

The Graduate Student Advocate

City University of New York

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Editorial:

Trustees to the Community: Guns before Butter

[Editor's note: The following text was presented to the CUNY Board of Trustees at the November 18th meeting for entry into the official record.]

On behalf of the editorial staff of *The Graduate Student Advocate*, the student newspaper of the CUNY Graduate Center, I hereby register my protest against the continued hiring of "contract guards" at the CUNY colleges. A case in point is the current request (see item 4B) for Brooklyn College.

My objection is threefold. First, whether this practice, which I believe now constitutes a definitive hiring pattern, is sanctioned by the leadership of the guards' union, Local 32B, and even if these actions fall within the scope of the current contract, the net effect is to bust the union. As this newspaper, and many of our student groups have repeatedly stated and demonstrated, notably in the Spring '91 strike, we are deeply concerned about the fate of the staff who run our schools and will not stand idly by as the CUNY budget and so-called operations requests such as item 4B are used to dilute the strength of their unions.

Second, the guards represented by Local 32B are not only members of a union which we support, but are also members of our community. As such they are responsive to the needs and mores of a vital university community, and are, finally, accountable to the university. If something goes wrong, or there is a security mishap, the university is directly responsible. We will not tolerate the introduction of guards who are not responsive to our needs, as CUNY students and as members of a community, but simply follow orders dictated by the maintenance of "security". This kind of arrangement will, ultimately result in personal injury to students. After the Spring strike, Yankee Security, and at the request of Steven Cahn/Floyd Moreland, placed plainclothes guards at the Graduate Center who were abusive and intimidating. This cannot continue.

Third, I question the ongoing calls for more CUNY security. These calls, which the trustees couch in characterizations of CUNY students as criminals and vandals, mimics a paranoid and authoritarian policy of "guns before butter", which our own city is now enduring. Furthermore, the call for additional security comes at a time when the 80th Street administration, on behalf of the trustees, seems determined to abridge our civil rights, notably to bar us when we attempt to attend public board meetings, and, most recently to annul our democratic attempts to reform our government the USS. For the record, the Graduate School DSC will carry through on its threat to call for the resignation of administrators on the USSERC in order to ensure that a fair and fully democratic USS Chair serves for the upcoming electoral year. We will insist on our democratic rights no matter how many guards are hired, now matter how many cops you summon.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Long
Editor, The Graduate Student Advocate

Art History Students Serve Notice to CUNY Administration

For over four years students in the Graduate School Ph.D program in Art History have attempted to avert sweeping changes in their department. Readers of *The Advocate* are familiar with the ongoing struggle between students and administration over changes in the Art History department that, if finally implemented, will radically alter the scope and direction of their program. Students have now retained Matthew Hagopian Esq. as legal counsel and have formally notified the department, the Graduate School and CUNY administrations, as well as the New York State Commissioner of Education, Thomas Sobol, that the proposed changes must conform to statewide guidelines.

Regulations developed by the office of New York's Commissioner of Education state that all new doctoral specializations must be specifically reviewed and approved in a formal process. Finally, any changes must be approved by the Commissioner. Guidelines state that a proposed specialization "must show evidence of careful planning indicated by clear definition of the goals of the specialization and the implementation of a reviewing system devised to estimate the success of students and faculty in achieving such goals..." While a committee has been formed to evaluate the proposed expansion, no such system has been established to evaluate the feasibility of expansion. An ad hoc committee of faculty from the Department of Art History rejected the idea of expansion, on the grounds of a lack of adequate funding. Nonetheless, the Commissioner's mandate for "evidence of careful

planning" has gone unfulfilled. Thus far, most of the planning has taken place behind closed doors, without input from the students. Excluded from the planning process, Art History students were forced to form their own committee to confront the expansion issue.

Thus far, students have limited their struggle to the department Executive Committee, though their representatives have formally contacted and negotiated with the late President Proshansky, the former Acting President Cahn, and CUNY Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds. In her September 11th letter to President Horowitz, which was publicly circulated, the students' DSC representative Mignon Nixon states that the "expansion" has been "promoted by the late President Proshansky and Provost Steven Cahn not only in the face of student opposition, but in possible violation of New York State law." Despite the Art History students' persistence and insistence that their objections to the proposed changes be addressed and formally recognized, the department and the administration of the Graduate School have ignored them. Indeed, for approximately three years the department has added faculty and altered course offerings in order to embrace the so-called expansion of the program.

These actions have been interpreted by the students as an attempt to bypass the formalized process established by New York's Education Law. Their retention of counsel is an attempt to regain the right to due process and demo-

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CUNY Moves to Centralize Security Committee Recommends Peace Officer Status

Ian McGowan

The CUNY administration is acting to centralize and strengthen CUNY's security force, which may culminate in granting CUNY's security guards arresting powers. Already 40 new public safety officers have been hired, who will hold a new level of campus security supervisory jobs. CUNY's new guards are taking a training course at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. The pilot program will be initiated at John Jay College and three Brooklyn CUNY campuses: Medgar Evers College, Brooklyn College, and New York City Technical College.

The administration is acting upon recommendations made in a report issued last semester by the CUNY Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Campus Security and Community Service. The report, obtained by *Student Leader News Service*, calls for the, "Implementation of a comprehensive, system-wide approach to campus security." The report recommended that "selected CUNY security ... should have officer status."

The reasons the report gives for the necessity of selected guards having peace officer status is that, "The availability of CUNY peace officers will provide flexibility of response and action within the campuses, because the peace officers are empowered to make arrests based upon probable cause for criminal activity." While peace officers will have arresting power, "Peace officer status does not, in itself, confer the authority to carry firearms. The carrying of firearms on a campus is regulated by University policy."

The committee wants to see the University's security program reorganized so as to limit the reliance on outside security firms, and increase the level of training of the University's security force. The report also calls for the

development of a CUNY Police Cadet program, which would involve student police cadets on patrol with New York City police officers was also encouraged.

Currently, the University relies heavily on contracts with a number of private guard services, colloquially known as "rent-a-cops", which include Bell, Burns, Ecco, Guardian, and Yankee. These guards are not CUNY employees, nor are they civil servants, and they do not have the same authority as police officers or peace officers. While many of these services are run by former police officers, their guards do not go through an extensive background check, nor do they receive a high level of training or staff development. Many current guards, having heard about this report and the pilot program, are worried that the reorganization of security will result in them being laid-off and replaced by guards who have peace officer status. [see *The Human Cost*]

The ten member Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Campus Safety and Community Service is chaired by Medgar Evers College President Edison O. Jackson, and includes Kingsborough Community College President Leon Goldstein, Borough of Manhattan Community College President Augusta S. Kappner, as well as John Jay President Gerald W. Lynch and Dean James Curran. Other members include City College Vice President George McDonald and Prof. Eleanor Lundeen, Brooklyn College professors James Levine and Robert Kelly, and former University Student Senate Chair, Gregario Mayers, who is now employed in the Office of the President at Medgar Evers College.

Ian McGowan is the City Editor of the Student Leader News Service

The Human Cost: Guards React to CUNY's New Security Policy

Ian McGowan

"This new policy has had a demoralizing effect on our guards," said one CUNY security supervisor who asked to remain anonymous. "Guys gave up better security jobs to come back to CUNY to get one of these HEO [Higher Education Office] jobs," he continued. "And now they hear that they're [the CUNY administration] hiring guards from the high schools to replace them. It's very demoralizing."

This feeling among the guards is due to fears that they will be replaced by guards who have peace officer status and unconfirmed rumors that the administration is recruiting guards from New York City's public high schools who already have peace officer status.

One guard commented that private security guards do not have peace officer status, but are nonetheless asked to perform

duties which require such legal privileges. "We've done a lot of things that private security are not allowed to do, like "stop and frisk" and detaining, and if people were to take it to court and say that their rights were violated we're not going to be covered ... We won't be supported by the college or the company ... We're risking this for the college and they're going to push us out and say, "Thank you for what you've done, but we're not going to be needing your services anymore." Another guard added, "We have no tenure, no contracts and no union to back us up ... God forbid if this goes through, we're out on the street and all we can say is our goodbyes."

"I feel betrayed," said one CUNY security supervisor. "I have a wife and kids, and I feel like I'm going to be left out in the cold."

Editorial:

City Council Ponders CUNY/SUNY

According to the 11/22/91 editions of *The New York Times* and *Newsday*, the City Council, in its counter-budget, has proposed that, it "transfer the City University to the state... (NYT 11/22/91)" The politics which mediate this proposal are typically confusing and downright scandalous, and "as typically regards New York City politics, intricately combine the drive towards social spending cuts with personal and corporate corruption. First, both articles describe at length the budget interventions of Felix Rohatyn the chairperson for the Municipal Assistance Corporation (commonly known in the local press as MAC).

MAC, one branch of the unelected government of New York City, is the quasi-public institution which sells bonds (MAC bonds). The profit from the sale of these bonds is returned to the administration of MAC, namely Felix Rohatyn. The money is earmarked for municipal expenditures, such as CUNY, though these expenses must be approved by Rohatyn. It is, consequently, noteworthy that Rohatyn is a partner at the Wall Street financial house of Lazard Freres, the entity which helped to engineer the wage deferral agreements (e.g. the Americana Agreement) which used municipal employee's money to finance the MAC slushfund, and which has subsequently benefitted from the pre-sale auction of these same bonds. It was givebacks which were earmarked for MAC and imposed upon the employees of our municipal unions which "saved" this city in the '70s, not Saint Felix, much less Ed Koch.

With this in mind, a major move such as the proposed CUNY to SUNY transfer would ensure that the MAC debt service would be bolstered, and would also preclude any CUNY financial maneuvers

of which the state government does not approve. Despite the presence of 10 Cuomo appointees on the CUNY Board of Trustees, and especially the presence of former Cuomo political hack and Lazard Freres employee, CUNY Trustee Michael Del Giudice, CUNY is still somewhat politically independent of the politics of New York State and our so-called education governor Mario Cuomo. A case in point is the recent transfer of A.T.&T.'s tax money (their tax abatement was rescinded by the city government) to bail out the financially strapped two year programs at John Jay College and New York City Tech, which would have been discontinued without this money. As The Advocate noted, New York State officials howled in protest when the Dinkins administration transferred the money to CUNY, and rightly tended to the needs of its constituency. The state government is politically impervious to the local outrage that would have followed the closing of these programs.

We should also consider that SUNY Chairman Fred Salerno, appointed by Cuomo, is a NYNEX Vice President, and chair of of the NYS Business Council, which, in 1990, also proposed that CUNY merge with SUNY and supported a \$500 tuition hike.

A CUNY to SUNY transfer would also provide the historical precedent to destroy open admissions. Without CUNY's community identity, its direct political relationship and responsibilities to the citizens of this city, officials opposed to open admissions could just declare that CUNY's mission is no longer relevant, for after all, CUNY is now SUNY.

No matter how often we strike and organize, whether as students, faculty, or staff, the governor, cynic that he is, simply does not have to listen, much less care.

CUNY Hires Anti-Terrorist Specialist as New Director of University Security

... Ian McGowan ...

As part of Chancellor Reynolds' plan to centralize security procedures, CUNY has established a new position of University Director of Security. The position was filled on November 11th by Jose Elique, a former Police Inspector of Operations for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

In addition to establishing a University-wide approach to campus security, Mr. Elique will be responsible for compiling and disseminating security information and statistics, in compliance with recent federal laws.

According to a CUNY press release,

prior to his tenure at the Port Authority, Inspector Elique worked for Newark International Airport, "where he initiated training programs to respond to violent criminal or terrorist acts." Elique was also "instrumental in establishing a joint FBI/Port Authority Police Command Post Communication Network, designed to deal with hijack and terrorist incidents."

Inspector Elique "holds special certificates from the United States Secret Service and the International Association of Chiefs of Police."

According to sources inside CUNY Central, Mr. Elique's salary will be \$65,000 in addition to a \$10,000 stipend.

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cratic participation.

The proposed changes have been dubbed by the non-doctoral committee an "expansion" of the current Art History program. The proposed changes are, however, considered by some observers to be self-serving actions, a means by which the non-doctoral faculty can finally teach Ph.D. classes and thereby boost their careers. Others point out the false promise and reactionary politics of the "expansionists" rhetoric. The multicultural appeal of "non-Western art", for example, masks the tradi-

tional and quintessential Eurocentric perspective from which non-European cultural production is, in fact, interpreted. All rhetoric aside, it is the disregard for well established guidelines that is most dangerous and at issue.

Unfortunately, the dilemma of the Art History students has implications for students in all departments at the Graduate School.

Andrew Long

Dead or Alive

Wanted!!

1991-1992 Editor for *The Graduate Student Advocate*

The Doctoral Students' Council Media Board Seeks Student Newspaper Editor

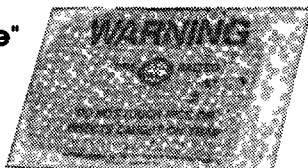
The Editor produces seven issues yearly and controls a total budget of \$9,500. The Editor is paid a stipend of \$400 per issue. All interested students should send a resume to:

The DSC Media Board
c/o CUNY Graduate Center
33 W.42nd St.
New York, N.Y. 10036

Deadline for applications: December 10th, 1991

Dead or Alive

"I'm sticking with you 'cause I'm made out of glue" -Velvet Underground



Mouse traps in the GSUC Student Center.