

## THE AGE OF REASON?

"Most of all, she (the Beaver student) will need the ability to think for herself, and the desire and the will to continue to learn throughout her life. Our primary objective at Beaver College, therefore, is not so much knowledge as power of independent thought and constructive action."

This quotation from page nine of the Beaver College catalogue for the academic year 1965-1966 is supposed to express what our college stands for. We have, rather, a flimsy idea of the kind of school that Beaver purports to be. Or, at least, an ideal of the kind of school that the students would wish their college to be.

In actuality, the students of Beaver College are treated not like adults, not like individuals with the "power of independent thought." Rather, we are treated as glorified prep school students who still need a mother's care even when mother is far away. This is not our college. We have no say in its policy. We are told by a mimeographed notice that we are no longer able to decide for ourselves whether we wish to attend a class or not. We are not considered mature enough to make such a decision. It is a professor's responsibility to make his or her course stimulating enough that students will not WANT to miss a class.

Why were we not informed of this change? Why are we never, or at best rarely, informed of any change before it becomes effective? We receive dictums from their upper echelons of Beaver College and it is our duty to carry out the... what can we call them but regressive actions by a body that

does not seek to afford us academic freedom but rather to curtail the little freedom we have. What happened to that ideal that Dr. Gates spoke so glowingly of last Tuesday in Convention? Why is every project that would lead to a more progressive college, to a greater recognition of the maturity of the student body, watered down until it is so disguised behind a lot of garbled doubletalk that is barely recognizable?

NOW is the time for us to wake up to the fact that only by positive action can our ideal be achieved despite the actions of an administration and faculty that seem to have let the ideal drift by the wayside. "And the drift is everything."

## TO THE EDITOR:

Twenty-four students have just returned to the Beaver Campus from the London Semester. I feel that we were simply a sampling of the entire student body; I feel that I am a "typical Beaver student." Because of the living conditions and the social situations, we were told we would have to exercise ability to think for ourselves and conduct ourselves as mature young women.

We were not handed a list of rules and were not required to account for our whereabouts at every moment after 6 p.m. We were permitted to smoke in our rooms, and we were expected to attend classes — not forced to do so. I can sincerely say that our group maintained our dignity as responsible young women, and that I feel the entire Beaver student body is capable of doing the same.

Charlotte Weyant

## STUDENTS SPEAK OUT ON OPINIONS, GRIEVANCES

Ten student leaders were asked for their opinions on the current lack of communication and misconception of standing between student and faculty. Following are their replies to the questions, "What do you think the major grievances are?" and "What do you think should be done to remedy the situation?", as well as other comments they wished to make.

**JEANNIE STOCKER**, President of the "Student Government," listed the three main grievances of the student body at the present moment: 1. the cut system or lack of system, 2. the freshman blanket permission, and 3. smoking in dormitory rooms. She stated the major problem to be the absolute lack of communication between the average student and the administration. Her suggestions for an improvement of the present situation include a return to an active participation by students in the running of their government, so that the government itself can truly and forcefully speak for the student body. "At a meeting held early this year for upperclassmen only a small majority of students showed up. Perhaps if more had attended, the present situation and others like it would not have arisen," said Miss Stocker. "Students seem to be afraid to voice their opinions to me. As president of the student government I must be made aware of their grievances as soon as they arise. This active participation must come voluntarily from the students themselves."

Miss Stocker said she "appreciates the support of the student body in the present situation. The conduct at the meeting last Thursday night was outstanding. The students' show of maturity and respect for each other was just another evidence of the responsibility they deserve to obtain. The Student Government Organization will do everything in its power to meet the needs and wishes of the student body."

**ROSEMARY FITZGERALD**, SGO vice-president: "Student opinions

regarding our life on the Beaver campus have not of late been regarded as those of adult people. "The limited program that the faculty and administration has mapped out for us has put an apparent stifling effect upon our independent thought and constructive action."

"My understanding is that a college education does not encompass academic achievements alone, but also the social and character-molding advances of an individual. This belief on my part has been badly shaken by several recent actions. Has the administration forgotten this very important aspect of our education? We would like to see our opinions and contributions accepted with more seriousness."

"The main grievances of the student body goes back to a change of attitude on the part of the administration. They must accept the fact that we are in the process of becoming adults and would like to be treated thusly. Within the past five years Beaver has been accepting more scholarly students. Shouldn't the delegation of responsibility be congruent with this advancement?"

**JUDY MULLINS**, Chairman of Nominating Committee: "I, as a senior, will not be under the new rules and regulations. However, I am thinking of the freshmen who have to live under them. More specifically, I am against the new ruling about class cuts, and against the lack of effective communication between students and administration."

"I advocate a student demonstration in the form of an organized 'sit-in' with adequate publicity to make the faculty and administration aware of our grievances."

"I would hope that if there were an improvement in relations between the student government and the Administration, that we would see that people would not be afraid to run for office."

**JULIE MAMANA**: Chairman of

## STUDENTS CHALLENGE ADMINISTRATION AT SPECIAL MEETING THIS AFTERNOON

By JUDY QUIGG

An assembly of the entire Beaver College community will be held this afternoon at 1:30 p.m. in Murphy Chapel.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss certain situations within the community which students feel have not been adequately explained.

A petition signed by great numbers of students was presented today to Mrs. Florence M. Plummer, dean of students; Mrs. Margaret LeClair, dean of the college; Dr. Edward D. Gates, president of the college, and the Board of Trustees.

The petition—reprinted on the back of this page—states the students' position on several current issues and asks for a clarification of certain misconceptions.

Today's meeting is more than a gripe session. It is the effort by an entire student body to find out where it stands in the eyes of the administration. It is an attempt, on a rational, thinking level, of a group of young adults to rectify a muddled situation.

It began last Thursday evening, when approximately 200 students attended a special meeting called in the Dining Room Lounge by SGO President, Jean Stocker.

At this time the students' grievances were aired and a plan of action formulated. As all who attended will attest, the meeting was conducted in a calm, businesslike manner.

The three basic grievances mentioned at last Thursday's meeting

involved freshman blanket permissions, smoking in student rooms, and the new cut system.

Freshman blanket permissions for second semester were passed last semester by the House of Representatives. The proposal was then sent to Dean Plummer. To date, no action has been taken.

A vote on smoking in student rooms was taken January 10. It was passed, 324 for and 277 against, but no action has been taken on this matter either.

The new cut system, announced to students on Wednesday of last week, stated that the number of class absences permitted in a given course would be left to the discretion of the individual professor. Except for a brief discussion of unlimited cuts at a meeting of Joint Committee, no student opinion was considered when this action was passed by the faculty of the college. In many cases this may now mean that no absences will be permitted in courses.

## Underhanded

"It's not so much the policy as how it was done," one student commented at last Thursday's meeting. "We never had any say in the matter. It was done behind our backs and sprung upon us."

"The whole student body is oriented toward the irresponsible student," a freshman stated. "People seem to think that if we had unlimited cuts, no one would ever go to class at all."

"The student government is a complete mock," was the opinion of sophomore Margo Rapp. "Everything we do or say is overrid-

den by the administration. The student government is allowed to give out punishments, but on really critical issues, they can't do anything."

"Our representatives are ignored," Maddy Johnson, sophomore class president, told the group. "The administration should try to help us instead of hindering everything we do."

## Airing Grievances

Students complained that they had no place to air their grievances. "We're given a lot of double-talk, we're told our parents would not like the things we want to have. It's like talking to a stone wall. Half the time we can't even get in to see the administrators," was the general consensus of the meeting.

One student pointed out that the announcement of the new policy on cuts "came as a complete surprise to one of my teachers — she didn't even know about it until she got it in her mailbox."

"If we wouldn't take treatment like this from our parents," questioned sophomore Alix Kucker, "why must we take it from the administration?"

Beth Middleton volunteered to draft a petition which would be available for signing in the Chat on Friday and Monday. Today's meeting was arranged at this time and it was decided that all members of the faculty, Dean Plummer, Dean Le Clair, and Dr. Gates as well as all other interested administrators, would be invited to attend.

Attendance at the meeting today is voluntary.

Forum: "Beaver cannot succeed as a microcosm; it must be allowed to be exposed to the outside world. My main objection is that there is not enough freedom of individual thought. There can be no freedom of thought without freedom of action. This coincides with unlimited cuts, unrestricted smoking regulations, and unlimited dress regulations."

"I, too, support a uniting of students in an organized 'sit-in' demonstration with abundant publicity. I feel this is the fastest, most direct and mature method."

**KAREN VIECHNICKI**, waitress, said: "Since many of us are responsible enough to contribute in part to our college tuition, we demand to be recognized as responsible enough to govern a larger segment of our college community life. We should be allowed to manifest the maturity and responsibility which will result in a true growth of the individual for the making of a better society."

**BABS KINGSLEY**, President of Dorm C, asked: "Are we being treated as responsible adults or merely being 'coped with'?" The administration, particularly the Office of the Dean of Students, and the Beaver students are widely separated. When we talk to the administrators, they are sympathetic to us, with the now all-too-familiar 'yes, yes, yes' reaction. However, they act as though they basically do not understand or want to understand our views, and so we have reason to doubt their words. The cut and smoking grievances occupy us at present. We might actually achieve these goals, and yet the basic problem will still exist. We will not be placated, for this is far too serious. I don't know how to change an attitude, and that's the basic problem."

**CANDY HOWELL**: "We're more interested in the attitude of the administration. We want them to consider our grievances and tell us why they disagree with us, if they do. But we want a definite decision from them so we can make the SGO work."

"We want them to treat us like young women—not boarding-school girls. The whole student body

cannot simply forget this. They must keep working at it. Smoking, cuts, and permissions are the specific issues now, but next year it may be something else. A change in attitude is our major problem."

**SUSAN CARUSO**: "Our specific grievances are not the big problem. They simply represent a lot of things not acted upon by the administration. Concerning the cut system, we disagree with it and feel it is an insult to the intelligence and maturity of the students. There was no indication it was coming."

"We're not trying to have a revolution or be a radical faction taking over the school. The fact that 200 girls showed up on 10 minutes' notice for last Thursday's meeting indicates that they're interested and want something done."

"I personally feel that our action will point out to the administration that students want the self-government to which they are entitled under our constitution. We don't want big changes in the structure itself, but in certain policies, so our constitution will be workable—as it was four years ago when it was written."

"We aren't trying to alienate the administration; rather, we want to enlist their cooperation and clear up the misconceptions they have about the student body. We want all students to feel free to speak up about problems to student leaders, faculty, or administration."

"This is not a whim. It's a project carefully considered by the entire student body, not spurred on by mass hysteria. The entire student government is involved."

**SUSAN ACKERMAN** said: "The insistence of the administration of Beaver College, in adhering to the 'in loco parentis' function, is unreasoned and unnecessary. The striking failure of the Beaver honor system attests to this. The actions of the administration are esoteric, the student as well as the administration suffering from fearful good intentions."

"It is heartening and significant that sufficient numbers of Beaver girls should make an attempt to agitate for freedom from restrictive legislation and, particularly,

that this agitation appears by committee within a responsible framework."

"Adult students, of course, demand their personal freedom in social matters, but academic affairs must also come within the sphere of student influence. Why are we not all familiar with the talents and achievements of the faculty? Why haven't we specialized courses in specific areas of faculty expertise which might intellectually excite and unite students and faculty?"

"Students are patient with Beaver's internal problems, such as the inadequate library facilities, when they are recognized by the faculty and administration. It is marvelous that Beaver students should refuse to submit to disgust and instead, act to inhibit the spiritual gravitation away from the campus."

"I would agree with Dr. Gates that the labels 'dynamic' and 'progressive' would be proud ones for Beaver College to bear — if she could, honestly."

**EILEEN HUTTON** commented: "People get used to systems; even bad ones. Until recently students sat back and allowed decisions rightly made by the students to be handled by the administration. It was an established code of rules that students accepted when they arrived at Beaver. Each student year they elected the SGO representatives and pretended that the students ran the school life."

"Recently, as a result of a number of incidents, a majority of the student body seems intensely interested in disavowing the parental type of rule provided by the administration; instead, they demand self-rule for student life. As the administration and faculty has often indicated, the college is the students; at last they demand their participation in responsible handling, in coordination with the faculty and administration, the decision concerning campus life. It demonstrates an enthusiastic attitude of the student body to accept the adult responsibility the administration has related they want of Beaver Students. It is important that such efforts not be thwarted."

We the undersigned are seriously concerned about the differences between the theoretical and actual policies of Beaver College, as quoted in the Beaver College Bulletin: "Most of all, a student will need the ability to think for herself, and the desire and the will to continue to learn throughout her life. Our primary objective at Beaver College, therefore, is not so much knowledge as power of independent thought and constructive action." We see that the action of the authorities on those issues which most closely follow the above aims is contrary and detrimental to our lives' objectives.

The purpose of this petition is to demonstrate that the student body is dissatisfied with present conditions concerning the lack of student voice in our college community. As students we feel that there must be a correlation between the student body, administration, and faculty in working towards our common goal.

We commend the progress which Beaver College is making to elevate the level of education—in independent studies and also in raising the calibre of the faculty and the students. Such academic advancements also necessitate fuller development of individual growth and responsibility.

As students, we feel that in order to correct the prevailing attitude of student disinterest in the college community as a whole, certain grievances require attention:

1. Whereas; the faculty has taken action on class attendance without the knowledge and/or consent of the student body, the student body finds this to be a deliberate denial of the student voice and a regression from the originally stated aims of progress.

2. Whereas; the administration tabled without further discussion the consenting vote concerning smoking in the rooms. We find this expressed disregard of 277 against and 324 in favor to be an unnecessary subjugation of student opinion.

3. Whereas; a concerted effort has been made on the part of the student body to grant blanket permission to second semester Freshmen, little constructive attention has been given to this proposal which was supported by a majority of the student body.

These are only examples of a dissatisfaction with prevailing conditions; behind them lies the more important issue of the treatment of the student body. If these problems can be dealt with through responsible action on the part of the administration and the student body, this will be an indication to both that the college climate can be improved.

A meeting will be held by the student body on Tuesday, February 15 at 1:30 p.m. in Murphy. There will then be a meeting open to discussion of the heretofore stated. If this meeting is unsuccessful in terms of communication between the administration and the student body, we feel compelled to take further action.

The "Beaver News" is a bi-weekly publication by and for Beaver students and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the administration.