and he had actually taught a class. At this juncture, I felt, it was natural for one to assume that he could cease looking elsewhere and resign his part-time position. Dean Draper laughed and responded by saying, "You can't be serious." Did Dr X really think that after teaching a day of classes and receiving rosters that the college thereby "committed" itself to retaining him? Dean Draper said that it was foolish of Dr X to give up his other job. Must one teach six months before he can assume that he is in the employ of the college?

Accompanied by Dr X, I paid a second visit to Dean Draper's office. Dr X soon lost his patience with Dean Draper's pathetic sophistry and cut the meeting short.

The cases of Dr X and Mr Y call into question the integrity of the administration. The jobs of the two men were sacrificed to the perverted ethic of the bureaucratic efficiency. The excuse that "the classes did not materialize" is a myth. The classes did materialize. What happened is that the administration miscalculated its budget; it did not have the money to pay Dr X's and Mr Y's salaries. Dr X and Mr Y (and their students) were expendable and the Chairman of the English Department did not even have the good grace to inform the two gentlemen personally of their fate. In the case of Mr Y he misled the instructor on the telephone on the same day that he dispatched a letter terminating his position.

When I told Dean Draper that, to protect all parties concerned, it might be wise to put conditions of employment in writing, he dismissed the suggestion, laughed, and claimed that it would make for too much paperwork. The cynicism of the statement would be hilarious if it were not so tragic to the injured parties.

This case is closed; neither Dr X nor Mr Y intend any legal action, warranted though it might be. But the incident has a significance for all members of the faculty. Several instructors have recalled that they never received their formal letters of appointment until well into September of their first year, after they had begun to teach. Would they have been dismissed if the administration had miscalculated its budget? Has the bureaucracy ground us up so finely that we no longer behave responsibly toward our fellows?

STORY

Autumn Harvest

by Jesse Pavis

The boy and his father waited at the curb for the traffic to thin or for the red light to stop the cars. The boy loosely held his father's hand, watching the people walking on the other side of the street, bobbing as they walked, colored like the animals in his books.

"Where is the hospital?" the boy asked his father.

"Over there," the father said, pointing to a black iron door.

"The light's red now, Daddy."

"Ha, ha"

"What are you laughing for, Daddy?"

"Nothing."

The boy tightly pressed his father's fingers as he walked across the street, feeling proud because his father followed him. Hospital -- that was something new to him, although now it just looked like any other gray building. Yet there must be something different about this one. His father didn't want to go there and Mama almost cried. He looked at his father. His lips were drawn and he was squinting. The little boy wondered why he had laughed. His father's hat was almost falling off the back of his head.

It was a glaring sunny day. The cars and windows of the shops sparkled, the sky was barely streaked and there were no shadows in the streets. The father and son reached the wrought iron door to the gray building. The father pulled the door open and his son stepped through. Then as the door closed the boy squeezed his father's hand.

"It's dark in here, Daddy."

"What do we do now?"

I remember, the father said to himself . . . Sometimes you come in through an alley and your mother holds the door for you and it is tin and you kick it because you like to hear it rattle. And your mother shakes you because she is afraid the hospital people will come running over to her. There was always a guard near the door

They walked to a little table set in the center of the hall. It was covered with stacks of paper and red, blue, and yellow cards. A woman with a pencil in her hand talked with the people who were lined up in front of her. The boy wondered whether she would mind giving him some of the cards, even if she would give him the red ones, he could put them in his cigar boxes.

The woman talked with his father and the boy put his hand on the red cards but then she finished speaking and glared at him. Anyway his father pulled him away from the table.

"Where are we going?" he asked his father, frightened of the bare white corridors and watching other children following their mothers.

"To see the doctor, I told you."

"But why ain't you a doctor?"

"Everybodynain't a doctor," he answered. Now if his wife had taken the boy she wouldn't have asked him that. He had never asked his own mother.

They reached the wooden gate to a small partition on the floor. A woman sat by the gate speaking to everyone before she'd let them in to take their place on the long wooden benches.

"Have you taken him here before?" she asked the father.

"No," he answered her.

"Do you have a letter from your doctor?"

"No."

"What is the matter with him?"

"I don't know," the father said, "I ain't a doctor." She was just like all the other women who sat behind desks and asked questions. They watched you, then listened, scribbling on paper.

The woman looked at him as he walked through the gate. A few people tried to be smart like him. He was squeezing his boy's hand, probably hurting him, bending his small head down and whispering to him. If he wanted any help he'd have to swallow it.

"Now we have to wait to see another woman," the father was explaining to his son.

"But I don't want to stay here!"

"I don't want to either but you make out like you're big like me. See, I am sitting back against the bench, my legs are crossed and my hands are in my lap. Just for a little while . . . come on, come on . . ."

How had his own mother kept him quiet, the father thought. She had a warm soft way of talking that most people thought was singing. And even if she didn't talk she'd hum and he'd listen to her and even put his hand lightly to her throat and feel it shivering. But maybe he didn't sit quiet at all, just like his own son who was now standing on the bench and trying to straddle it.

"Who are we going to see?" the boy asked, bringing his face close and whispering.

"I told you, another woman."

She would be worse than the others. There she was coming through the gate.

"I knew this one would be old," she said aloud.

"Why Daddy?" his son asked him.

"They always are,"

She walked into a glass room. He couldn't hear what she was saying to a young girl there but he could see her gray hair and the deep rouge on her cheeks. Now she sent the girl from the office who passed out forms to the people who were sitting on the benches. He took his quickly. He could fill it out by himself. Not like his mother who had to shake her head when they passed her one. He could write quickly too. "You don't write? You don't write?" They used to ask his mother, leading her to a special room. Then when she returned to the bench he'd tell her not to cry. Perhaps she wasn't even going to cry but she'd turn away from him. He could already write his name and things like that and in a little while he could write everything for her,

Later the girl came back and inspected the forms carefully and making the people correct those that had been filled out wrong.

"I want to walk," the boy said to his father.

"Go ahead but don't go where I can't see you."

"No, I want you to walk with me."

"I gotta wait here, son."

"Why?"

"Cause you gotta see the doctor."

"Why ain't you a doctor?"

"Don't talk so much. I'm not going to take you with me anymore if you don't leave me alone. You're getting to be a big boy now."

"But there's too much noise here, Daddy."

If the boy would only leave him alone., Yet when his mother sat with him he couldn't bear sitting still either. Once there was a long waiting room in a basement. It was narrow and the benches on either side of the corridor were only a few feet apart. They were white metal benches and he could scratch the paint off no matter how carefully his mother watched him. Most of the time he wouldn't sit there though. He would run down the corridor, looking at the faces on both sides. Sometimes he'd even go upstairs and look through the windows. When he came back to his mother she would still be sitting there. He used to ask her how she could stay there so long. "You won't always have to wait there, Mama," he'd tell her. "I'm gonna be a doctor, then nobody will have to wait here." "You're going to a doctor?" she'd repeat to him. She'd shake her head and then he would run down the corridor and come back with a drink of cold water for his mother.

"Daddy," the boy said, "You didn't say it was going to be such a long time."

"Everyone else is waiting."

"But why does everyone have to wait?"

"Because that old woman with the gray hair has a lot to say. Anyway the doctor isn't even here."

"Well, I'm going to find him." The boy pulled the gate, opened it, and walked out.

He sat back like his mother. Everything was gone. Surely he could see it just like he knew the boy would never find the doctor. He had been in this very same place before, although maybe then the room was narrower than this one, like a corridor. Or maybe it was a little room with a barred window and gray iron benches. The kid was going to come back in a minute. Years, many years had passed. Yet he was not just fooling when he talked with his mother. But things happened that couldn't be stopped. Just like leaves falling off trees in the autumn, piling up one by one. You just know that one handful falls and you can't sleep and you figure and you figure. Another handful falls and you watch it fluttering almost as if it will stop. Then one day you walk through leaves packed solidly against your legs . . . everything is gone and done. Yes, he had been here before, with his mother who would let him lead her to whatever bench he wanted her to sit on/

He sat quietly, resting his head on his hand, not noticed by the other people who were waiting too. Although his eyes were still squinting and his mouth was set he was laughing at the little boy who had promised his mother he would be a doctor. You stop growing after a while, he thought. You're not just old . . . hell, no . . . he was as strong as he ever was. His father was a clerk, he was a clerk, what was the point of waiting or believing what you used to say to your mother? His mother knew all about the leaves, that was why she used to hug him and kiss him when he told her all about the wonderful things he was going to do.

"Daddy," the boy said, walking back to the bench and putting his head down on his father's lap. "Nobody will talk with me here."

"No?" his father answered him/

"No," the boy repeated. "I asked them why the doctor wasn't here. They told me that they didn't know and then I told them that I would tell you."

"He'll be here soon."

"But I don't want to wait anymore."

"We have to . . ."

"Why ain't you a doctor, Daddy?"

"I don't know."

"Well, what is a doctor?"

"I'll show him to you when he comes in."

They waited a long time, until mothers and their children were sitting on all the benches, until some had to stand in back of the benches. Then someone whispered that the doctor was coming in and the word spread through the crowd. A young man in a freshly pressed white suit walked in. He took a small glass office to the left of the old woman's.

"There's the doctor," the father told his son.

"Why does he dress in white, Daddy?"

"Because he is a doctor."

"Daddy, why don't you want to talk with me. You haven't played with me at all."

"I am just tired, son."

"Why, Daddy?"

"I ain't a doctor, son."

FILM REVIEW

Blow Up

by Leonard Quart

An enigmatic smile crosses the face of the mod photographer as he listens to the sound of a non-existent tennis ball. For a moment he joins with a group of young mummies in a pantomime tennis game and then the film ends with a parting shot of the photographer walking away, a minuscule object in an infinite sea of green grass. The scene is the culmination of Michelangelo Antonioni's glorious and ambiguous evocation of mod London. In moving from his characteristically bleak Italian landscape to "swinging London," Antonioni adds a hint of a conventional plot but continues to create a world which unfolds calmly, symmetrically, and antiseptically as an extended metaphor for a complex state of being. Though more realistic and concrete in its social detail than his other films -- pot parties, rock sessions, fashion photography, and peace marches pass before the camera -- it is also the most elliptic of Antonioni's works. There is less dialogue and past history provided for the major characters than is usual and we are left to construct and comprehend motivation and feeling from the beautifully composed frames that are Antonioni's trademark.

In this richly designed and elusive world we discover clues to the photographer's consciousness and we comprehend that he is a man who feels kittle for and connects even less with others. He lives fashionably and comfortably, wedded to his camera which is the guide and mediator of his reality. He carries it everywhere and in a telling photographic session he simulates the sexual act with his model with the camera as his organ. His friendships and his women are fragmentary sensations and contacts with little involvement or continuity. He gains pleasure from his craft and desires more money so he can have greater freedom but both his conception of photography and his dream of freedom are vague and undefined. In his meanderings through an Edenic English park he seems to take pleasure in its luxuriant stillness and in the feel of his camera as he leaps and gambols among the greenery taking pictures. Antonioni sets the scene beautifully by using the sound of the wind rustling the leaves as an augur of impending doom. The photographer accidentally witnesses and photographs a man and a woman making love in the park. The woman comes after the photographer, frantically pleading for the roll of film and offering a sexual reward for it. He does not give her the film and blows up the pictures in his darkroom to discover that a murder has taken place in the park. At first the discovery only arouses his excitement, another titillating sensation to absorb but hedonism is followed by intimations of a growing consciousness of himself and others. It is a consciousness which commits itself to no particular end or vision of existence but remains suspended in uncertain ambiguity.

Antonioni's photographer is an inhabitant of a world which is affluent and empty, a reality reality which unfolds not as a bizarre nightmare but as a cold comfortable death. This is not the film of a moralist who inveighs against the decadence and hollowness of contemporary life but one of a director who allows the camera to describe the way life is lived today. There are no answers posited here to the enigmas of modern existence; there is just the world and man's consciousness trying to bind something together in the void.

PERSONAL VIEWPOINT

On A Revolutionary Purpose For the Union

by Joseph Conlin

I

A great deal of talk about the purpose of a union in an academic community has passed through the pages of THE GADFLY this year, through the pages of the New York Local's Action, and in the offices and corridors of this college. Most of the talk has centered on the union's obvious functions of raising wages, reducing teaching loads, presenting faculty grievances, legally aiding unjustly-treated faculty, and guaranteeing just and rational proceedings for reappointment, granting of tenure, and welfare benefits.

These are all worthy goals and I personally support all union efforts in achieving them. However, at the risk of heresy, if these are to be the raison d'etre of the United Federation of College Teachers, I find it impossible to muster any considerable enthusiasm for the union. Such "bread-and-butter" issues have, of course, traditionally been the purpose of American Labor unions and those unions have, by their own criteria, been a resounding success. But they have also been tragi-comic failures. If the goal of the UFCT is to strive and strive so that --someday-- we can be just like the Plumbers Brotherhood or the Federation of Retail Clerks, I begin to see the point of those colleagues who argue that college instructors should never join a union because college instructors are "professional people." Not because it is demeaning for "professional people" to seek higher wages and the lot through unions but because it would be extremely demeaning to mark victory by the erection of a union like those which characterize American labor today. Indeed, who needs a union bureaucracy to match in size and lack of imagination the bureaucracy that governs our colleges even if the new one does maintain our salaries? Who needs a coterie of easily-corruptible, high-salaried union officials to bargain for us at "contract time" each year and then announce to our glee that we will now receive some 67.8¢ more per credit hour and may go to Europe for the lowest group rates among Eastern Colleges? The trouble with the administrations of our colleges is such a bureaucracy -- who needs another one? In graduate school a frequent sermon referred to the Ph.D. as "the union card" and, in truth, if the purpose of our UFCT is merely to gain "bread-and-butter," the Ph.D. can do the job better and more worthily.

My grievance against "bread-and-butter" unions --of steamfitters or college instructors-- is that by their own definition they accept the system in which they work as legitimately established. In their acceptance they help to preserve it for they seek only to become a part of it themselves. The instructors' union which seeks only its "right to bargain collectively" is de facto accepting the fact that the other party --the administration-- also has the right to bargain. It is my contention that the union must categorically reject the legitimacy of the adversary administration and honestly confront the fact that the simple existence of these administrations, as presently constituted, afflict colleges such as BMCC with a pervasive sickness. The union must assume the revolutionary purpose of upending the basic structure of the contemporary public college and reorganizing these colleges from the bureaucratic business concerns they are into humanistic academic communities of teachers and learners. *

II

The structure of a college like BMCC is fundamentally characterized by an administration responsible only to agencies outside the college, dictating policy to faculty, and directing the actions of its students. The administration is management, responsible to no-one within its factory, which orders about its employees, the faculty, and turns out its product, the students. The college's phrase, "servicing the disadvantaged," is here instructive and the factory metaphor could not have been better illustrated than by the President's recent reasoning that, whatever the possible groundlessness of an Instructor's dismissal, the power to hire and fire belonged to the administration and, in this case, the administration elected to fire.

* This essay is addressed to the faculty; it says nothing about the legitimate role of students in the academic community nor does it suggest any means by which they should secure it. This role is for the students themselves to define and secure. For a member of the faculty to presume to direct them would be analagous to the present administration-faculty relationship which this essay abhors.

"Hiring and firing" is indeed the prerogative of the employer of a textile mill. It might be suggested, however, that a scholar's and teacher's qualifications should be ruled upon only by his fellows. In this case, three-quarters of the dismissed instructor's colleagues confirmed his qualifications but the President saw fit to ignore them.

It is neither just, legitimate, nor traditional that the faculty of a college should be employees of an internally-impotent administration. The idea of the academy understands a community of teachers and learners. The college is supposed to be, in its essence, a place where teaching and learning takes place. But colleges such as BMCC are nothing of the sort. They are places where "education" becomes an incidental excuse for administrators to provide positions, salaries, status, and power for themselves.

It is undeniable that the complexity and size of contemporary public education require a highly-specialized administrative apparatus. The vision of a vernal academe or a medieval Oxonian circle of philosophers is pleasant but quite without the realm of reality. However, if administrators --like secretaries-- are necessary, it is they who should be the employees, not those who are the teachers, essential parts of learning.

BMCC pays lip service to this idea of the college but in a way which is even more offensive to it. Thus, virtually every administrator holds faculty rank, almost monopolizing, in fact, the highest positions of Professor and Associate Professor. "Deans" whose duties appear to be the assignment of rooms and the supervision of maintenance are entitled to be called "Professor." Nor is the title merely an Italianate honorific. Professor-bureaucrats have tenure and a vote in faculty elections, a fact which takes on more meaning when viewed in light of the fact that there are a great many administrators who deliver a handsome bloc of votes at "faculty" elections. "Professors" who pass their day putting cards in alphabetical order (the euphemism is "creative administration") can sit in Departmental meetings and nullify the vote of a teacher on a matter of teaching. In one department, at least, fully one-third of those eligible to vote in the recent chairman election were primarily administrators.* Even, reductio ad absurdum, the college's Business Manager claims professorial status and an automatic seat on the "faculty" council. (The proper euphemism is "Chief Fiscal Officer.") With all due respect, the Business Manager's task is to add and subtract figures and not to judge the merits of adding a course in Jacobean Drama, drafting examination policy, or uttering one public syllable on any matter concerning teaching.

In a word, the faculty at BMCC is confronted by a topsy-turvy state of affairs which is recent in the history of education and by no means novel to midtown Manhattan. Our college is governed by administrators who have successfully relegated us to the status of employees and students to nothing better than commodities. They operate independently, usually arrogantly, and often to the detriment of what is left of the academic community.

III

How did it get that way?

It is a complicated story and neither completely within the ken of this writer nor, in detail, relevant to the point at hand. One obvious origin is the fact that the relatively recent public college was the creation of a governmental bureaucracy and that administration chronologically preceded institution. Presidents and Chancellors and Deans and Directors and Chairmen and Business Managers all had their posts and their salaries before the first Lecturer was hired or the first note scribbled. The public college did not grow organically and thus, "administration" had a substantial headstart in devising policies and establishing its power.

This was unavoidable. If it were the whole story, faculties could claim that the present woeful state of affairs was none of their making. In fact, academics must bear a large share of the blame. For administrators were traditionally drawn from the ranks of academics. Lured by higher salaries, smitten by the prospect of power over others, they were rapidly transformed from academics with a loyalty to their profession and colleagues into bureaucrats loyal to the bureaucracy. Administrators of this cloth were and are capable of obnoxious decisions; they are often no better than professional bureaucrats. But, so long as the opportunity for advancement into administration was clear, ambitious and even contented teachers could comfort themselves with the delusion that administration was an adjunct of the faculty rather than, as was increasingly the fact, vice versa.

* Which administrator-professors, it should be noted, also occupy "lines" provided ostensibly for teachers.

Recently, even this illusion of faculty control has been destroyed by the advent of the professional administrator. Previously the servicers of government and commercial bureaucracies, public administration schools now grind out M.S.'s and Ph.D.'s in the field of college administration who have garnered an increasingly larger share of administrative plums and who choose their lieutenants from their alma maters and at administrative "workshops." Thus, BMCC boasts a Dean of Faculty who never served on any faculty but that of a school of public administration. Yet he has the power to veto a candidate for a teaching position in music, physics, medieval literature, and Italian. Not that the History Professor become Dean of Faculty is any more qualified to rule on the appointment of an Instructor of Biology than the professional bureaucrat. But, the Historian-Dean could be expected to acknowledge his incompetence in plant life, accept the recommendation of the Biology faculty and chairman, and thus by default judge the applicant on his qualifications. The professionally-trained administrator can be expected to have no such respect for the various disciplines. His understanding of academic affairs is based on the instruction of other professional bureaucrats. His first loyalty is not to the building of a strong faculty nor to the mutual respect of the disciplines but to the smooth functioning of the bureaucratic machine. He may make the correct decision more often than not. But the fact remains that he has a decision-making power which he is unequipped to make and which, in any event, is utterly illegitimate.

IV

That the interests of the administrative bureaucracy and the faculty often clash needs little demonstration; its manifestations are everywhere. Virtually every member of the BMCC faculty has experienced the incredible arrogance with which they are often received by administrators. (If the faculty is sometimes deluded, there is no doubt that the administrators know where the power is.) A mild example was the case of the college President who unabashedly informed the first meeting of "his" faculty that, unfortunately, they would not see him about very much because of the pressing nature of his duties. What, one daigns to ask, is the first duty of the college President? Advising the administrators of Harrisburg Community College on how they can get accredited?

There was the incident of the Dean who has busy at work fixing his door jamb when approached by a departmental chairman on a matter of academic affairs whereupon the Dean snapped that could not the Chairman see that the Dean was "busy" and either wait of return later when the weighty matter was settled? The relegation of a chairman to a status a niche below a doorjamb is an engaging symbol and the incident illustrates what Deans do with their well-compensated time.

There is the fact that Presidents of colleges carry out their affairs (largely the reception of Presidents of other colleges, it appears) in plush, oversized offices while students and faculty lack adequate lounge facilities and classrooms are overcrowded. The office of an Acting Dean was recently doubled in size while new Instructors were piked into already crowded offices and informal faculty-student discussions of such secondary matters as "Literature" are shunted to "the hotel across the street" because of "lack of room." There is the spectacle of the College which claims penury when requested to compensate its faculty members for the loss of a vacation while it simultaneously announces with a yawn that a five figure annual grant has been provided so that the President might have a second residence.

Instructors are dismissed from their positions after the first day of class due to "lack of funds" (the displaced students can always go into already crowded classes, of course) while administrators pocket generous honoraria for "advising" the College Center. There is a Dean who was requested to dispatch a routine letter to an Instructor's draft board explaining that he was employed at the College who explained in the letter to his bureaucratic counterpart that the Instructor was expendable.

But the purpose of this essay is not to catalogue horror stories. The faculty at BMCC tells and hears them in their offices and in the corridors daily and could tell the writer a few he has not heard. Nor is it the purpose of this essay to attribute such tales solely to BMCC nor to place the blame for them on personalities. If the reader concludes from these incidents that so-and-so is a bastard, the essay is a failure. The point is that these incidents are the product not of personalities but of a system which accepts an administration utterly without responsibility to the faculty and devoted primarily to maintaining its existence, its power, its position, its status, its salaries and --not even secondarily-- the interests of faculty and students.

If the administration of this or any similar college could ever devise a "prospectus" whereby they could eliminate faculty and students and still justify their salaries, they would not hesitate for a moment. For, when their very existence is devoted to

And dependent on running an efficient machine, faculty and students are only annoying encumbrances which, ideally, should be replaced like tubes by transistors. The bureaucracy's end is itself, nothing more, and that any number of bureaucrats may be nice fellows in a cocktail lounge is beside the point. Slavery corrupted the slaveholder, cut-throat competition corrupts the most generous of businessmen. The most humane man on the second floor is necessarily corrupted by his corrupt position. Consider the administrator at BMCC who was confronted with the facts that he had lied and acted totally without scruples in a certain matter. He could not deny the incontrovertible but responded only that he was personally sorry that the complainant had been unjustly treated. He was sincerely sorry . . . but he could not change the situation in keeping with his better instincts. The bureaucracy required that he continue to lie and "administer" the situation unscrupulously.

V

More comical than tragic is the fact that a substantial number --very likely even a majority-- of college administrators are completely superfluous, even to the bureaucracy. The Dean wrestling with the noisy door was probably doing so more out of boredom than annoyance. The "busy work" memos that flood our desks and say nothing (though often so amusingly) speak eloquently of the waste of salaries and floor space on professional administrators' former colleagues. Consider the apparitions that constantly pace the halls in search of a piece of paper, a smoking student, or small talk. (A group of students was recently treated to the sight of a high administrator racing at heart-attack speed lest two students illicitly exit by elevator.) These fifth wheels are --make no mistake-- happy and secure in their sinecures. They realize their functional uselessness; they panic at the vaguest innuendo in their direction; they attempt to secure their positions by timidity and sycophantism; they truly fret about the fact (to their personal credit) that they just have nothing to do. Thus the defensive arrogance, the "busy work," the ludicrous memos, the superfluous new "programs," the irrelevant policies, the prospectuses and revised prospectuses, the enlarged offices, the organizational charts and revised organizational charts, the unending conferences, workshops, and bilge, the mutual back-scratching.

VI

This situation warrants pity but not to the extent of condonation. It is the purpose of this essay to suggest that the destruction of this system must be the union's revolutionary purpose. For the sake of faculty morale, the very existence of learning at BMCC, and for the sake of the humanity of the legitimate members of the college community, the union must work actively and incessantly --not simply for "bread and butter" nor, least of all, to become a part of this system, but-- to wrest the direction of the college from administrators and relegate them to the clerkships for which they have been so eminently well-trained.

It is not an easy task for it is revolutionary. It will be necessary that we sustain a closer loyalty among ourselves --loyalty to the college-- than we now claim. It will be necessary that the UFCY include more members than the slight majority in which it presently takes pride. For I am suggesting a kind of syndicalism wherein, through the union, we will build a legitimate, humanistic, and communitarian college structure within the banal and corrupt structure of the old.

Though difficult, it is not an impossible task. BMCC, in fact, has a genuine opportunity to establish a new college structure for the example of others. The very newness of the college --from which the administration derives its exaggerated importance-- can actually be of assistance to us: the individual members of the administration do not have the deeply rooted security of their counterparts elsewhere and are concerned with backstabbing bureaucratic rivals as well as managing the faculty. Still, carefully laid plans are necessary and an incomplete and tentative program can be suggested.

VII

First, the faculty must itself recognize its right to govern the college, accept the responsibilities that accompany that right, and begin to act immediately as the college's governors. The union, for example, must cease to ask the administration to rule on this, state a policy on that, grant such a privilege, modify such a practice.

 It is this very requesting that aids the administration in establishing their power and accustoming the faculty to accepting it. The faculty, for the time through the medium of the union, must state unequivocally what the policies of the college should be. The issue of tenure can serve as an example. Such an important aspect of our professional life cannot be left to administrators. Yet, to request that the administration establish guidelines is to do just that. The union should state on what basis tenure is to be granted and defy any administrative alternative by recourse to demonstration, appeal above the college, recourse to the mass media, and so on! Of course, so long as the administration exists, union statements have no actual effect. But the statement of policies will, on the one hand, help to shake the administrative apparatus and, on the other, will provide experience in formulating policy for such time as the faculty is prepared to seize that right.

Second, in the period before the union has achieved legally-recognized bargaining status, the faculty should take a leaf from the books of British opposition parties and the "new left," namely, parallel institutions. That is, the faculty should name its own "shadows" paralleling administrative officials and groups. The faculty should democratically name its own shadow Deans, shadow Teacher Evaluation Teams, shadow appointment committees, its own publicity director, etc., wherever the administratively-appointed equivalents are illegitimate and unrepresentative of the faculty. The posts of "Dean of Faculty" and "Dean of Students," for example, are patently purely academic positions. But they are presently filled by administratively-appointed bureaucrats responsible only to bureaucratic superiors. Decisions in curricula, appointments, reappointments, evaluation of teaching, student activities, etc should obviously be made by the faculty. The final word on each is presently the province of administrative personnel answerable to no faculty member.

"Parallel" Deans, Committees, and other groups --democratically chosen by and from the faculty-- could organize the expression of a democratic policy paralleling bureaucratic claptrap. When grievances are to be publicized, for instance, against an administrative Dean, the shadow Dean would speak for the faculty. Does the City of New York require certain reports on college activities? Let administrative committees find themselves challenged in the Hearing Room by a faculty committee. Let the faculty ignore the absurd "faculty" council and convene its own, spared the presence of Business Managers and Deans of Administration.

Third, the union should immediately direct its attention to preparing an exhaustive study of this college to be published and presented to the City University, the State University, the Board of Higher Education, holders of public office, influential educators and the mass media. This is our answer to the farcical Middle States Evaluation Team, comprised of administrators interviewing administrators and reporting to administrators. The study must be democratically-organized: committees of union members and (according to their wish) non-members representing a broad segment of the faculty community should investigate every cranny of the college's operation: its courses, its methods of introducing courses and curricula, its methods of hiring, firing and promoting, its values, its teaching, its administration, its disposition of funds, student affairs --everything.

The collections of "horror stories" (and paeans) should be organized by a select committee and presented with recommendations to all interested groups. There should be no illusions that such groups as the City University and the Board of Higher Education will act on them of their own volition. These are, after all, simply one step heavenward on the great organizational chart in the sky. However, if the documented report substantiates my own analysis of the malaise of our college or any equivalent situation, pressure will be brought to bear toward doing something, preferably our own recommendations but, then, almost any change would represent an improvement. James Wechsler of the New York Post recently inspired an investigation of the city's juvenile detention halls by publicizing the deplorable situation in that other bureaucratically-afflicted institution. It is reasonable to count upon journalists such as Wechsler if the union of faculty members of colleges such as BMCC can make their point.

Fourth, and on this the union has this year shown it hardly needs patronizing advice, the Chapter must maintain an unrelenting pressure on the administration. THE GADFLY must continue to act as it has in the past, as a gadfly. It has and should publicize administration depredations that without THE GADFLY would go unnoticed except by the few. The union must also press the administration relentlessly on every issue. This, of course, is merely what any good union must do but it also serves a revolutionary purpose. The administration's goal is to run like a well-lubricated machine. Thus, while the President had to support a chairman recently in his groundless dismissal of an instructor in order to maintain the morale of the bureaucracy, he was obligated in the process to endorse an absurd, discredited evaluation of the teacher and the personal animosity of the chairman. Publically, we heard only of the formal endorsement.

But somewhere along the line, in one of the suites on the second floor, someone said to somebody: "Godd God, man, what kind of fool are you?" Or, if they did not, somebody higher up the line is going to warn the President not to allow such a blunder again. The bureaucracy simply does not like the unsettling effects of the agitation which such episodes inevitably produce.

Or, as in the case of the instructor who was dismissed after his first day in class. The administrator who dealt with the union on the issue was called and caught in several bald-faced lies. It did not change the outcome of the case! As long as the bureaucracy is in charge, no amount of justice on an aggrieved instructor's part or called lies on the administration's part is going to make any difference. But, once again, somewhere along the line, the called liar is going to be told that if he cannot get away with his lies to the faculty he is not going to make much of an administrator.

This sort of aggravation is the type of thing which can totter the administration. Simply by injecting disunity into administrative councils, the union can further its aims. One means by which the administration has successfully maintained its position is by dividing the faculty against itself. Let our oxen do some goring.

Fifth, the union must itself remain an open and democratic organization. I set before the Chapter the task of seizing what is rightfully its own but which is, nevertheless, not its province at the present time. The union must merit the role it defines for itself by maintaining a "purity" in just those things which the administration lacks. There must be no arbitrary decisions; policy must be made openly and democratically; all members must share in the decisions of the union as they should share in the decisions of the college; officers must be representatives, not themselves administrators.