COLUMBIA forum

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Columbia University's New Senate

MEN AND IDEAS

COLUMBIA'S NEW SENATE

"Ladies and Gentlemen," said Andrew W. Cordier, President of Columbia University, "I welcome you to this first meeting of the University Senate." Then, after acknowledgments appropriate to the occasion, he introduced Professor of Law Michael I. Sovern, the chairman of the Executive Committee of the Faculty, who had been the Senate's Moses for most of the previous year. Sovern stood before the 82 Senators and said simply: "Speaking for the Executive Committee, I greet you with relief." Thus, scrutinized by a brooding Buddha and surrounded by cabinets full of *objets d'art* from the Sung, Han, T'Ang, and Chou dynasties, the first Senate session got under way on May 28, 1969, in the Faculty Room of Low Memorial Library.

While critics might dispute the merit and the relevance of the Senate, it was, unquestionably, there. Senate watchers would debate the significance of the meeting's minutiae throughout the summer. Other institutions would watch carefully too, for the success or failure of Columbia's Senate, the first of its kind at any major university, would affect their own plans for reform.

Perhaps much of the subsequent interest in this first Senate session, and the more extensive attention accorded the year-long restructuring progression, springs from the current endemic concern about universities in general. This topic generates several standard questions. What is a university today? What should it be? Are universities healthy, and if not, what is wrong? How can they be changed? And, is a university senate the remedy? Here are seven unstandard answers which demonstrate how these concerns apply to Columbia University.

COMMENT: THE UNIVERSITY

Professor of Law Frank Grad, draftsman of the original plan of the Senate:

"Let's talk about the University Senate first. It developed naturally, indigenous to Columbia and its special problems. There were really no applicable models, though there are some student-faculty governments at small liberal arts colleges like Antioch and Bennington.

"I think in retrospect the whole Senate experience was an amazingly affirmative one—for, after all, we

were building on what was a serious loss of confidence. But now new lines of communication have opened up. I see this process as a growing pain—as a redefinition of the role of the university in the world, and of all our roles within the university.

"It's clear now that Columbia University's problems in the spring of 1968 were conditioned by its particular structure and organization, and yet all universities' difficulties are very similar. There seems to be an underlying malaise at each university, and a general malaise throughout society. We must face the fact that a great many underlying difficulties cannot be resolved in the university. You can't resolve the Vietnam war, or problems with the draft, by magically waving the University Senate wand.

"All of this—the question of the University's role—I suppose is connected to the hotly debated concept of the university as a service station. Universities have always had service functions, of course; but the question is, at any given time: is the service function we are presently rendering consistent with the educational function? We've had to examine just that in the last year. What we've had to do, what we must continue to do, is to find a new *modus vivendi.* We must come out of it not running an educational department store, yet retaining functions that combine educational purposes with contemporary social ones."

Herbert A. Deane, Professor of Government, who was University Vice Provost until November, 1968:

"The myth proclaimed by SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] and others that the administration of Columbia University was monolithic and autocratic was completely wrong. When strong monarchs —like [former University President] Nicholas Murray Butler—depart, you are left with a loose collection of feudal baronies. The analogy with feudalism is very apt. If you have a weak center, then strong men out in the provinces have to build castles to protect their domains. That's what happened here. Every school a castle, the great barons allowing no strong center. And the College and Graduate Faculties just didn't have the muscle the other schools had. I have spent 21 years at Columbia University seeing the heart starved, the arms and extremities getting all the blood.

"How many times, in the last ten years, when Dave Truman and I sat around talking about the University and its problems—how many times did we ask if it was too late to turn it around, too late to stop the decline? We both decided that it was not too late—it could still be pushed back up the hill again. I think now that we were probably wrong in thinking in 1962 that it was still possible to reverse the downward trend.

"The problems of Columbia come down to money, staff—and New York City. How often have I heard this tale in my years here: a department spends months negotiating with a top man somewhere else, finally gets him to agree to come to Columbia—and then, in a moment, the whole thing goes up in smoke. He calls and says, 'My wife just doesn't want to come to New York.' Schools, housing, etc., etc., I can write the script. So then you spend months trying to get the number two man. The same thing happens. And on to number three. Finally, you've been hunting for a year, and the department is tempted to get it over with. You are likely to settle on someone who is just not first rate. Columbia has moved twice already. Maybe it's time to move again. Perhaps the University can't survive in this city.

"I think the University's *hubris* has been to allow itself to become a service station. But now we're told, don't serve the government—but serve the community or Harlem. SDS asks us to have open admissions, and yet at the same time tells us not to expand. How is that possible? And even if you were to liquidate the whole endowment of the University, I don't think you would make a dent in the problems of the ghetto.

"Our main function is to train people who will be able to deal intelligently with these problems, instead of becoming a huge social work agency ourselves. We should question very carefully any new affiliations or service functions. Educational, scholarly, and scientific values come first; we must make a firm commitment to them. I think we must try to pull this thing back to being a university again."

A graduate student member of Students for a Democratic Society (who, in exchange for anonymity, was willing to break the SDS ukase that no individual interviews be given):

"The new Senate is a procedural change and not a meaningful change. It does not address itself to some of the basic questions—what is the function of a university, and what is its relationship to society, and its responsibility to the community.

"There is no question in my mind that the university is geared to preserve American capitalism, to preserve the rich and the super rich. There is fantastic waste in the United States. Not only the waste of material, but waste of human life. I'm not just talking about the waste of lives in the Vietnam war; I'm talking about people's lives being wasted when all their talent, their time and energy, is devoured by American capitalism to produce products which supposedly fill people's needs, but obviously don't. Who trains people to do this? The university. This is perhaps its gravest involvement with the corporations.

"The university is an agent of oppression. Any talk about a university senate and committees is irrelevant and stupid. It is a form of social control, of pacification, of co-optation. It diverts energy into institutions that are not open to change.

"The university should be destroyed and re-created to serve only the needs of the people. The university should be democratically run, restoring human procedures in the classroom and debunking professors as authority figures and students as passive recipients. I think many SDS people would like to create a school of revolutionary studies where the only thing engaged in is radical analysis of American society. The university would serve black students, for instance, by giving them the tools to develop their own political consciousness in the black liberation movement.

"Now maybe I'm getting away from Columbia here, so let me bring it all home. I think Columbia, in its expansion policies, has oppressed blacks and members of the Puerto Rican community by evicting them from their homes and forcing them to move back to the ghetto. In its function as a tool of the corporations, it exploits people in the third world, serves imperialism, and perpetuates colossal blindness and inhuman callousness to people's desperate needs."

Michael Sovern:

"I would challenge the nonsensical argument that the university functions to support the war and oppression. It's ironic that the big bogeyman of last year was IDA [Institute for Defense Analyses]—and IDA came out over the summer with a research document opposing the ABM.

"Really, what did the University do to support the war? Pursuing the line of argument advanced by students, they themselves support the war because they are registered for the draft. I'm sure only a handful of SDS members have burned their draft cards. Are the rest guilty of complicity?

"No, I see the essential functions of the university as teaching and research. Restructuring will not change that. In a way, the Senate is itself a pedagogical instrument—for all its members, not just for students. If it functions well, all who participate will be able to make wiser decisions about their university. They will, however, be seeking what we have always sought at Columbia: to help the young to learn and the scholar to carry on significant research."

University Professor Jacques Barzun, former Dean of Faculties and Provost of Columbia University:

"Just as the lower schools must organize transportation, free lunches, dental care, and driver education," writes Professor Barzun in his book, *The American University,* "so the university now undertakes to give its students, faculties, and neighbors not solely education but the makings of a full life, from sociability to business advice and from psychiatric care to the artistic experience. . . .

"If the university is in a big city—Chicago or New York or New Haven—it is likely that the area surrounding the institution is deteriorating, and in self-protection the university must take measures that look like waging war on the inhabitants: bringing in the police against crime and vice, hiring special patrols, and buying real estate as fast as funds and the market permit. . . .

"The new university thus presents a spectacle on three levels, like a medieval sculpture of the Last Judgment. On one plane is an administrative apparatus struggling to keep instruction, research, and community services in balance and the corporation solvent. At the center is the faculty, solicited from every quarter (including the university itself) to impart its knowledge and yielding (or not) to the temptation and summonses possible and impossible. In the third realm is the student body, fraternizing with its young instructors, often turning away from the education it seeks, and tending to lump the once-revered university with the social evils to be reformed. The new American university goes back scarcely twenty years; the "old" university is less than a century old. If the new deserves to be saved, the salvation can come only from within, from those who continue to say that they are the university: the faculty. And their self-reformation can occur only if they fully understand what they have come to be doing and the setting in which they do it."

Samuel Coleman, non-tenured faculty Senator:

"The students are really great kids. What's bothering them is that this country is at a point where everyone can lead a life proper for human beings. But the arrangements in our society prevent it, and obviously we require a great deal of rearranging of our social and political structures, which are simply relics of the pre-space age.

"Now I think this Senate can affect the University's position in society. Given the ability to alter the composition of the Board of Trustees, and to develop an outlook in the University community as a whole, the Senate can change the University's relationship to the government and industry. I don't believe a university has only one function. It has a lot of functions. Each function is the correlate of someone's purpose; those in the university must search out whose purposes are being served, and see whether they want to serve those purposes.

"I think we can't help but be a service institution. But ideally, I'd like to see the university devoted simply to teaching and learning. Learning that which people want to learn. I think the Senate can make this more possible. I think some steps have already been taken—those on Naval ROTC, and externally funded research. A great many more steps have to be taken to guarantee that federal funding in no way gives the government any control over the university that it doesn't have in the ordinary course of

enforcing rules against homicide, violence, and the like."

Wm. Theodore de Bary, tenured faculty Senator:

"I suppose if you believe that there are good things worth conserving, then you are a conservative. I believe this university is worth conserving. But of course this is only part of the picture—nothing good can be preserved simply by holding on to the status quo, and refusing to adapt to new challenges.

"A person with conservative inclinations must realize that things can't stand still. Yet, at the same time, a person who wants to respond to change realizes that he must have something to work with. Whatever he has received from the past—basic values, institutions, or practices which may serve to achieve certain common goals—will be worth preserving.

"Therefore my support for the Senate is wholehearted in that I believe the process of consultation is vital to change, and to the future of the University. But the way it is done is very important. If we degenerate into a situation wherein everyone is attacking everyone else, rather than listening to and working with them, we will have a very unsatisfactory Senate."

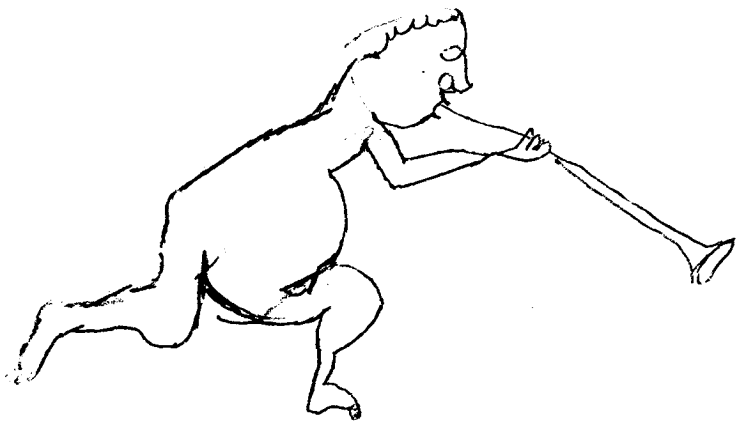
TWO, THREE, MANY PLANS

Simplistic dialectic: given the structure of the University as thesis, and the strike of spring 1968 as antithesis, the synthesis becomes the Great Restructuring Sweepstakes. There was no dearth of entrants. By September 1968 a minimum of 10 groups had worked on restructuring plans. By November 15, more than 40 restructuring proposals, in varying stages of completeness, had been aired before the open hearings jointly sponsored by several student reform groups and the Executive Committee of the Faculty.

Not all students were enthusiastic about these efforts. As far as members of SDS were concerned, the idea of a senate represented a trivial procedural change in university policy. "Participation in the senate legitimizes the University's complicity in a complex of business and corporate entanglements," says the graduate student SDS member quoted before. "Such a senate might have been a daring innovation in the fifties, but it's outmoded now. After all, the Cox Commission itself said that extraparliamentary means were the only way students could have worked change at Columbia. I don't think the senate makes any provision for innovation or basic radical change and so I think things are still the same, senate or no."

Many at Columbia, however, didn't agree that extraparliamentary means were the only way to work change. Here are the outlines of a few of the more prominent proposals for reform that emerged during the spring, summer, and fall of 1968:

1. One pole was represented by the so-called



Walsh Report. On August 12, 1968, Trustee Lawrence E. Walsh, President of the Alumni Federation, announced the restructuring plan of the committee that he chaired. "We do not suggest any basic change in the structure of University government although we suggest consideration of several possible improvements," the proposal stated. The principal innovation would be the creation of overseeing "Boards of Visitors" for each division of the University, appointed by and responsible to the Trustees. The Walsh plan also suggested alternatives to the creation of a faculty senate, and opposed any changes in the process of Trustee selection.

2. At the other pole, Students for a Restructured University (SRU), a left-liberal, anti-SDS splinter of the spring's Strike Coordinating Committee, released a 14-page plan on October 3, 1968. It proposed the creation of a "Joint Legislature" with equal student and faculty membership, which would have final authority over all University matters. It would oversee the University-wide election of Columbia's President (who would hold a five-year ceremonial position), and the election of deans and chairmen of departments. Members of the administration, under this plan, would "act as civil servants, carrying out as efficiently as possible the decisions of the Joint Legislature." They would be subordinate to the Legislature's committees. The Trustees would raise funds and ratify decisions of the Joint Legislature as a formality. Legislators, serving one-year terms, would be elected from constituencies formed around departments in the various divisions of the University. "We hope that these proposals will lead to a never-ending revolution in the University—a constant innovative experiment with education," the report's prolegomena stated.

3. The Trustees' first comment on institutional reform was made in an interim report issued on August 28 by the Special Committee of the Trustees, a six-member subcommittee formed May 1, 1968, under the chairmanship of Trustee Alan H. Temple.

"The structure and functioning of the Trustees are subject to restudy equally with all other parts of the University," the report stated, to the surprise of many. It considered changes in Trustee nomina-

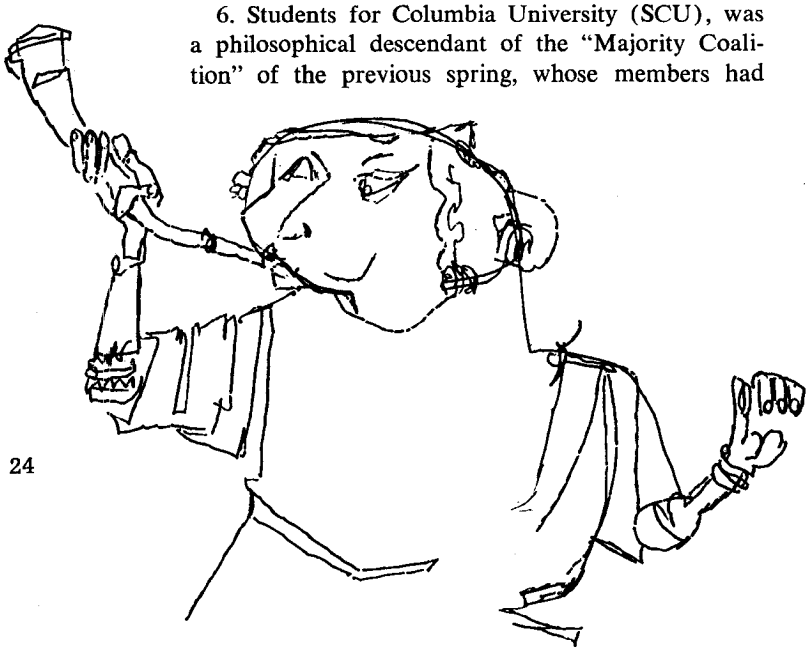
tion and selection procedure, and said that "communications in the University require improvement."

4. For the administration, formal suggestions for reform came from Vice Provost Herbert A. Deane, who issued three proposals, the first of which was released July 30. The proposals recommended the creation of a general assembly of all officers of instruction (meeting once a year); a 50 to 100-member elected faculty senate; and a 12-member faculty council chaired by Columbia's President or Provost. Students would be elected on a departmental basis to "student associations" in each University division; divisional groups would send representatives to a "university student association." Students would establish regular contacts with the faculty senate, the administration, and the Trustees. Serious students, the plan said, should have a greater role in their departments and in the University itself.

5. The Joint College Commission, created by Columbia College Acting Dean Henry S. Coleman in May, 1968, issued its restructuring proposal on October 17. It called for a variable four- to six-year curriculum in the College, abandoning the current eight-term setup. Students could receive credit for reports on "self-study and development" projects, which subsumed study, community service, or work. The JCC plan also proposed pairing freshmen and faculty tutors on study projects; substituting a linguistics course for the second-year language requirement; and instituting a pass-fail grading system, "where feasible," to eliminate the "oppressive competitive atmosphere" of the College.

Unlike the other reform plans, the JCC proposal was not political. And, as an editorial in the *Columbia Daily Spectator* pointed out, this report was the first to address itself specifically to the quality of academic life at Columbia: a focus which seemed to have been lost in the political shuffle.

6. Students for Columbia University (SCU), was a philosophical descendant of the "Majority Coalition" of the previous spring, whose members had opposed the strike and felt that the demonstrations hindered reforms. SCU presented its own restructuring plan on November 3. It proposed a tri-partite senate which would have 40 student, 50 faculty, and 10 administration members. The senate would make all appointments, including those of the University President; it would confirm the nomination of 12 Trustees from among the faculty and 12 Trustees from among the alumni; it would have veto power over the Trustees, and give students voting rights on tenure committees, evaluating faculty members on their teaching abilities as well as their academic accomplishments.



7. Last, but by no means least, there was the plan of the Executive Committee of the Faculty. Its proposal ultimately became the University Senate. It was one of the few plans to be discussed seriously amid the congeries of reform proposals issued. "Whenever you were discussing restructuring, you always worked *from* the Executive Committee plan," says Professor Frank Grad, who authored the first draft.

TWO EXECUTIVE APPENDAGES

The Executive Committee of the Faculty was born on April 30, 1968, 12 hours after the police had cleared the occupied buildings on campus. Created by the Joint Faculties of Columbia University—which itself was only two days old—it was empowered to "call the faculty together and to take other needed steps to return the University to its educational task." Two appendages of the Executive Committee of the Faculty were to have tremendous impact upon Columbia in the following year: first, the Cox Commission, appointed to study the disturbances and the state of the University, under the direction of Archibald Cox, Professor of Law at Harvard University and former Solicitor General of the United States; and second, the Project on Columbia Structure, the staff research group which, as noted, created the restructuring proposal which finally became the University Senate.

Almost from the beginning, the report of the Project on Columbia Structure was dubbed "the Grad plan." Director of the Law School's Legislative Drafting and Research Fund, Frank Grad was consulted in mid-May of 1968 after the Executive Committee decided to set up a research project on the University; by the end of the month he had formally been entrusted with the job. The project invited faculty and student participation. "There were more than 80 student applicants from all over the University," Grad says. "I interviewed 40 of the most promising, and hired 20. The student staff worked with five members of the faculty in studying the numerous aspects of University governance, and

prepared many position papers on these things."

The staff plan that emerged by September 1968 called for the election of a 92-member senate, consisting of 50 senior faculty representatives, 20 junior faculty representatives, seven administrators, five alumni, and 10 students. The students would be chosen by a separate "student assembly" elected from all University divisions, which would have jurisdiction over student and disciplinary affairs. The plan was distributed at the September 12 meeting of the Joint Faculties.

THROUGH TWELVE DRAFTS

By the end of September, the various restructuring groups had set up a joint program for the dissemination of reform proposals. A weekend conference to study the problems of Columbia and the proposals for change was set for October 5-6, and all members of the University were urged to attend and participate. Fewer than 100 people showed up for the Saturday meeting. The Sunday session was cancelled. Critics of the reformers claimed that the sparse attendance demonstrated the apathy of students when confronted with alternatives to disruptive demonstrations. Students countered that, thus far, the restructuring proposals had been anything but exciting, and had failed to deal with real issues. Subsequent to the conference, student groups and the Executive Committee announced that there would be open restructuring hearings starting in mid-October in Ferris Booth Hall, the student center.

After the Executive Committee elections in November the second test of reform interest was held: a poll on the interim disciplinary rules drafted over the summer by the Joint Committee on Disciplinary Affairs, a tri-partite commission created in April, 1968. Student representatives to the disciplinary committee would be chosen in the referendum, and a pool of students would be elected to serve on six other interim advisory committees that would study such things as community relations, the status of Naval ROTC at Columbia, housing, the search for a permanent University President, counseling and placement, and the creation of a permanent rule-making body.

The poll and the elections were held on November 6 and 7; the voting turnout was the lowest in recent years. Only 14 per cent of those eligible in the College (394 students) and 4 per cent of the graduate students (166 students) voted. The rules were approved. The "pool" arrangement, however, caused a protest in December: the elected students, meeting in Lewisohn Hall, refused to choose committee assignments by lot, and demanded membership parity with the faculty. In a compromise, committee assignments were made on a first-choice basis, and student strength was reshuffled on several of the committees.

A criticism of the elections was that since the committees would not be meeting until February, and since by February a consensus university senate plan might already have been announced, why should students bother to elect representatives to restructuring committees that might be superseded? "The committees were not really being outflanked by our senate plan," says Frank Grad. "We were sure the Executive Committee plan was going someplace, but we couldn't rely on it exclusively. Had the senate proposal gone up in smoke—and it might have, had there been another bust this spring—then the University would have been in the position of not having done anything. The committees were temporary by nature, but they were necessary and not redundant."

A new version of the Executive Committee plan was discussed in a January 5 meeting, and a faculty member leaked the contents to *Spectator*. The much modified proposal called for a 99-member senate which would have 20 students elected at large from University divisions. The student assembly idea had been dropped. "The students opposed the student assembly," says Frank Grad, "because they saw in it a repetition of the Columbia University Student Council experience. 'Student government is Mickey Mouse government,' we kept hearing, 'there is only University government.' "

After considerable revision, this plan was officially released February 14. It proposed a 100-member senate, including 45 tenured faculty senators, 14 non-tenured faculty senators, six faculty members from affiliated institutions, 20 student representatives, the University President, Provost, and five other administrators, and eight other members from the alumni, library, research, and administrative staffs.

This senate would replace the University Council (a body composed of the University President, Provost, vice presidents, deans of divisions, and two senior faculty members from each school), the Advisory Committee of the Faculties, and the Columbia University Student Council. It would have a 13-member senate executive committee composed of seven tenured faculty members, two non-tenured faculty members, two administrators, and two students. This body would assign senate members to the standing committees, prepare the senate's agenda, and would be consulted on the appointment of all officials of University-wide power, including the President and Provost. It would also collaborate with the Trustee nominating committee to produce six Trustee candidates "mutually acceptable to both the Trustees and the senate executive committee."

Due to the poor turnout at the disciplinary elections in November, the plan incorporated another

stipulation: representatives to the senate would be considered validly elected only if at least 40 per cent of their constituency had voted. This provision, it was hoped, would ensure a more legitimate senate and obviate charges that it was non-representative.

The February 14 plan made the President of the University the presiding officer of the senate. This position was not ceremonial: the presiding officer would decide which senate decisions needed Trustee approval. (The Trustees held final veto power.) Another provision stated that no measure taken by the senate could be final until the senate could reconsider it at another of its regular monthly meetings.

Senators would serve for two years, subject to recall by the petition of one fourth of their constituents in each of the University divisions. Meetings would be open to all. Twelve University schools would elect one student representative each; two student senators would be elected each from the College, the School of Engineering, and the Faculty of Political Science—the three divisions with the largest number of registered students. Students in affiliated institutions like Barnard and Teachers College could elect observers who would be able to speak on questions relevant to their schools. They would have no vote.

This February proposal soon drew criticism. Some, calling the plan totally inadequate, objected among other things to the clause about the reconsideration of senate actions at a subsequent session, claiming that it would curtail quick action which, they said, would be essential if a senate were to succeed. Others felt the plan went too far. Some administrators were skeptical of a powerful decision-making body that did not have their expertise on daily University operations; others doubted that the faculty would remain interested in a senate. Many faculty members, in turn, felt that student senators would not be committed to the University.

In response to these criticisms, the Executive Committee of the Faculty's plan was amended again and appeared in its final form on March 20 as "A Plan For Participation—Proposal for a University Senate." The changes reflected student criticism in particular. The reconsideration clause, which demanded two-time senate approval of any action, had been dropped. Individual senators were given the right to propose legislation from the floor; instead of the 100 faculty signatures and 250 student signatures formerly needed to get an item on the agenda; now any 150 qualified University voters would do.

In addition, the time for Trustee action on senate matters had been revised to give the Trustees two meetings' time to consider senate actions. This meant that approval would have to be given in no less than 30, nor more than 60 days.

This final version of the original proposal—the twelfth draft, according to Frank Grad—would be voted upon by students, tenured faculty, and non-tenured faculty in University-wide elections.

On March 19, the Temple Committee announced that, despite some specific reservations, it concurred with the general direction of the Executive Committee's senate efforts. It was the first statement of the Trustees on the proposal, and Executive Committee members were greatly encouraged that the plan would win Trustee acceptance eventually. That night, SDS released its statement on the plan: "The Executive Faculty wishes that the senate could be the Duma of Columbia University. But, unfortunately, it won't even be that."

The Executive Committee launched an education campaign. More than 25,000 48-page senate pamphlets were distributed by mail and stacked in campus lobbies. "Someone from the Executive Committee met with every faculty," says Michael Sovern, "and spoke to groups from every student body in every division. I remember one night when there was one member of the Executive Committee on every floor of the dorms, right before the vote."

The results of the referendum on the Executive Committee's plan, released April 8, were overwhelmingly in favor. Of those voting, 89.3 per cent of the students, 92.4 per cent of the junior faculty, and 90.4 per cent of the senior faculty approved the senate proposal. Of 19,248 eligible voting members of the University community, 8,420 had mailed ballots; the participation rate broke down to 40.9 per cent of the students, 36.9 per cent of the junior faculty, and 65.5 per cent of the senior faculty. "The referendum participation rate is higher than what the figures show," comments Professor Grad, "due to the fact that some of the constituencies overlap; there are a lot of people who belong to several constituencies at once. Thus, the figure of 19,248 eligible voters is too large. My own guess is that better than 50 per cent of the actual number of people who could vote, voted."

Student Senator Faris Bouhafa says: "Sure, the plan was accepted. But we only had one choice on the referendum. We could take this senate plan or leave it. Most wanted some sort of reform, so they voted for the plan. But it was the tenured faculty's plan. Not only the elections, but also the whole senate proposal was rammed down our throats." To this objection, however, Frank Grad says: "If there had been three plans on the ballot, one acceptable to students, one to faculty, and one to the administration, then the Executive Committee would have had to let the Trustees decide which plan to accept. Ultimately, the Trustees would have rewritten the proposal. No, the Executive Committee had to achieve a consensus in advance on what the best plan was. Otherwise, there would be no question that the complaints

from all quarters would have been more bitter, and the end result in doubt."

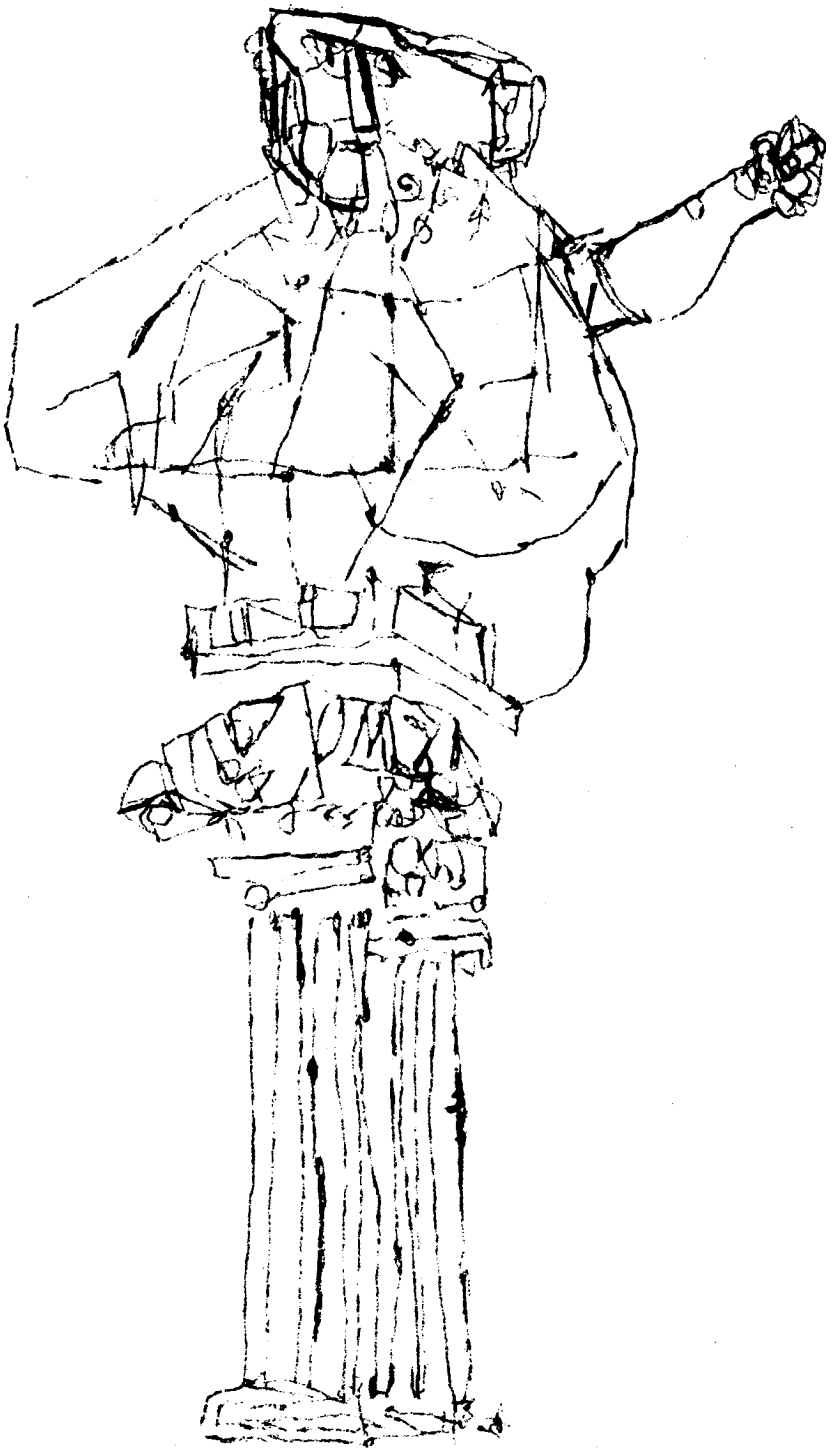
At that point, six weeks remained before the final exams. A *Spectator* editorial strongly urged that elections be held quickly, before the end of the term. It pointed out that, in the fall, newcomers would not be familiar with the issues and that elections couldn't be held until November. With breaks for Thanksgiving and Christmas, the newly elected senate wouldn't really be functioning until the spring term. Many senate supporters felt that the favorable referendum had made Trustee approval a formality. "The Trustees are faced with a *fait accompli*," said Professor of Painting Andre Racz. Professor of Economics Albert Hart suggested that candidate nominations and elections be held while the Trustees were deliberating whether to approve the senate.

Thus, at the end of April, during the time of troubles at Harvard and Cornell, and brief building occupations by SDS members and a group of black students at Columbia, President Cordier announced that voting on the senate would be from May 13 to May 21. The deadline for nominations was May 8; 10 signatures were needed to nominate student candidates, and five signatures to nominate faculty members.

Meanwhile the Trustees were kept fully informed. Professor Sovern says: "We discussed everything with them. We never played confrontation politics with the Trustees, and I think they respected that." On May 13, the first day of all-University voting, the Trustees announced their decision to phase out Naval ROTC at Columbia, and their approval of the Senate with only minor changes. The Trustees gave *ex officio* seating to the deans of Columbia College and the Graduate Faculties by raising Senate membership to 101 and taking away one of the three senior faculty seats given to University Professors. In addition, the Trustees decided that any Senate actions on monetary matters or contractual obligations must automatically be sent to the Trustees for approval.

For weeks before this decision, however, the University Senate Elections Commission had been supervising the nomination of Senate candidates. The only thing left to do was to elect a University Senate.

The terribly tight deadlines caused difficulties, however. *Spectator* ran its election preview under the headline "Senate Elections: Contests or Confusion?" The chaotic constituency problems raised other questions. Were the elections valid? Student Senator Sally Guttmacher remarked, "I really don't know what the people we represent want. Did they know who they were voting for? Faris [Bouhafa] is an Arab, I'm a Jew who's just back from England, and I'm wondering, do we represent anybody? Were people voting blindly? Is this a democratic thing or isn't it?" [Faris Bouhafa, a Tunisian, had come to America for the first time when he entered Columbia College, and Miss Guttmacher had spent the previous six years in England, studying anthropology.] Yet, the clamor for a functioning Senate had made quick elections a necessity. Despite confusion, final exams, and a time shortage, the Elections Commission completed its work.



And so, as of noon on the day of the first Senate meeting May 28, 94 Senate seats had been filled. Telegrams to the winners advised them of the 2:10 p.m. meeting. When the body was called to order for the first time, 82 Senators were present.

Although the first minutes were all harmony, the glow of camaraderie soon yielded to a first test vote, and, some claimed, to a bit of Machiavellian maneuvering, as the Senators turned to the principal business of the afternoon: the election of faculty and student members of the Senate Executive Committee (SEC), who would determine committee assignments and conduct interim business over the summer until the selection of permanent committee members in the fall. After some busy caucusing and a debate over the method of choosing a chairman, the Senate elected Wm. Theodore de Bary, Horace Walpole Carpentier Professor of Oriental Studies, as chairman of the SEC.

THE SUMMER DOLDRUMS

Did the summer meetings of the interim Senate Executive Committee give any clue to the Senate's future? It is difficult to say, due to the members' anomalous status. Some—especially Faris Bouhafa, Sally Guttmacher, and Samuel Coleman—were convinced that the SEC should respond immediately to issues, while others felt that it had no right to set precedents without the consent of the whole Senate.

The principal source of conflict occurred early in the summer, after U.S. Senator John L. McClellan's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations subpoenaed information about radical student activities at Columbia. The University, stating that it was legally required to respond, and that cooperation would convince the Subcommittee that repressive legislation was not necessary, furnished the names and addresses of the students and non-students who were observed occupying buildings in the disturbances during the spring of 1969. It detailed the financial aid received by each demonstrator from the University and from government sources, and a list of SDS officers was also provided. The students involved were notified of the University's action.

Critics of the administration said that the University had capitulated to the McClellan Subcommittee on an issue that involved academic freedom, and charged that the inclusion of the name of the SEC in a June 24 press release on the administration's McClellan statement made it appear that the SEC had concurred with the University's action—but that actually the SEC had been informed about the action afterwards.

Members of the SEC argued over the proper response to the McClellan issue. Professor de Bary's view was that the SEC should prepare a policy position on such cases for the future, instead of debating whether to censure the administration. His view prevailed. The SEC worked on the legal and procedural specifics of a proposal that, members hoped, would preserve the autonomy of the University during the course of any future legislative investigation. The recommendations were to be presented to the Senate in the fall, to be accepted or rejected by the body as a whole.

COMMENT: THE FUTURE

What is the future of the University Senate?

Samuel Coleman:

"The big problem this year will be in educational policies. What is the outlook of the University? For example, there is no point in having an architect like I. M. Pei create a master plan for the University's future if nobody knows yet where the University is going to go. We must establish a policy in relation to the community that is substantially different from our policy in the past, which got us into trouble.

"So, I think the first thing the Senate must become is the genuine forum and legislator for a united University community, in which the great gulf between the administration versus the faculty and students can be overcome, and a democratically governed University emerge."

Michael Sovern:

"I would say the Senate has a better than even chance to survive. One problem the Senate may face is that of size. If a body is small, it will have first class communication among its members. If it is large, there will be much better connection to campus constituencies. When we made our choice on the size, we thought there were too many risks in making the Senate any larger than 100 members. We felt this number would be small enough to permit the decision-making process to work. But—is it too small a number to maintain the vitality of representational connection? Will the students really feel that they have been admitted to the decision-making process?

"If it makes decisions a little slowly, I don't see this destroying the Senate. I think the overall pattern allows for reasonably swift action which is nevertheless well considered. Difficulty will arise if the members of the Senate are too antagonistic among themselves. I'm not talking about senior faculty versus students. But suppose 60 members of the Senate oppose the administration? Then there will be a constitutional crisis.

"Another problem will be the working out of the Senate's jurisdictional limits. The question of what should be Senate business is a real one, since it may legislate in areas where it should not. If it does, there is a real danger that divisions will not take instruction from the Senate. For instance, if the Senate decides that grades shall be abolished in all divisions, my own faculty—the law faculty—would probably take the view that the Senate had ex-

ceeded its powers by usurping the role of the schools and faculties. Then you'd have a constitutional crisis. If the Trustees upheld the law faculty, where would the Senate be?

"Much depends on the precedents that will be set unthinkingly. It's an amusing commonplace that people don't realize they are setting a lot of precedents—'let's do it,' they say, 'and we won't make it a precedent. It'll be an exception.' But of course anything the Senate does will be a precedent. The Senate may make itself a success or a failure right away, without knowing it, by the kind of precedents it sets."

Herbert A. Deane:

"I voted for the Senate, despite a number of considerable reservations. For I felt that the final draft was certainly much better than the original versions. And I was scared to death that the year would end and we would be left with nothing at all —I couldn't turn down the only plan we had.

"I was impressed with most of the people chosen as faculty Senators. But a year from now, or three years from now, if the Senate work proves to be less exciting than people think, then will the first rate people still be there? I fear that the tendency will be that people who are not interested in teaching or research, and students who are not really interested in their studies—the political types, the operators—will take over. Very soon Gresham's Law may start to operate, the bad driving out the good.

"I hope that won't happen, but I'm worried that it will. For I know that in the past, if there was an unwillingness on the part of the administration to use the University Council to discuss major questions of educational policy, there was an equal tendency for the faculty not to want to get involved. There is a real tradition at Columbia which sometimes shocks newcomers—the University has had fewer meetings, and other such chores, than any university I can think of.

"After years of observing University Council meetings it became apparent to me that the President did not choose to use the Council as he could have—to consider major problems.

"But if the President never used the Council, neither did the faculty members. They hardly ever raised important issues or asked significant questions—and there were more faculty than administration members on the Council, by a long shot.

"Now this worries me. It makes me suspicious of the faculty when they go around lamenting their lack of access to the levers of power. I'm not at all sure that the faculty will invest more interest and energy in working with this new Senate than they did with the University Council.

"So I don't think that because we have new machinery we are in the promised land. And I think the faculties of other universities follow this same pattern. It's terribly hard to get most faculty members to tear themselves away to do administrative work for more than a few brief moments.

"Now I don't think it's criminal or wicked that distinguished scholars may decide that they don't want to spend a couple of days a week on meetings discussing financial problems, or the like. It's not what they're here for. If these men are forced to become administrators, then they just won't want to stay here. So we must have talented administrators to deal with the staggering problems facing the University. Yet it's getting harder and harder to get people to take on administrative jobs; hundreds of presidencies and deanships are vacant all over the country.

"One of the dangers is that an inner cabal will develop—formally or informally—so that you have a congressional oligarchy masking itself behind a legislative democracy. The legislative body as a whole distracts attention from the real power of the cabal—they say piously, 'There is no directing group —there's nobody here but us congressmen.'

"You can't tell from the final Senate document itself if the dangers of legislative supremacy are strong. We'll only get answers to this in practice; we'll just have to see. But as John Stuart Mill said, a parliament can criticize, warn, express grievances, perform many other essential functions—but it cannot govern. If the Senate attempts to govern on its own, then God help us."

Frank Grad:

"The Senate faces some dangers. If people do not regard it as an important implement of University policy-making—if they treat it as a toy—it's not going to work. I hope the administration and Trustees will give the Senate a chance; I hope they don't regard the Senate as an inimical body, but rather as a constructive tool in the formulation of policy.

"But the things I am most concerned about are the things the University is not in control of. For the University is at the receiving end of many things that happen in this world. The Senate could be overwhelmed, faced with the resolution of a prob-

lem where the University is involved only with the effect, not the cause. The University is often the place where symptoms appear, not where they were generated. For instance, any major racial upheaval might place demands upon the Senate to do something immediately in an area where it has no power.

"But the great thing about the Senate is that now there is a forum where the force of opinions can be felt. That the streets and the buildings are not, as they once were, the only place to make things happen. I hope people wake up to the fact that there is an outlet, and I hope they try to use it before they take to the streets."

Wm. Theodore de Bary:

"This fall, I can see certain difficulties with the Senate. First, procedural problems will take time, and I'm afraid some people will get very impatient while these things are being worked out. Yet we must establish these rules of procedure, so that when we have a significant cleavage of opinion, we have the means to refer it into committees, where some agreement on these questions may be worked out.

"Second, the proper allocation of committee responsibilities will be an immediate problem, too. In my view ideally the committee members should work closely with their counterparts in the administration, and the Trustees. Hopefully the committees' sense of responsibility will grow in time, as they have a better sense of what they can and should do.

"One long-term problem will be the willingness of able people to give time to the Senate. I haven't been able to do any significant scholarly work this summer; the Senate has been almost a full-time job. So, I think it's going to be a problem to find people who are devoted to the University, who have other tasks, and yet who are willing to give time to the Senate.

"The burden will fall very heavily on the members of the Executive Committee, and members of the key committees—like external affairs and research, educational policy, and rules of conduct. In fact, on the basis of my experience so far, I think the chairmanship of the Executive Committee must be rotated quite frequently if it is not to become an intolerable burden.

"I think the Senate must be principally involved with long-range policy planning. We shall have to make difficult judgments as to how far the Senate shall become involved in the immediate day-by-day problems of University administration, without losing sight of the major policy questions which administrators often have little time to think about. I think we must refrain from always looking over the shoulders of the people in the administration. It is unreasonable to expect administrators to bear responsibilities, if we are constantly yapping at them. Nevertheless, we must be assured that the policies we adopt are followed in practice.

"It all comes down to a question of whether we want to keep faith with the other members of the University community. We have to develop the capacity to criticize and suggest—in such a way as not to undermine the basic trust and good faith which holds this community together. If a community has faith and trust, it can tolerate differences and actually gain strength from them."

Faris Bouhafa:

"There have been two forms of dissent on this campus so far. Straight to the barricades or straight to the committee. Well, neither one has worked. I think now, for awhile, most dissent will be channeled through the Senate. If the Senate can make it, it can be very valuable. But if the Senate doesn't work, there's going to be trouble.

"I'm not saying this Senate can't work. But it must create its own power. If people start avoiding things, if everything gets lost in committee, forget it. I'm not sure the senior faculty members know their role in this, that they have to make it work. Maybe the primary job of students—when the Senate opens—will be to educate senior faculty members."

Sally Guttmacher:

"Right now I see the whole mess as a power scramble—the Trustees, administration, senior faculty, students. That doesn't mean I'm willing to chuck the whole thing and say it can't work. The Senate could work because it's a channel, a dialogue, for various groups. If the Senate doesn't work, we can always walk out later; but first we've got to give it a chance.

"But if the Senate is going to be polarized all the time, the senior faculty has to be the winner, always—unless we can find 15 senior faculty members who will cross lines. And if the senior faculty always gets what it wants, then the Senate is not going to work.

"But I want to say something more. One thing about this country is interesting, and very scary. I spent the previous six years in England, and England leaves you alone. America doesn't leave you alone. The miserable things going on all affect you personally. You have to participate or go under.

"Columbia is the same way. It just won't leave you alone. I hope a lot of the other Senators feel that way too. For it's obvious to me now that, for the kind of things that need to be done, the Senate is going to be a full-time job. I don't know whether the others realize that yet."

—GLENN COLLINS

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