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### The Spark, Volume 3 Issue 1

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# THE SPARK

## NOT ME, SAM!

Oct 23, 79

Robert Landau

That's right, another article on the draft. It appears that there still exists some doubt as to the seriousness and danger of a peacetime draft. First, it must be realized that the potential for another attempt at enactment of draft registration is very real next year. Secondly, it must be realized that an astute awareness and an active lobby on "our" part is of paramount importance in retarding the present pro-draft drive. "Our" being the 19 to 26 year olds who will be subjected to this onerous registration requirement.

A serious delusion recently echoed states that the Congressional legislation is simply to reinstate registration, NOT to reinstate the draft. Let's be realistic, if it's not the draft that we would be registering for, what would it be, a ping pong tournament? This issue goes far beyond the mobilization capabilities of the Selective Service System. The S.S.S. is the cornerstone of the system of compulsory military service. Its sole function is to provide inductees for the Armed Forces. The shift from the service's current stand-by status to an active mode signals a return to a system of conscription.

Furthermore, proponents of pending bills have made it clear that they view the return to a Selective Service registration and classification as a major step towards phasing out all Volunteer Force and returning to a draft. It would be a good idea to face the music before this thing is rammed down our throats.

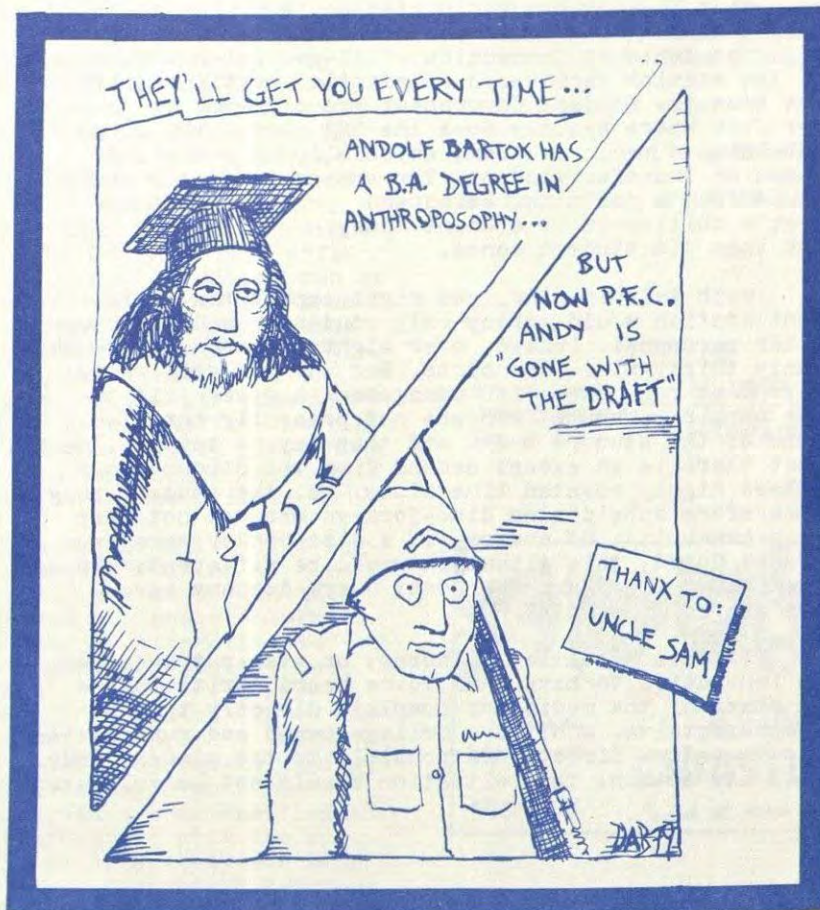
A presidential study is due in January, but let us do our own scrutinizing of the draft. All of us bore witness in the 1960's to the

Southeast Asian conflagration. The draft provided a ready vehicle to obtain military manpower which enabled our leaders, without any accountability, to involve our nation deeper and deeper, in that bitter and unnecessary struggle. The draft had been manipulated to serve adventurist goals of foreign policy. The lessons of Vietnam must not be forgotten. A peacetime draft facilitates the possibility of starting or entering (another) war.

The typical response on the part of draft proponents is that the youth of this nation owe something to society and its government. The absolute equation of the

state with society is assumed in this argument. What we should "owe" however, is a resistance to the bad ideas of people in government. Thousands of youths made sacrifices for their country during the Vietnam war. These sacrifices meant disruption, and often the loss of their lives, for reasons they didn't understand. These same sacrifices were later to be rationalized by top officials as grave mistake.

Serving our nation when its future is truly at stake is a different story. For that matter, so are civil service obligations and other types of nonmilitary service.



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# Editorials

THE SPARK is finally back!

Its early history began with the NEWSLETTER, which was an independent, alternative newspaper to the old PUNDIT. After its first year of existence, the NEWSLETTER became THE SPARK. It is our every intention to remain the alternative, slightly radical newsmagazine of Connecticut College.

THE SPARK is an editorial newsmagazine with its focus on our College community. We feel that it is our duty to publish articles about issues, both campus and local/national/international, which affect our lives as students, faculty, administrators, or just concerned Americans. We intend to constructively criticize (as well as voice our disapproval when necessary) issues and policies which we feel need improvement and to support those which will be beneficial to the College community and our lives. We urge letters of agreement or disagreement with THE SPARK. It is important for us to have your input so that we may better serve the College community. We look forward to the College community's support in the upcoming year.

If you have listened at all to 91.5 FM you must realize that the college radio station is now on the air. WCNI is a student run radio station managed by an elite group of students at Connecticut College. Being a College club, the station receives a substantial portion of its budget from the Student Government Association. You may wonder from where exactly does the SGA obtain the money to subsidize a radio station, especially if you are a freshman or transfer student. The answer is simple enough: it comes from a definite, earmarked, percentage of each student's tuition-it is student money.

With this is student money.

With this in mind, you might expect that this student station would employ only students as disc-jockeys or other personnel. Indeed, over eighty persons tried out for only thirty-nine time slots. But no! The station is only student run. The elite management has seen fit to choose on air personnel who are not presently enrolled members of the student body, and thus pay no tuition, when in fact there is an excess demand from the student body for these highly coveted time slots. We, the student body, are therefore subsidizing disc-jockeys who are not part of this community. Of course, if a disc-jockey were from the Coast Guard, this situation would be different; since Connecticut College and the Coast Guard Academy have always shared facilities.

If this situation bothers, or even outrages you, it is imperative to have your voice heard. Write to the radio station, the media, or complain directly to your SGA representative. WCNI is a College owned and run station, and is therefore directly responsible to the student body for all its action. This situation should not be tolerated.

VOLUME III/ ISSUE ONE

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THE SPARK is a student run journal of editorial and literary content dedicated to presenting student and faculty opinion on campus-related subjects.

THE SPARK Welcomes letters from its readers on any and all subjects which are relevant to the College, or on articles which have appeared in this journal. Letters should be sent to:

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Sunday Afternoon Blues



# DRAFT

But that is not the issue at hand. The militarist legislators in Washington are specifically referring to registration in the armed forces. As several studies have shown, there do exist alternatives to a peacetime draft. Perhaps with a more positive professional and imaginative military leadership, along with the continuing elimination of nitpicking, demoralizing regulations and requirements, the volunteer army will continue to supply us with the necessary manpower.

Conscription should be the last resort of a nation facing imminent threat. It must rest upon the interest of national security, what James Madison called "the impulse of self preservation". The government has a duty to prove to the public, that such a drastic step as conscription is absolutely necessary today.

# from the conservative viewpoint

Bill Butterly

Every young person, especially we students here at Connecticut College, should be concerned about plans to reinstate the draft and/or registration. That is why Conn. College Young Americans for Freedom has made opposition to the draft its #1 priority for this semester.

In recent days, the college YAF Chapter has been passing out pamphlets door to door to inform students why they should actually be against the reinstatement of the draft.

YAF's main argument is that the draft runs counter to American principles. As conservatives, YAF members believe strongly in the promotion and protection of individual liberty. They see the draft as contrary to the protection of the 13th amendment against involuntary servitude. They cite the fact that the continuation of the draft was passed in the 1940's by only one vote and that conservative senator, Bob Taft, called the move "totalitarian."

In addition, the YAF argue that the draft is less efficient because it trains men at great cost only to have them quit after two years because they didn't want to be in the army in the first place.

Further, the YAF organization believes that the servicemen who are drafted pay a high price in lost wages they could be making in the private sector.

As an alternative, YAF suggests a continuation of the all-volunteer army with the increased pay scale enough to make the job attractive to more and higher quality recruits.

The YAF pamphlet blames the future of the present volunteer on the government saying, "because today's government bureaucrats are as inefficient and ineffective with the voluntary army, as they are with most other government programs the bureaucrats claim their only solution to America's military problems is to draft you!!"

Chairman Bill Butterly asserts that "The government has no right to deprive any young person of their rights to live their life free of government control. If the bureaucrats think they need more men let 'em draft the bureaucrats."

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# Noise Pollution

Barbara Fried

I would like to address the problem of noise on this campus. Although there appears to be sufficient student frustration with the noise level to warrant some type of action, none has been taken to date.

The type of noise of which I speak is caused by total inconsideration. In this sense, noise made by one who, although

The appropriate and desirable level of noise within a dormitory is debatable. Thus, the library is often considered an appropriate accommodation for the "serious" student. Let that myth be hereby shattered. Perpetual whispering is as disturbing as the gum snapper.

Assume a considerable part of the noise is caused by students who, if it were brought to their attention, would quickly and apologetically desist. It would follow that after a sufficient interval had passed, students would rise to a new level of consideration through recognition and compromise. The institution of quiet hours where quiet was expected was reminis-

ration to emphasize those goals which they supposedly endorse might be made. In light of the campaign against partying by certain members of this administration, such a suggestion is reasonable. Yet this type of recourse fails to deal with the inherent problem.

We are students with differing needs and interests. It is known as the "liberal experience." As a community we must try to reconcile our needs with those around us. If that cannot be done, a viable alternative must be offered for students who enjoy what the outside world might consider a more "civilized" pattern of life.

The idea of a quiet dorm-

## In light of the campaign against partying by...the administration...

living in a college community, does not ascribe to the social contract theory. This person is different from the person who generates noise but is more civically minded. They are equally disturbing.

cent of a more common order to which all might adapt. It may be noted that quiet hours in many dorms have been abandoned, and where they do exist, are relatively inefficacious.

An appeal to the administ-

itory has been suggested in the past. Student reception to the plan was enthusiastic until an actual commitment was required. Why is there apprehension to such an operation?

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# Infirmary Issue: Where We Stand

Bruce Liebman

Immediately before last semester's spring break, the Health Services Committee met with the college's physician, Dr. Murphy. The intent of the meeting was to report the results of a recent student poll which had indicated general satisfaction with infirmary care, especially the gynecological services provided by the semi-retired Dr. Murphy. At the HSC meeting, Dr. McKeehan announced that the administration was considering cutting out much of the infirmary services. Proposed changes included reducing the nursing staff, closing down the in-patient overnight service, and firing Dr. Murphy.

HSC and the SGA did not support the proposal, as both bodies were highly angered that their views on the matter were apparently ignored by the administration. The ousting of Dr. Murphy was not economically sound as two people would have to be hired to replace him—one nurse practitioner and a physician on call every other night. HSC sent a letter to the president of the school, the Secretary-Treasurer, and to Mr. Schles-

inger in which the committee stated its reservations concerning the proposal. It asked that the members be notified before any action was taken.

But after returning from vacation, HSC learned that Dr. Murphy had not been asked to return for the fall. The committee learned this fact through student rumor confirmed on confrontation by Dr. McKeehan.

After an SGA forum with Dean Alice Johnson and Dr. McKeehan, SGA decided that pamphlets outlining the situation would be printed up and distributed during parents' weekend describing the administration's disregard for student input. After considerable debate, SGA chose not to defy the administration by writing the letter; in part this decision was due to the administration's refusal to give SGA access to the computerized addressing system and in much larger part due to the spring fund raising season.

Soon after a considerable number of parents questioned the logic of the proposed plan, SGA and the Board of Trustees agreed

that the administration had handled the issue poorly and expressed concern about the "communications problem" which existed. The administration then agreed to let SGA contribute input to Oakes Ames' summer letter on the issue. The letter was sent out over the summer, but there was no student input. Only a small paragraph dealt with the issue in a vague, passing manner.

After the Trustee's meeting, it became clear that the issue warranted strong follow-up attention. A new ad-hoc committee was formed to investigate the issue and make recommendations to the administration. This committee consisted of one trustee, two advisors from outside institutions, three administrators, students Seth Marcus and Janice Mayer, three doctors, and six parents.

The committee met several times over the summer, with the bulk of its time taken up drafting proposals modifying the administration's initial plan. While delaying a decision on Dr. Murphy's possible retention,

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# Nuclear Energy and Health Conference

Pam Gray

Despite a degree of caution, and perhaps a bit of reluctance, Conn. College has acknowledged an issue of vital importance outside campus boundaries. This most recent attempt to widen the scope of educational concerns was the Conference on Nuclear Power and Health (sponsored in part by Chapel Board), which was held on October 12 & 13. It was held in Palmer Auditorium. Both the evening session and the following day of workshops were host to an impressive and diverse panel of specialists in various aspects of nuclear energy. Each 15 minute introductory presentation was concise and informative, flashing a glimpse of the complexities involved in approaching the issue of nuclear energy-its risks and its benefits. Consequently, as the Conference progressed, many questions were asked, and still more left unanswered.

The evening began with Sister Rosalie Bertell revealing test results on the correlation between three factors: radiation exposure, aging (particularly premature), and susceptibility to leukemia. Her admittedly frightening conclusions prompted her keen observation that we must question whether this society is, in fact, able to recognize, and ultimately deal with, the reality of radiation effects. Considering where our energies are focused, as a country, it seems clear that nuclear health hazards are not yet a primary concern to Americans. More specifically, have we, as college students, recognized these risks as serious ones?

Speaking on the subject of alternative sources of energy was Dr. Howard. A "facts and figures man", he showed that while the U.S. uses nuclear power for 3.5% of its total energy consumption, Connecticut uses 17.5% nuclear energy for its power! The important point, however, is not the relative use of nuclear over petroleum or gas, but the significant factor lies in the country's emphasis (1) on ever increasing energy consumption, and (2) on its existing preference

for exhaustible, rather than renewable, energy resources. There is a need to research these renewable sources of solar, wind, waste, and geothermal energy. Finally, Dr. Howard placed most of his faith in the concept of "Energy Management". This concept would entail great reductions in fuel wastes- especially in the areas of transportation and electricity

In addition, efforts could be made to reduce and reallocate demands on specific energy sources.

The voice heard from John Cagnetta of Northeast Utilities was clearly and understandably defensive. Although the conference was not officially anti-nuclear, the seriousness of the controversy along with the

benefitted everyone. A good number of the Conference participants were non-College members. In fact, the student turnout was very disappointing, considering both the quality of available information and the imperative need for this kind of education. Conn. College students are not widely known to be concerned about "outside" problems. Still, there is no excuse for the poor attendance at this Conference. Even if the worldwide or nationwide scale of the nuclear issue is beyond the scope of Conn. students, certainly we could show more interest in our local situation! This college sits in the center of 3 (potentially 4) nuclear power plants. Increased

## We cannot afford to leave the debate over risks in... manipulative hands

recent campus activities of the "Committee for Safe Energy", established an air of reserve-if not outright hostility-toward proponents of nuclear production. Cagnetta's arguments were fairly straightforward, if somewhat unconvincing. He made several unsubstantiated refutations, including the questioning of the validity of numerous research studies, the serious implications of ongoing scientific controversy, and the truthfulness of information offered by very reliable sources. Although Cagnetta had sympathy among other panel and audience participants, the overall feeling was unmistakably one of skepticism and critical judgement.

On Friday, specialized workshops allowed further exploration of the topics briefly introduced the evening before. The Conference was organized particularly well, providing ample time for questions and discussion. People took advantage of this opportunity and proceeded to ask very perceptive and worthwhile questions which

radiation levels and reactor accidents are very real dangers. Unfortunately for everyone, we find ourselves far too concerned with our "isolated" campus problems. When forced to choose, our time will undoubtedly be devoted to our own immediate, individualized realm of activity. Besides, in a few short years, we will be far from this unhealthy location, pursuing our very private, self-oriented lives, relinquishing all social responsibility to those wonderful experts-the chemists, ecologists, engineers-and will be wondering what all the uproar was ever about. As Dr. Elling suggested, it is not we who are most endangered by industrial hazards.

We can more easily remove ourselves from the role of decision-making. Here, policies are formed based on the specific interests of Big Business and political power. The significance in this context is that the decision makers need not suffer the immediate effects of inadequate safety standards, low-level

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## NUKES

radiation exposure, and higher taxes to cover the costs of possible accidents. With so vital a controversy, we cannot afford to leave the debate over risks in the manipulative hands of political businessmen. We have our health, if not our entire future, at stake. The nuclear issue demands some serious attention and a conscientious effort by all of us. But, as Sister Bertell asked, are we, indeed able to deal with these dangers honestly? If so, it will be the most important and necessary step toward arriving at a worthwhile resolution to the ever-increasing danger of the use of nuclear reactors and materials.

## HEALTH

the committee did endorse such cost-saving measures as eliminating the infirmary's own production of food, releasing one nurse, cutting back on some beds, and instituting a self-help cold clinic. Crucially, though, the administration did not agree with the committee on Dr. Murphy's future status here. When students returned in September Dr. Murphy was no longer practicing here.

The committee then focused attention on students' rights in the matter. It recommended that transportation to town in emergency cases must be arranged and paid for by the infirmary and not by students, as had often been the case in the past. Also, student member Mayer requested that the college lawyer be placed on the committee. Disturbingly reminiscent of the earlier "communications gap" is the fact that the lawyer has yet to appear in committee.

The present position of the issue is this: The changes made so far constitute a trial semester for the infirmary. A questionnaire asking students' opinions of the infirmary will be sent to every one in November. Mayer has stressed the importance of having a very large response on these. The more the students respond on this issue, the greater the credibility and strength of the ad-hoc committee to determine policy. It must also be stressed that while trustee and student opposition to the administration altered the latter's plans, the trustees do not have actual 'veto power' over administrative decisions. This writer's discussion with the three most recent student trustees last weekend indicated, however, that the administration is "seriously concerned" about student and committee views on the issue. The future will reveal how much of a "communications problem" still remains.

## NOISE

Contrary to popular conception, it would not be contingent on recitation of Locke's Social Contract, rather a sincere acceptance of responsibility in this community. It is to this end that the undercurrent of exasperation with the noise problem should be directed.

### CLASS of 1983 ELECTION RESULTS

President: David Kaster  
Social Bd: Mark Finnegan  
J Board: Paige Cottingham  
Liz Loeb  
Sec-Treas: Undecided

CONGRATULATIONS

# Recycle

# this

# paper



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Jim Francese

1

Silence in fear, it is not right.  
Fear is a demon who burns a wicked sight.  
lovers--Estranged, people I have known well.  
Silence is but living hell.

2

To be trapped in silence--god  
What pain!  
How to make it right again?  
Unable to speak, for  
Unspeakable fears  
Trapped in silene, how the demon learns!  
God help me--let  
Her speak first.  
To be trapped is silence is what I fear worst.

3

I shouted and screamed, but not a word fell.  
Silence is but living hell.

## QUESTIONS

Jim Francese

Who are you? they say.  
(the breeze is blowing warm today)

What is it you have been?  
(the sun is smiling a great wide grin)

What is it you will be?  
(the fish are dancing in the sea)

Can't you speak, have you no tongue?  
(let's go outside and have some fun)

Come; Let's go; He's mad, can't you see?  
(why can't they just let me be)



# Truth in Testing?

Bruce Liebman

Most Conn. students are aware of the law which permits one to see any written recommendations about him or herself as long as one initially requested to do so. A law recently passed by the New York State legislature promises a scope much wider than merely knowing what a teacher wrote on an evaluation form. The Admissions Testing Act, better known as the Truth in Testing Law, requires that test-takers of the standardized versions administered by the Educational Testing Service (E.T.S.) in Princeton, New Jersey., be sent a graded copy of their exams. E.T.S. is a nonprofit corporation which devises and scores the battery of secondary, college, and graduate achievement and aptitude tests. In Congress, there is a measure under study which not only would require that test-takers be told exactly how they performed, but would also require that students be informed what score is generally required for admission to institutions of higher education.

The testing corporations are opposed to the New York law. Besides driving up the cost of the test, which would now have to be personally graded and returned to each student, it would also mean that a test could never be used more than once. On the medical boards, this law could jeopardize the existence of the test itself: since the human body comprises only so much material for testing purposes. E.T.S. has actually threatened to stop offering its test in New York altogether. Such a strong move is probably something that the bill's sponsors never intended.

What some education officials and administrators did intend to accomplish through the law was the protection of students. By exposing standardized tests to public scrutiny, much of the "mystery" surrounding the application process to colleges and graduate schools will end. Public accountability

is especially important in this area due to the great influence these tests have in determining one's school, and ultimately one's career. While many students can afford expensive coaching courses for a test, many can not; thus the New York law hopes that by equalizing the testing process for everyone, the disadvantaged students can gain some measure of their academic strengths and weaknesses. Enactment of the law, however, will be a boon to those coaching courses, since they will have actual tests to work with.

Were it not for the increased cost and the obvious unfairness of ever-increasing numbers of students who will profit from cram courses competing against students who aren't able to take prep courses and thus do as well, the law would still be objectionable on two philosophical points. The first is that it is the government that is trying to rectify deficiencies in the educational testing system. The second problem is the belief that there should be truth in testing laws just as there are truth in packaging and truth in advertising laws. This notion indicates a crude attempt to transfer the consumer ideology of the sixties and early seventies to a non-business sector of society.

The number of students taking standardized tests has been increasing every year. Apparently, these test-takers have not been too perturbed they would never see their graded tests. Governmental regulations in the educational sector have been a continual bane to many colleges and universities. The truth in testing law now spreads this curse to E.T.S. E.T.S. is not supported by the government; it exists primarily in a one to one relationship with the student. This fact does not stop the government from intruding in this relationship and jeopardizing the fundamental right of E.T.S. to conduct its own affairs without interference.

Ostensibly, governments issue regulations in order to protect individual rights. What "right" is being protected by this law? E.T.S. is merely the scapegoat of the national problem of plummeting verbal and math skills. In our increasingly fragmented and individualistic society, it has become the norm to expect and even feel entitled to certain rewards and privileges. Thus, when students do poorly on their college boards, the government officials who are responsible for the administration of public education immediately conclude that the fault lies with the slightly imperfect standardized tests. E.T.S. is aware of the tests' major influence as an admissions criteria, yet it also warns against abuse and over-dependency on scores. One wonders whether this law would even exist if the scores had not declined, and without the need to redress the obvious "injustice" of lost prestige. In the end, E.T.S. is treated as the messengers were in ancient times—that is, shoot the person who brings bad news. Perhaps if the government establishes its own test service, in the same way it formed and then proceeded to run into the ground the Postal Service, Amtrak, and Social Security, will we realize that the problem of declining achievement is the fault of the public school system and not that of an efficient testing corporation like E.T.S.

