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Oct 7, 80

THE SPARK

SGA: DEMOCRACY BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Lucía Núñez

In my past experience with Student Government Assemblies the series of motions made, debated on, and passed have only amounted to boredom. Previously, important issues such as the building of the skating rink and the reduction at the infirmary have brought in more than the usual amount of house presidents and concerned students. These open meetings included members of the administration, the student body, and believe it or not a few faculty. Debates were open. Having open meetings on controversial issues affecting us all is crucial to maintaining a student government which is responsive to the college community.

This year's third meeting of Student Government on September 24th, was one that all members of the college community should be aware of. It should not simply be thrown aside as another boring meeting of pseudo-politicians. This meeting concerned whether another referendum should be brought up on ConnPirg. Many concerned individuals who came to the meeting were shunned away as the SGA suddenly decided to close its doors. This new kind of democracy being conceptualized here at Connecticut College should not set a precedent for future meetings.

The specifics of last week's meeting are as follows: After the roll call, and some initial discussion on business, the Parliamentarian, (a non-voting member) made a motion to call an executive session. According to the constitution, however, "The Student Assembly, at the request of the Pres-

ident or a voting member, may entertain a motion to hold a close executive session for ensuring the confidentiality of a vote or discussion." (p. 8 of the constitution) Why was an executive session called? When questioned as to why, the SGA president said that it was called because a rumor was heard that an uncontrollable number of students would be attending the meeting. If there were to be a large number of interested students, this would not seem to be reason to shut out their views, but rather all the more reason for keeping the meeting open in order to air them.

After the motion was made, a further violation of SGA by-laws was made. According to Robert's Rules of Order, the motion to call for an executive session requires a call for debate. The SGA president failed to make such a call. In the minutes of this meeting, the names of those who made the motions were left out. Perhaps, this was done on purpose?

Rumors and leaks concerning what occurred behind closed doors indicate further abuses of SGA's responsibilities to the student body. The issue at hand, whether a new referendum on ConnPirg should take place, was improperly discussed. Perhaps an attempt was made to prejudice the original motion. Instead of limiting discussion on the referendum for freshmen, student government members chose this time to discuss the funding mechanism of ConnPirg. The result of the

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We Almost Lost Arkansas!

Terry Greene

Huddled together in the basement with a few close friends, I wasn't really afraid. I had resigned myself to death. Suddenly, there came a hardly noticeable flash - not the carnage my mind had anticipated. No destruction followed. Instead a utopia emerged out of the clearing smoke and ash before me.

Awakening, I was at first relieved to discover that nuclear war had not yet become a reality. Yet, I was left uneasy knowing that if such a war does come to pass, it will not consist of merely a flash, devoid of suffering; the end result will surely not be a utopia.

Unfortunately, even my initial relief was short-

lived. Later that morning, while leaving the post office, N.Y. Times in hand, my heart fell as I glanced at the headlines. An explosion had occurred in the Titan II missile silo. I read to see if Arkansas still existed. It did. Apparently, the warhead itself, by far the most powerful in the country, did not explode.

After reading The Times this past week, I fear that the possibility of a nuclear disaster is ever increasing. This could result from a conflict abroad escalating into nuclear war. Politicians have claimed that such a war is unthinkable. Yet, this week, while speaking of the situation in Iran and Iraq, Senator Muskie claimed that

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EDITORIAL: from the Boiler Room

In the basement of the Chapel, a boiler (christened Bertha) erupts at various intervals, making us aware of her presence. Whenever we try to ignore her, periodic grunts remind us that she is there. She has been here longer than the SPARK has been in existence; she saw the beginning of what is now the SPARK, which was formerly named the "Boiler Room Press" after her. During long hard hours, and late nights, she has kept the newspaper's staff company and awake as they worked on the last touches of layout.

We are writing about the boiler to show her that although we've changed our name, she is not forgotten. The name the SPARK was chosen as a substitute when staff members decided that it was time we "sparked" the student's awareness and active interest in controversial issues of local and worldwide importance. Whether or not we should promote the proliferation of nuclear weapons and plants, what to do about the increasing amounts of chemicals in our environment, the upcoming presidential election, and the potential for our nation becoming involved in war in the Middle East are only a few crucial topics we plan to cover. If you have opinions you would like to see voiced, send your articles, artwork, poems, etc. to Lucia Nunez, box 977. Pieces from faculty or those living outside the college are also appreciated.

Lucia Nunez
Lucia Nunez

Reagan's Dream: "A Shining City on a Hill"

-Sally Susman

On Sunday, September 21, the presidential contenders John B. Anderson and Ronald Reagan met at the Baltimore Convention Center to participate in the first multi-party debate. In a race that is very close, many considered this debate to be a crucial confrontation.

Before the microphones were even turned on, one man established himself as the loser of the day: President Jimmy Carter. Carter, unwilling to involve himself in a three man bout, chose to sit this round out. Unfortunately for the president, his absence did not take away any of the media and attention from the evening; rather, his absence was noted numerous times and not favorably.

Almost as ludicrous as President Carter's absence was Ronald Reagan's presence. Rea-

gan's aides had hoped the former governor's "John Wayne-like" manner would characterize him as steady and capable. His easy-going style, however, was inappropriate for the evening and illustrated the former movie star's inability to comprehend and reconcile the complex issues of the 1980's. Thus, he exhibited great confidence in terms of the movie camera; however, in terms of the questions at hand, he lacked force.

With inflation and unemployment on the rise, Americans feel threatened by the state of our economy; whoever sits in the oval office in 1981 had better be prepared to deal with this problem. On the issue of the economy, Ronald Reagan claims he has the experience to handle it because he governed California which claims 10 percent of the nation's population. Mr. Reagan had better realize that a governorship is not

Spark

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THE SPARK welcomes and encourages letters from its readers on any and all subjects which are relevant to the College, or on articles or letters which have appeared within this journal. Letters should be sent to THE SPARK
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THE SPARK is a student run journal and editorial newspaper dedicated to presenting student and faculty opinion on campus and non-campus related subjects.

the presidency and 1966 is not 1980. Furthermore, his record during his California administration is in direct conflict with what he is saying now. Reagan is continually calling for restraint of government spending, yet during his eight years in California spending increased from 4.6 billion to 10.2 billion dollars. That increase surpassed the federal government's spending during that time.

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Did You Like Vietnam?

Reagan

from pg.2

You'll Love Pakistan!

-Susan Arnott

Given the political apathy that abounds on most college campuses, it was encouraging to find forty or more Connecticut College students attending a lecture which offered a socialist interpretation of our government's recent call for a draft registration. On September 15th, Ahmed Shawkil of the International Socialist Organization, spoke to an attentive and receptive audience on "The Draft and the New Cold War." Ahmed, a dynamic and articulate speaker, criticized the American policy on the draft. During the lecture, he showed that our government's draft policy characterizes a definition of "national interest," which is not that of the American populace. Whether the students attending the lecture were socialists or not, or whether they agreed with Ahmed's views, the lecture was a stimulating and rewarding experience. Those who devoted two hours of their time to the discussion obtained a better sense of issues relevant to the American people.

For example, Ahmed claimed that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan provided an effective tool for the hawks in our government to defend the need for a reinstatement of the draft. Likewise, it provided the basis for these same people to re-create the atmosphere of war hysteria characteristic of the original Cold War, and of the new Cold War which we are currently experiencing. As an anti-draft activist myself, I found Ahmed's talk particularly useful in clarifying the ways in which our domestic social crises not only provided the motives for turning attention abroad (i.e. as a means of distracting attention from the dismal social and economic conditions

at home,) but also in explaining how these crises are worsened by the effects of a war economy, and indeed by war itself.

The draft is said to be a necessary measure for "self-defense." Is there however, a military threat upon the U.S. today? The real purpose of the draft is not to insure our protection, but to facilitate U.S. intervention in other areas of the world. Will the U.S. government, as it has in the past, send our youth to war in order to boost ailing foreign governments that have lost the support of their own people--- in the name of democracy?

Our multinational corporations want more protection for their foreign investments, and control over the resources of other nations. As a well-known slogan of the anti-draft movement says, "We won't die for Exxon."

The Persian Gulf region from which we obtain most of our oil, is becoming an area of increased conflict and instability. As a result, will we be asked to defend "our right" to consume an excessive share of this resource? There is an alternative: we can start by cutting back on our levels of consumption and by turning to other sources of energy.

The people who will be most affected by a draft are those who already stand to gain the least in our society: the poor, the minorities, and the working class youth. Much of the privileged class of youth will, as in the past, succeed in evading the draft through the help of lawyers and doctors. In the same way, those who suffer indirectly from a war economy are also the poor and powerless. This is due to the fact that as military spending increases, the amount of money spent on social services decreases. In the midst of a recession

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Another area in which Reagan demonstrated his inability to understand the real problems of the coming decade was his inept responses to the questions involving energy. He said, "To say that we are at a dangerous point in this country with regard to energy is to ignore the facts." Mr. Reagan, not the American people, has obviously ignored the facts. He claimed that the United States has twenty-seven years supply of natural gas and a forty-seven year supply of oil. Reagan implies that all we have to do is get the government off the backs of the big oil companies. Then we will have abundant supplies of fuel and we will never need to worry again. The American energy problem cannot be written off in that way. Solving the energy crisis is not like reading a script. He ignores the actual problem, finite resources, by encouraging oil companies to drill and drill and drill.

Issue after issue. Governor Reagan continued to give simple answers to the tough questions thrown at him. In the final moments, his remarks sounded as if they composed by Walt Disney and God. He said, "Together, we can build the world over again. We can meet our destiny and that destiny can build a land here that will be for all man kind, a shining city on a hill."

In still another segment of his closing remarks he said, "I'm not running for the presidency because I believe that I can solve the problems we've discussed tonight. I believe the people of this country can." I, too believe that the people, with innovative and responsible leadership, can and must meet the challenges of the future. We do not need campaign rhetoric and glorified speeches of good ol' yesterday. The shining city does not exist here, at least not without powerful leadership and the concern of the people. It is the duty of the president to instill this concern and carry out this authority. Ronald Reagan can dream of his shining city elsewhere, we need much more than dreams. ■

SGA

from pg.1

meeting that was held behind closed doors and took up so much valuable time, makes one question the productivity and effectiveness of SGA. The motion that caused all this secrecy and waste of valuable time was almost unanimously defeated. Is this how SGA spends its time making ridiculous motions? A realization that a new referendum would also have to include a revote for the executive board members, may have been the reason for the motion being defeated.

The SPARK plans to continue monitoring the activities of SGA. We do not plan to watch idly as the coercive politics of SGA rot away the integrity of Student Government democracy. We plan to watch how and in what ways the invisible thumb of the administration hovers over the SGA president and other members. How autonomous is SGA from the administration? The independence and effectiveness of SGA will be future issues for the SPARK.■

Arkansas from pg.1

"such a conflict always has the potential for spreading, and even producing 'the unthinkable' a nuclear confrontation." Although he does not believe that this situation will lead to war, even the remote possibility is frightening.

Nuclear disasters are not necessarily contingent upon wars. As the explosion in the Arkansas silo demonstrates, accidents at home may also initiate nuclear catastrophe. The explosion in Arkansas occurred when a mechanic dropped the socket of his wrench into the missile's fuel tank. The tank broke, and an accumulation of toxic fuels resulted in the explosion.

This is not the first incident. The Airforce reported that between 1975 and 1979 there have been 125 leakage accidents of toxic fuels from missiles. Workers interviewed by The Times claimed that there has been a plague of mechanical failures, minor accidents, and serious toxic leaks in the last two years." The Times reports that

since the first Titan II missiles were built in 1963, 55 persons have died and many more have been injured in missile-related accidents. The most serious accident occurred in 1965 when a welder's torch ignited a fuel hose. Military officials have noted that human error, not mechanical error, is primarily to blame in such mishaps. Nevertheless, when we are dealing with 54 Titan II missiles and a total of 1,054 land-based Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (IBM) planted in our land, all of which combined could destroy the world several times over, we can not afford to tolerate any accidents.

The military is quick to point out that in the hundreds of accidents which have occurred, a warhead itself has never exploded. They attribute this record to a "fail-safe" mechanism, designed not to go off accidentally.

Although this particular "fail-safe" system has operated efficiently so far, other safety systems have not. One safety device in the Arkansas silo, reminiscent of the one at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant, was supposed to flood the chamber to prevent fires and explosions in case of a fuel leak. Although the device was triggered and water gushed in, it only rose to a level below the fuel tanks; therefore it was useless.

A potentially cataclysmic equipment failure has occurred at least twice in another facet of our nuclear weapons program. In two recent incidents the computer involved in the U.S. Warning System erroneously signaled a Soviet missile attack. The U.S. went into attack mode. If the mistake had not been detected within the twenty minute response time, we could have been thrust into a nuclear holocaust.

Although the military planned for protections against an accidental warhead explosion, they admit that the warhead could have broken, releasing deadly Plutonium into the atmosphere. If inhaled, less than one millionth of a gram of Plutonium is enough to cause cancer. One high Government official feared that if the warhead had been a newer, lighter model, it would not have survived the explosion. Danger did not disappear with the end of the explosion. When the warhead was recov-

ered, it had to be deactivated. Officials describe this as a "delicate procedure." They do not say, however, just how delicate the procedure is; could the warhead have exploded? Subsequently, it had to be transported to a safe place. Against the better judgement of the State Director of Public Safety, the transportation occurred during peak traffic hours.

Another foreseeable threat in such an accident is that the warhead might be stolen by saboteurs. During the Arkansas incident, the Airforce assured the public that the warhead was at every moment under their control. However, this may not be the case if another similar accident ever occurs.

Admittedly the military has taken two steps to prevent similar accidents in the future. For the first of these steps, they plan to attach all sockets to wrenches with a safety rope so they can no longer fall (only the wrench and socket together can fall.) The other step is to lower platforms beneath workers. Consequently, if something does fall, it will not fall too far.

The Federal Government is also taking certain preventive measures. The Senate just passed an amendment which requires all Titan II sites located near population centers to install an alarm system. The originator of the bill, however, is quoted as saying, "It's time not just to move ahead with installing the warning devices, but to take a critical look at the safety of the entire Titan II system." I would add that it is not just time to examine the safety of the Titan II system, but to take a "critical look" at how much security is actually achieved from our entire National Security System.■

freedom of choice . . .

Carl's Jr. Hamburger chain contributes millions each year to the National Right to Life Committee and its fight to stop any woman from having an abortion.

It is with great cynicism and disgust that one views their latest billboards and advertising.

In glorious color are four different hamburgers. The logo below it reads "Freedom of Choice."■

Pakistan

from pg.3

and the highest unemployment rates in thirty-five years, this is not an appropriate time to be decreasing social services.

In the 1960's, students devoted their efforts primarily to the anti-war movement. Their focus was somewhat narrow, because at the end of the Vietnam war the activist movement ceased to exist. A movement cannot be sustained if it simply fights against something. To be maintained, a movement must include constructive goals. Thus, we must work not only to stop registration, the draft, and other steps toward war, but also, as one student activist put

it, we must "demand that the resources that go to destroy life go instead to enhance life... Instead of weapons we get jobs, and decent wages and homes, health care, and schools for our children."

In the 1970's, the student population allowed itself to digress into a politically impotent force. The trend appears to be reversing largely because of the call for draft registration and the prospect of U.S. military intervention overseas. This trend away from political apathy is very encouraging. Though some of what Ahmed said might have been frightening or threatening to many students, his thoughtful and fresh

perspective was appreciated. Discussions such as those offered by the International Socialist Organization are worthwhile not only for the circulation of ideas, but also as a means for interesting and enlightening debate. Ahmed brought to Connecticut College a perspective which most students are neither aware of nor exposed to. The students who attend such meetings can come away with their eyes opened, and with a broader perspective from which to make their own judgements. Your support in various political activities can make a difference. We are entering a new decade; Let's make the student voice heard!■

Olympic Medalist to Visit College

-Patricia Daddona

Former Olympic medalist and Connecticut College alumna Anita DeFrantz will be the guest preacher at the morning worship service on Sunday, Oct. 5, at 11:00 a.m. in Harkness Chapel. Her sermon topic will be "Taking Up the Challenge."

Ms. DeFrantz won a bronze medal in the 1976 Olympics as a member of the U.S. women's rowing team. Subsequently she became the only woman on the board of directors of the formerly all-male Vesper Boat Club of Philadelphia. She is a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee board, the Athletes' Advisory Council, the President's Council on Physical Fitness, and the organizing committee for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. She was a member of the anti-boycott movement during the 1980 summer Olympics.

Upon her graduation in 1974, Ms. DeFrantz was elected to the Conn. College Board of Trustees, a position which she still holds. A lawyer, she received the J.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, and now works for the Corporation for Enterprise Development in Washington, D.C.

Ms. DeFrantz had no opportunities to engage in athletics until she entered college, "with the exception of

surviving with three brothers." She played basketball as a freshman, and joined the new crew team a year later. The outdoors, the challenge of setting and accomplishing goals for oneself, and simply working with healthy people make sports an exciting activity for her.

Her career as a lawyer apparently thrills Ms. DeFrantz less than the exhilaration of athletics. After three years, she changed her music major to one which pointed her in the direction of law. She came to think that supporting herself in an effort to make a living in music was unrealistic. Her main impetus however, was the influence of several good Government and Philosophy courses, which she took during her four years at Conn. College. As a result, she became fascinated with the ideas inherent in these disciplines, and thought that law would provide her with "a fine opportunity to do something with those ideas. But," she adds with a laugh, "I was mistaken." Law school students were more concerned with the "how-tos" of legality than with the ideas she speaks of. While she enjoyed working for Children's Rights a few years ago, she found that "winning court cases can't (and doesn't) make a whole lot of impact on pol-

icy." Despite these disappointments, she is sticking with her career as a lawyer. She also hastens to add that she has certainly not abandoned her avocation, music.

As for the protest movement to the Olympic Boycott this year, her involvement in it was the result of a single phone call. At that time, she frankly made her viewpoint known to the caller. She has been getting calls ever since. Essentially, Ms. DeFrantz believes that the boycott is "a violation of my rights as a citizen of this country." If a choice either to support or boycott the Olympics must be made, that should be done by athletes individually. "It is not appropriate," she says, "for the government to make that decision. It is a violation of civil liberties, and it's also pointless." Such statements have resulted in hate-letters and accusations that she is a "traitor to her country." Yet she withstands these and other pressures, and holds her ground. "I believe in the Olympic movement," she says. "The good things are worth keeping."

Immediately following the sermon, there will be an Agape meal in the Chapel library, where Ms. DeFrantz will discuss the 1980 Olympic boycott.■

The Erotic Baker

- Anonymous

After lunch, walking down seventh avenue, Kim turned to me and said "I read an article the other day... about an erotic bakery on Christopher street." "Where's Christopher street?" I replied. My curiosity increased. "Where's Christopher street?" We continued walking down seventh avenue until we happened upon the infamous street sign.

"It's down this way" I urged. "It's just gotta be." We walked down the street, our heads turning from side to side looking for a store which might look in the least bit compromising. Ah ha! A big pair of red lips. No, just a confectionary store. The walk seemed endless.

"Big Betty, the name of one of the lollypops, sat silently staring at my friend."

Finally I turned to Kim and said "what did the article say? Are you sure they said it was on Christopher street?" Just as the words left my mouth, the big moment arrived. THE EROTIC BAKER was spelled out on the store window. We finally reached our destination.

We entered laughing, and blushing and feeling very out of place. Once we passed through the door however, our inhibitions immediately became assuaged. Everyone in the store had the same thing on their mind; what's inside of an erotic bakery?

Where to start looking? On the walls? No, too embarrassing. The special order catalogue? No, too exclusive. The candy rack? O.K., that's

Anyone interested in writing literary pieces or poetry for the SPARK, please contact Patricia Daddona p.o. box 327, phone 444-9857.

not too bad. The rack was lined with candy bars of all shapes and sizes. "Big Betty," the name of one of the lollypops, sat silently staring at my friend. I couldn't take anymore of the rack. I walked over to the counter where the sales clerk stood. "Hello there. May I help you? Have you ever visited us before?" My reply was a little muffled. "Here, take some of the literature, and if you have any questions, just ask." I was astonished. I didn't think that anyone who worked in an erotic bakery could be that friendly.

"I'd like to buy something" I thought to myself, "something by which to remember my

first visit to the bakery. I can't afford the cakes, and besides, who could eat one?" I wandered aimlessly around for a while until I happened upon a cheese mold. "It's not too expensive... Oh hell, why not." I walked over to the counter, "excuse me, I'd like to buy a cheese mold." "Oh fine, which kind would you like, the male or the female?" Yes, I did, I turned purple and eeked out my answer; "male please." "Fine, do you have any I.D.? We can't sell erotica to minors you know." I whipped out my license, and bought the cheese. Soon after, I saw Kim paying for Big Betty.

We continued our walk through the streets of New York, our bounty in our hands, trying to cover the side of the bags which read "THE EROTIC BAKER." ■

Dying

The phone is ringing; doorbells buzz and chime.
I lie upon the bed in pillows flung.
I do not rise to answer; not this time.

I've had in days past harder hills to climb
Than peaks of sheets that I now lie among.
The phone is ringing; doorbells buzz and chime.

My head is clanging, words meld into rhyme,
And I hear whispers of a foreign tongue
I do not rise to answer; not this time.

The callers do not know that dead ones lime
My bed, encircle me and chant, shrouds hung.
The phone is ringing; doorbells buzz and chime.

The ghosts attack with glee, their bliss sublime.
I twist and turn to no avail, death-stung...
I do not rise to answer; not this time.

"To dust you shall return..." no less, to grime.
I yield to death chanteurs, my thin neck wrung...
The phone is ringing; doorbells buzz and chime.
I do not rise to answer; not this time.

- Patricia Daddona