

News and Blues

Volume 2, Number 1
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More Parking Headaches: HSC Students, Staff Fighting Attempt to End Free Parking

By George Bidermann

Angry students, faculty and staff members at the Health Sciences Center (HSC) have begun mobilizing against administration plans to close the East Campus's gravel parking lot when a new \$8 million parking structure opens up next month.

The 437-spot parking area, which represents the only free parking on East campus for faculty, staff, and graduate-student employees, had been scheduled to close in mid-August. But delays in completion of the new parking garage and pressure from the GSO and campus unions have so far kept the administration from shutting it down. As the *News and Blues* went to press, students in the Health Sciences Center and union members were gearing up for organizational meetings and a meeting with administration officials on Friday.

They are demanding that the administration keep the gravel lot open as the only free parking area for graduate students working or taking classes in University Hospital or the Health Sciences Center; open the HSC garages after 5:30 PM, as had been done until this semester, so that graduate students can park in a safe environment at a time when the garages are virtually empty; reduce the monthly parking rate in the garages to an affordable fee; and improve bus service and security for students who work round the clock, in many cases, at the HSC. With the new garage now set to open on October 1 and the gravel lot set to close 48 hours after that, students are planning direct action at the same time that they negotiate with the administration on the above points.

GSO President John Nolan, who has been meeting with HSC students regarding these developments, said, "I have not heard of or seen HSC students reacting with such anger

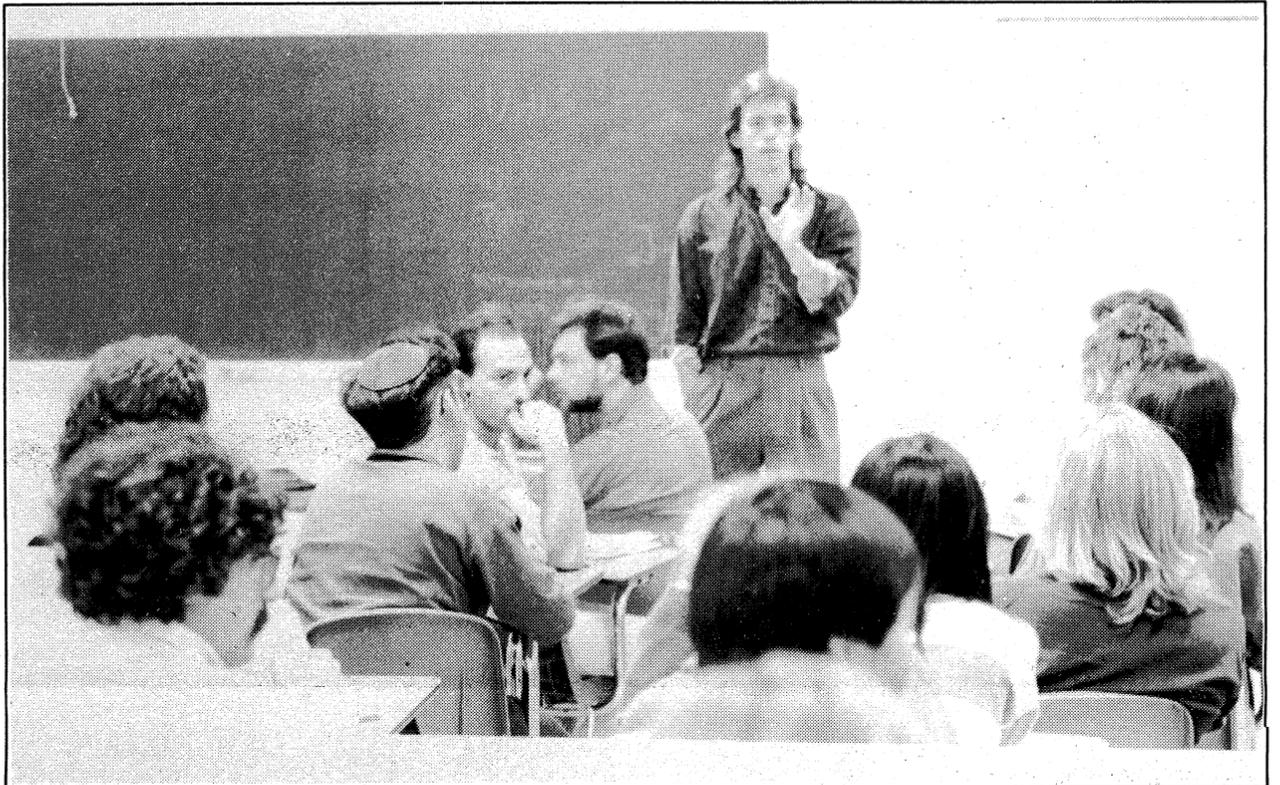


Photo by Gregg Forte

GSO President John Nolan addresses a meeting of Health Sciences Center students last week.

or energy on any other issue. This seems to have been the straw that broke the camel's back." At presstime, students were organizing letter-writing campaigns and petition drives with union representatives to show the administration that there is strong support from all constituencies for the positions they are taking.

The closing of the gravel lot appears to be part of a coordinated effort by the administration to restrict, if not totally eliminate, "free" parking throughout the university. All university community members currently pay a \$5 yearly "registration" fee, which provides them with a plastic sticker and entitles them to search for an open spot whenever they can find one during the day. Typically, all faculty/staff lots on campus are full by 10 AM each

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GSEU Case Finally on Schedule To Be Heard By Appeals Board

By Carl Montgomery

The Graduate Quill

BUFFALO- After years of delay, SUNY's graduate-student employees may soon be granted a right long held by virtually all other New York State employees: the right to decide for themselves, in a law-sanctioned election, whether or not to unionize.

The State's Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) is set to hear on September 23 an appeal of a decision handed down in the Summer of 1987 by the Board's director. At that time, the PERB director agreed with SUNY's argument that the student status of teaching assistants (TA's) and graduate assistants (GA's) took precedence over their status as employees and therefore made them ineligible to unionize.

SUNY opposed the original petition filed by the Graduate Student Employees Union (GSEU), which included research assistants (RA's), on the grounds that RA's are a separate bargaining unit. Rather than fight that battle, which would have delayed the case even longer, the GSEU decided to exclude RA's from the petition with the belief that once GA's and TA's were given the right to self-determination, SUNY's argument against including RA's would, in effect, become moot. GSEU President Dominic

Chan said, "The first step that GSEU will take, if it is recognized, will be to organize RA's through a union membership drive. We hope that SUNY would not start another protracted legal battle over the issue of whether RA's could be included, but we believe that they would be wasting the state's money in a case that they would eventually lose."

The Graduate Student Employees Union (GSEU), formed by SUNY graduate-student employees in 1979, filed an appeal of the director's decision in January 1988. That appeal resulted in a split vote by the Board, which was operating with one of its three seats empty. Since that time, the Board has not maintained a full membership long enough to re-hear GSEU's appeal.

But barring any death, resignations, or other unforeseen events, the state of affairs-- along with the nearly interminable waiting period it occasioned-- seems to be at an end. The two vacancies in PERB were filled this summer, and the GSEU found its case at the head of the docket, initially scheduled for the middle of August. SUNY's lawyers, unprepared for this rapid turn of events, requested a brief postponement. GSEU's attorney David Mintz, of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), assented. CWA

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Welcome Back; How Much Worse Can It Get?

The GSO has a new executive committee and we welcome you back to Stony Brook. Not everything is well here. During the summer the impact of the budget cuts became apparent to those of us who were here.

First and foremost, the university administration decided to cut TA- and GA-lines to make up for the budget shortfall. Although the money restored by the legislature eased some of the pain, Stony Brook apparently lost a significant number of state lines. At present it is still unclear exactly how many lines have been lost. This is just the beginning. With New York State's economy in poor health, a legislature reluctant to increase state revenues through progressive taxation, and a governor preaching fiscal responsibility, it is very likely that during the next budget year SUNY will see a comparable, if not larger cut, in its budget. The administration at Stony Brook is certainly convinced that these mid-year cuts will take place. This will result in an even larger reduction in TA/GA-lines.

But the administration seems to have far-reaching plans on how to restructure graduate-student support. More fellowships will become available at the expense of TA/GA-lines. Also, the administration expects more students to apply for outside grants, like those awarded by the National Science Foundation or National Institutes of Health. Thirdly, the administration expects an increase in outside research money so that more RA stipends will become available.

All in all, we might see more students competing for less support. Stony Brook seems to be becoming a tougher place to survive. But the university is not the "egalitarian meritocracy" the administration envisions it to be. A system of graduate-student support that does not make allowances for the unequal access to higher education of segments of the student population is intrinsically unjust. Whatever system of support this campus adopts should, from the outset, have the intention of providing a large and diverse number of graduate students with enough support to be able to finish their studies.

A second, more tangible effect of the budget cuts has been the reopening of the parking-fee discussion. A large rally sponsored by the GSO and campus unions two years ago to protest the proposed parking fee, and the subsequent vote by the Stony Brook

Council against instituting a mandatory fee, haven't dampened the administration's zeal. They seem more determined than ever to implement such a fee, although they now call it a "transportation fee." We believe it is crucial to stop this fee for several reasons.

First of all, parking is a necessity and it should not be a financial burden to students. We do recognize that there is less money available for maintenance and major repairs. However, we are not convinced that a parking fee will lead to a significant improvement in lot maintenance, nor will it alleviate the shortage of parking spaces close to academic buildings. To the contrary, the administration's goal is to decrease on-campus parking, as indicated by the proposed closure of the HSC gravel lot. Instead, we propose keeping free, on-campus parking available and not spending

any more money on it than absolutely necessary.

Second, we oppose another back-door tuition increase. If this fee is instituted, the administration will find a way to implement a whole new set of fees in the future. In this respect, we are reminded of recent events at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. A couple of years ago, under the same budgetary pressures that SUNY is experiencing, the administration at Amherst raised an "academic" fee-- a similar back-door tuition increase-- up to \$1,000 a year. The campus erupted and the graduate students formed a union, which after a successful strike forced the administration to recognize them as a legitimate bargaining unit. The students were granted waivers for the academic fee, among other things. You may draw your own conclusions.



Faces of the enemy: an Iraqi mother with her malnourished child.

Michael Viola

200,000 Dead Children Can't All Be Right

The images on the video screen were horrifying, almost too painful to watch. An endless stream of dying children, their bloated stomachs and chests laboring for each breath, stared vacantly into the air. Distraught parents fanned their children to keep away flies and provide some small comfort from the 110 degree heat. Doctors and medical personnel stood by, helpless to relieve the suffering of their tiny, innocent patients.

These were the images presented last week by Dr. Michael Viola, professor of medicine and microbiology, in a lecture detailing the effects of the US-led devastation of the Iraqi nation. Dr. Viola, who is co-director of Medicine for Peace, a coalition of physicians working to aid victims of war, led a research team through Iraq in June on a fact-finding mission to see just what the U.S. bombing had done to a people, and specifically children, with whom President George Bush had said "we have no quarrel." The images of dying, suffering children, bombed in our name and with our tax dollars, were unbearable.

Let our leaders brag all they want about "smart" technology. Their smart bombs hit most targets, all right. Twenty of Iraq's 22 electrical power-generating plants were destroyed; thousands of sewage-pumping stations were wiped out; water-purification plants were either demolished or rendered useless by the loss of electricity. And hospitals were either destroyed or rendered nearly useless by "collateral damage." Thus began the kinder, gentler biological warfare against the most innocent victims of all-- little children.

The pollution of Iraq's water supply through sewage discharge is just the beginning. Electrical outages

have rendered most Iraqi hospital equipment useless. Incubators and dialysis machines are inoperable for lack of spare parts; needles, vaccines, and dyes used to diagnose illnesses are still embargoed; laboratories and operating rooms are virtually shut down and doctors are relying on clinical diagnosis.

At the same time, diseases that are curable under normal circumstances are claiming hundreds of lives each day. UN estimates of 170,000 additional child deaths this year in the wake of the bombing of Iraq now appear conservative as gastro-enteritis, typhoid fever, meningitis, and viral hepatitis spread through the population. The Bush-led embargo prevents Iraq from using its only big asset-- oil sales-- to purchase the necessary medical supplies and food.

Worst of all, famine caused by a poor harvest in the wake of the destruction and Iraq's inability to sell its oil is making the situation worse as time goes by and the United Nations does nothing. The vicious cycle of malnutrition, diarrhea, intestinal infection, and more malnutrition ensures death for thousands of children wasting away before their parents' eyes.

Humanitarians around the world are crying out for the UN to ease up on the sanctions. You can add your voice to the outrage. Call the White House's comment line (9 AM to 5 PM) at (202) 456-1111 and let George Bush know you are repulsed by the suffering and you want him to quit punishing his vanquished foe. Call the office of the U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Thomas Pickering, at (212) 415-4050, and register your concerns about the murder of innocent children through the wanton destruction of Iraq's infrastructure.

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Administration Vowing to Close HSC Gravel Lot—

(Continued from Page 1)

morning, and people spend upwards of half an hour searching for an open spot in other lots. The situation has rapidly deteriorated over the past few years with the closing of a large faculty/staff lot on the site of the new fieldhouse and as the administration added metered parking and increased the number of "state vehicle only" spots on campus. Personal forms of protest have already begun (see related story on this page).

In a year in which students have already had to swallow unprecedented tuition increases and the institution of a number of new fees, the administration is proposing a \$75-per-year transportation fee to be paid by students. This fee would, of course, be mandatory, but it does need the approval of the Stony Brook Council, the policy-making board which must approve all mandatory fees at the university. In 1989, the Council shot down administration attempts to institute what was then referred to as a "parking fee."

But this time around, the budget crisis has sent shudders through all universities in the SUNY system. And the administration has prepared a much more detailed argument for a mandatory student fee. Ivy-league "peer" institutions such as Cornell and Emory are being cited as comparable to Stony Brook. Factors such as snow-plowing expenses and the amount of time Public Safety officers theoretically spend patrolling parking lots are being calculated into the overall expense of operating parking lots and garages on campus. Students are being asked to bear the brunt of these expenditures because, according to a university report, 98% of the users of the "Campus Transportation System" are students.

Nolan said the GSO opposes the idea of a mandatory fee that "will help the university balance its budget on the backs of

students. It is a gross injustice when poor planning at both the Stony Brook and SUNY levels are responsible for the shortfall."

Fee or no fee, graduate students in the Health Sciences Center and the Medical School still want access to free parking on campus. "Many of us work late hours," said Monica McTigue, GSO senator from Phar-

macology. "With inadequate bus service, it appears that they expect us to either walk to South P-Lot late at night, which jeopardizes our safety, or pay prices we can't afford to park in empty garages."

Indeed, generating funds to pay for construction of the new garage seems to be part of the reason that the lot is being closed. It

has been declared an "eco-disaster" by the university, according to Nolan, yet he says he finds that hard to believe. "There are other gravel lots on campus," he said, "and drainage problems can be corrected if they do exist. The timing just seems too coincidental." He urged students to get involved in the battle now, before the fee becomes a reality.

Grad Student Fights Back

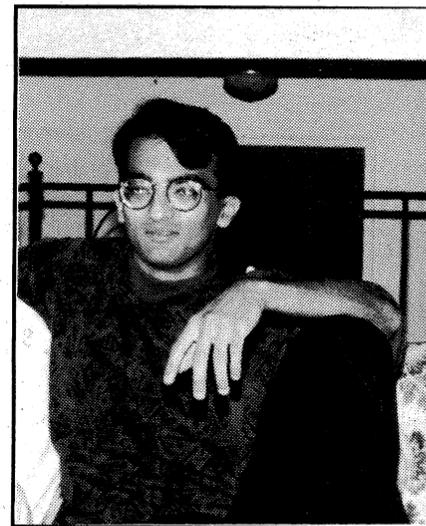
The first official protest against the parking fiasco and the accompanying bus fee was recorded on Thursday, September 5 when Shuvajit Paul, a graduate teaching assistant in the Sociology Department, stood up (or sat down, actually) to voice his outrage. Shuva had come to the university that morning and, after searching in vain for a legal parking spot in numerous faculty-staff lots, gave up and drove to South P-Lot. There he boarded the bus and paid the fifty-cent fee.

After class that morning he returned to Engineering Loop and waited for the next bus. When he boarded it, he told the driver that he did not want to make things difficult for her, but that he would not pay the fee. She told him that if he didn't have any money, it was okay, but he explained that he would not pay as a protest and that, furthermore, he was willing to accept the consequences. In fact, he said he wanted to be arrested as a way of registering his outrage at the parking system and the injustice of charging a bus user fee when there was no acceptable alternative to taking the bus (besides searching endlessly for an available, legal parking spot).

After the driver had unloaded her passengers at South P-Lot, she drove the bus (with Shuva on it) to the motor pool's fenced enclosure. Several officials boarded and tried to talk him into leaving, but he refused, stating again that he wished to make a statement by his actions. Soon Public Safety officers arrived and again tried to talk him off the bus. After being told that an arrest would land him in Hauppauge's county court system, Shuva agreed that his protest would have more of an impact if handled on-campus. He stated that he did not want to just get off the bus and have the issue disappear. Lieutenant Frank Parrino informed him that he was, in fact, violating Section 4 of the Student Conduct Code by disobeying an official directive, and that the matter would be dealt with through the office of Student Affairs. Given this guarantee, Shuva agreed to get off the bus.

A report was filed and the case currently rests with Associate Dean Gary Mis, who may either decide to drop it or forward the case to the Student Judiciary. At presstime, Shuva had been told that this decision will be made by next week. Efforts to obtain a comment from Mis were unsuccessful.

A written statement that Shuva submitted to the GSO says, in part: "I did not plan



Shuva Paul

this act of civil disobedience ahead of time, nor did I discuss this with anyone before I did it. I simply did it and was guided only by my sense that the fee was unfair; that I should not resist punishment for refusing to pay it; and that I should not direct any anger or abuse personally at the persons who were charged with the duty of collecting it or with the duty of enforcing its collection."

-Bidermann



Photo by Gregg Forte

The spot in question: aerial view of the new parking garage (left) and the gravel lot (stretching across the photo right above roadway).

First Impressions: Getting to Know Stony Brook

Editor's Note: This special feature of the News and Blues will run throughout the Fall semester, and feature articles from new graduate students at Stony Brook. This first article is written by a student who came here in mid-August without a place to live, and ended up staying at the GSO until he could secure housing on-campus.

By Momchil Velkovsky
Department of Physics

When I was planning to come to Stony Brook a week before the beginning of orientation, I was not very concerned. I suppose it was not a good idea to come on Saturday, but the support for new international students that was promised in the booklets I had received seemed so gracious! Well, the Foreign Student Affairs Office, as well as the imaginary Welcoming Committee and any other administrative offices, was not open on weekends.

"Okay," I thought, I had been hiking for weeks in Europe and Asia, I had a sleeping bag and some money for food, so I could survive. But when I realized that I couldn't move my luggage a long distance by myself and that there was no place to leave it, I started to become a little nervous. What frustrated me most was the fact that I expected my wife--also a graduate student-- and my one-year old son to arrive at the end of the following week. And the information as to whether we would obtain housing in the Chapin apartments was so contradictory! I had applied for it in May and I was told that room would be available in the beginning of August. However, the answers to my calls were very vague. The various officials with whom I spoke told me different things about my application, including two different application numbers. The cold shower came one day before my arrival, when some official told me that I had no chance of getting housing for the Fall semester. However, the following week I was accommodated without mentioning that I had been told there was no housing available.

Here is the place to say that, concerning the administration at Stony Brook, I feel just as if I am home in my native country of Bulgaria. The fact is that there is bureaucracy in the USA; I learned this when I was in California for the Spring semester, but it was a kind and smiling bureaucracy. Well, the New York administration does not make me feel homesick. You have to wait at long lines and then they send you to another person, who eventually sends you back to the previous official. When we and the couple sharing our two-bedroom apartment decided that there was no need for two ROLM phones in our apartment, I didn't realize that I was starting a phone quest in my attempt to avoid paying for something that was not included in my contract for the apartment, and that I had never applied or signed for.

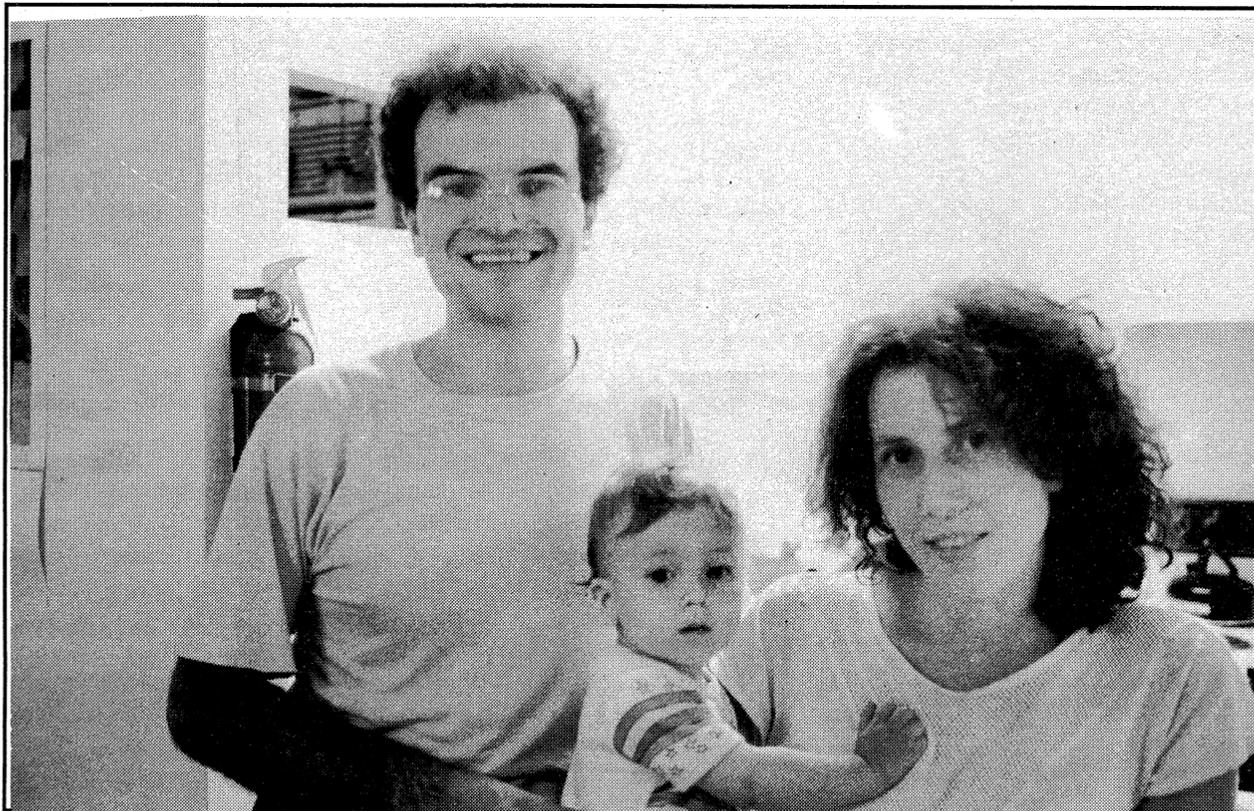


Photo by Greg Forte

Momchil and Julia Velkovsky relax in their Chapin apartment with their one-year-old son, Stoycho.

I won't be surprised if one day I find an additional charge on my bill for the lamps or the cupboards. However, I think the conditions in the Chapin apartments, except for the cockroaches, are good, but the rental price of our bedroom in a two-bedroom apartment (\$438 per month) seems too high. What shocked me was the sight of a friend's room in Keller College. The poor guy, who had much experience in student dormitories in Bulgaria and the Soviet Union, said that it is worse than anything he had seen.

I received further proof that New York State is close to "socialism" when the official in the DMV threw my passport on the floor, trying to convince me that my proofs of identity were insufficient. Then after waiting an hour for the director, who was lunching at 4:30 PM, it occurred to them that my identification was sufficient. As you can guess, after another half an hour at the line I was able to see an angry glimpse, but no apology.

But this is the bad half of the reality. There is the nice countryside around Stony Brook, the woods, and the sea. The only thing missing are sidewalks for pedestrians or bikers. Other nice impressions were from the Physics department, which is one of the most famous in the USA,

and from the people there. And speaking about people and support, I must say that it would be difficult to survive at Stony Brook if there weren't so many kind and supportive people. The first big help I received was from Fletcher Johnson and the people from *The Stony Brook Press*, who helped me move my luggage from the train station, fed me, and gave me valuable information. Then the people from the GSO were so kind as to allow me to live in their office for several days. They gave me many hints about surviving here. I am especially grateful to George Bidermann, Chris Kushmerick and Fons Haffmans, who took of their time to help accommodate me here. Chris even drove me to Kennedy Airport to pick up my family. I realized that the GSO really is an organization that fights for the interests and well-being of graduate students.

In conclusion, I want to mention something that seems obvious to me, but is apparently not obvious to many others. This is the fact that the administration is here to serve the faculty and the students. And respectively, the faculty and students are here to do research, teach and study, and not to be an excuse for the existence of the administration.

GSA Corner

Advocate Is There to Help You

By Tom Pepper
Graduate Student Advocate

As the new Graduate Student Advocate working in the Graduate School, I suppose I should introduce myself. I am a fifth-year graduate student in English, currently working on my dissertation. I applied for this job with the hope of being able to help protect graduate-student rights during the current recession and budget crisis. My office is located in the Graduate School, which is in the Laboratory Offices building, and my office hours are Monday-Wednesday-Friday from 9 AM to 2 PM. My phone number there is 632-7045. Please contact me about any problems (academic, housing, funding, etc.) and I will try to help. If you can't reach me, leave a message and I'll get back to you.

Of immediate concern for the lucky few of us is the upcoming filing deadline for December graduation, which is September 20. As those of you who are ready to graduate may know, the guidelines for preparing theses and dissertations were supposed to be revised for this semester, but the new guidelines

have not been published yet. The deadline for submitting theses and dissertations for Fall graduation is December 13. If the absence of the new guidelines presents a problem for anyone, contact the Graduate School-- I believe they will tell you to continue to use the old guidelines, but confirm it just to make sure.

I'm sure we're all aware that the budget crisis creates particular difficulties for graduate students. I would like to urge everyone who has a problem concerning loss of funding or increased workloads to contact me and get involved with the GSO; these problems can probably be better dealt with collectively. The next couple of years (at least) are going to be financially difficult for graduate students. It is important that all departments elect a senator to the GSO, so that we will be informed about and prepared for next year's inevitable budget "crisis."

Please remember that if you have any questions or problems pertaining to your studies, on-campus housing, conflicts with colleagues, or your employment situation, it is my responsibility to assist you in whatever ways I can. Call me or stop by my office if you think you might have a problem that requires assistance.

*The Next Issue
of
The GSO News and Blues
Will Be Published
On October 9;
Deadline for Submission
of Articles,
Letters,
and Viewpoints
is Monday, October 7
Call 632-6492 for more info!*

International Students Page

The India Society At Stony Brook

The Stony Brook Mainland China Students Association

By Yingchao Zhang

After a period of silence, we Chinese students from Mainland China have reorganized ourselves and formed the Stony Brook Mainland China Students Association (SBMCSA). We currently have more than 400 members, 350 of whom are graduate students.

The SBMCSA was formed to promote social activities among Chinese students and scholars and the cultural exchange between Chinese students and people of other cultures at Stony Brook. Helping new students from Mainland China settle down and get used to the environment is another major goal of the organization.

We are planning to present contemporary movies from China (some with English subtitles), to sponsor the celebration of traditional Chinese festivals, and to organize sports and other games which are popular in China.

As one of the largest international-student organizations, we'll do our best to serve our members and make contributions to our campus. If you have any questions concerning our organization, please feel free to get in touch with the following people, who are currently serving as officers:

Yingchao Zhang	2-5150/2-9007 (office)
Peicheng Hu	2-2309
Zibang Li	751-5787
Yue Zhuge	2-2252
Chang Xu	2-2055/2-8376 (office)
Wei Shi	2-2218

By S.N. Sridhar and Harish Panth

The India Society at Stony Brook was founded in 1989 by a group of students and faculty with the following aims:

- to sponsor significant intellectual, social and cultural activities that contribute to a deeper understanding of India's rich heritage and dynamic present.

- to promote a sense of community and a spirit of mutual support among students, staff, and faculty at the university at Stony Brook and the residents of Long Island with ties to or interest in India.

- to facilitate exchange of ideas and experiences between Indians and Americans with a view to enhancing mutual understanding and friendship.

- to extend active support to academic departments, student organizations, civic groups, and other institutions in their India-related activities.

- to serve as an informal resource on matters relating to India for schools, libraries, museums, universities, the media, and individuals in the area.

Although the India Society is a young organization, it has already successfully organized a number of high-quality programs addressing a wide range of interests. These include:

- lecture discussions* on individual freedoms in India, India's elections, Indian theater, life in the Vedic times, etc.;
- readings of poetry and fiction* by Indian writers such

as Meena Alexander;

- lectures on the psychology of South Asians and Americans* by psychoanalyst Alan Roland and on Buddhist art in India by art historian Vidya Dehejia;

- Indian classical dances* (Bharathanatyam, Kathak, Orissi) by celebrated artists like Kamala Laxman, Sonal Mansingh, and Neera Batra;

- Classical music concerts*: Hindustani by Vishwa Mohan Bhat, Sukhwinder Singh Namdhari, and Jhota Pandit; and Carnatak music recitals by Mysore Nagaraj and others;

- picnics, potluck dinners*, arts and crafts shows, films and music, etc.; and

- Book Club discussions* on current publications.

The society's forthcoming programs include a Welcome Party for New Students (dinner and a martial arts performance) on Saturday, September 21, at 4:30 PM in the Commons Room of the New Graduate Housing Complex; a Classical Dance (Bharatanatyam) performance in the Stony Brook Union Auditorium on October 20 at 4 PM; and a talk on Nehru and his writings on November 16.

The Society publishes a quarterly newsletter. Membership (for the calendar year) is \$5 for students. For information, call Kavish Bhatnagar at 632-7935 or Harish Panth at 689-2726.

Korean Students Association

By Iljoong Youn

The Korean Students Association consists of about 100 graduate students at Stony Brook and is supported by the people who are of Korean origin in the USA. The main purposes of the KSA are, first of all, to learn and to preserve a unique culture located in Asia; second, to help each other through communication about academic, living, and social

information in America; third, to develop and to keep the wide relationship with kindness and sincerity in Korean society, and finally, to help members who might have accidents or problems and to share happy events with other students.

A welcoming party for new graduate students was held on September 9 at Sunken Meadow State Park. Activities being scheduled for the rest of the academic year include a Thanksgiving party, New Year's Party, commencement celebration, and seminars. Information about these events will be published in future issues of The GSO News and Blues. People who are interested in the Korean Students Association can contact:

Iljoong Youn, President
Dept. of Mechanical Engineering
SUNY at Stony Brook
Stony Brook, NY 11794
632-2554 (home)
632-9118 (office)

Mid-Autumn Party

The Stony Brook Mainland China Students Association will hold a party to celebrate the traditional Mid-Autumn Chinese Festival. The date will be August 15 on the Chinese Calendar (September 22). On that day the moon will be full, and family members or friends in different places watch the moon to see the reflection of loved ones in it.

What?

Speeches, performances, games, dancing, refreshments

When?

September 22 at 7:30 PM

Where?

Student Union Ballroom

Admission:

\$2 for Student ID-holders

All are Welcome!

Sponsored by SBMCSA

SBMCSA 宣告成立

寂静了一年多的中国大陆留学生, 现在重建了自己的组织——石溪中国大陆学生联谊会。四百多名会员之中有研究生约三百五十人, 其余为博士后、访问学者及家属。

我们这个组织将以服务中国大陆学生、学者为本, 以开放的姿态与其它学生组织及各有关方面保持接触, 加强联谊。作为我校最大的学生社团之一, 我们将为丰富本会会员、及至全校同人的生活而努力。

SBMCSA

一九九一年九月十五日

With this issue, *The GSO News and Blues* begins publication of a special section devoted to clubs and events for international graduate students and those who would like to learn about the international-student community at Stony Brook. We invite all organizations to submit material for this section; it is our hope that it will grow to two pages in our standard, twelve-page issue. We can also print brief notices in languages besides English. But we need your input. Call George Bidermann at 632-6492 if you would like to write something or publicize an event that your organization is sponsoring.

Senate Opens New Year With First Meeting

By Fons Haffmans
GSO Secretary

The first Senate meeting of the GSO was held on September 11. The turnout was not bad. The meeting started off with the Executive Council reports, full of lots of news regarding summer battles and efforts to stave off line cuts and new fees.

And quite a lot has happened indeed! The senate was informed of the proposal to implement a parking fee and proposed changes in graduate student funding. A committee was formed to prepare a GSO position on these proposed changes. If anyone wants to join, call the GSO office. In addition, as an outflow of last year's elections, the GSO Election Committee will review the possibility of setting up polling booths for future elections. Hopefully, this will increase voter turnout.

Later on in the evening a spirited discussion took place on a proposal by the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) to create a position for a graduate student to work on registering graduate students to vote in state and federal elections. Some members of the senate questioned the wisdom of such a project. Given the level of education that the overall majority of graduate students have, it seemed incomprehensible to some senators that graduate students would not be able to fill out a voter registration form by themselves. More significantly, if they choose not to do so this, it may indeed point to a fundamental disenchantment with, if not alienation from, the political system. The causes of such an alienation, some senators argued, are to be found in the absence of real opposition parties, a

critical press, and a truly enlightening educational system. These members-- who said they believed in true democracy-- suggested quite a different agenda for NYPIRG to pursue.

The other side of the aisle based its support on the observation that most graduate students move a lot and forget to register. Increasing student registration might induce politicians to give greater weight to student issues than otherwise would have been the case. When the question was put to a vote, the votes divided equally among those in favor, those against and those abstaining. The motion failed.

Discussion also proceeded regarding plans to open a new Graduate Student Lounge in the space currently occupied by the Rainy Night House in the Stony Brook Union. The prospect of a reopened lounge produced enthusiastic support from the senate floor. A new Lounge Committee was formed and has already begun meeting with representatives of SCOOP, the cooperative that runs the Rainy Night House. Students interested in working on this committee can call the GSO at 632-6492 to find out when it will be meeting next. The Senate also agreed to form a research review committee to track university movement on the issue of moving graduate-student lines to research fellowships; this is a matter of concern for the GSO because the university has not included graduate students on its own review committee. The Senate also passed a resolution expressing its concern about access to Central Hall-- where GSO and a host of undergraduate clubs and media organizations are located-- in the wake of administration efforts

to cut down building hours and restrict student access to their offices after hours.

A second time spirited debate erupted was after Dominic Chan, GSO vice-president-- speaking in his capacity as president of the Graduate Student Employees Union (GSEU)-- gave the GSEU report. He invited all those present to attend a GSEU informational meeting. Subsequently, some members questioned the wisdom of pressing for graduate-student unionization. They questioned whether in these lean times, the state would be amendable to graduate-student demands. The point was also made that if graduate students were recognized as part-time employees, their rights as a bargaining unit would be restricted. Seeing the diversity of opinion on this point, GSO President John Nolan proposed an extended discussion in the form of a public forum to be held in the near-future.

The meeting ended with a spontaneous outburst of applause from the Senate floor in appreciation for the efforts of the new executive council. This lifted the executive council's spirits, but their hearts sank when they realized they had to clean up the mess caused by the amply provided bagels. The next GSO Senate meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 2 at 7:30 PM in Room 201 of Central Hall.

**The Next GSO Senate Meeting
Will Be Held on Wednesday, October 2
At 7:30 PM, Room 201 Central Hall**

Letters

TAP Alert

To the Editor:

This should serve as a general alarm to all students who must apply for TAP (Tuition Assistance Program) funding each fall in order to receive their departmental tuition waivers. There is a serious flaw in TAP's system of processing applications that could allow Student Accounts to charge you \$600 per semester for "failure to apply for TAP" even if you have applied for TAP correctly. This is what has happened to me, and although my department is pursuing the matter with the Graduate School, and agrees that a change in the system is required, they are not promising that I will be spared my bill for \$1200.

Many of you will apply for a summer work-study award by completing a Financial Aid Form (FAF) next February. On it there is a section that asks whether you would like information from your FAF to be sent "as application to TAP". **DO NOT ANSWER YES!** The reason is this: if you answer yes, then TAP will throw away any application-- even those designed expressly for TAP-- that you

may send them in the fall. Thus any new information you might submit on this TAP application *will never be processed*. In my phone conversation with "Operator 36" at the TAP office, I was told flatly that TAP did not "have time" to look at such applications if that "yes" box was checked off on the FAF form a person might have completed months before; such applications were "redundant."

In my case, the only reason I filled out the FAF in the spring of '90 was to get summer college work-study. Once I got my award, I was done with the FAF people as far as I was concerned, at least until the next summer when I would apply for work-study again. So when I moved in the summer of 1990, I didn't file a change of address with FAF. But in the Fall of '90, *before the deadline*, I submitted the TAP Student Payment Application-- with my new address and other new information on it. It was never processed, and TAP's requests for information from me-- which they needed before they could decide my award-- were sent to my *old* address and never forwarded to me despite my having filed a change of address form with the post

office. As a result, the 45-day-period TAP gives a student to respond lapsed and I was denied TAP-- even though all the information they needed was on a TAP application that I had submitted *on time* but which they tossed away without looking at.

So beware! In these times of crisis, Student Accounts seems more likely than ever to seize any opportunity to gobble up your \$1,200.

Shuvajit Paul
Department of Sociology

NYPIRG Holding General Interest Meeting

To the Editor:

When the New York Public Interest Research GROUP (NYPIRG) began operations 18 years ago, students had a vision for a better New York and a better world. Today, students at 19 campuses around the state work together with a staff of professional organizers, lobbyists, researchers, and attorneys to fight for a healthier and cleaner environment, consumer protection, and student rights. Directed by students from each campus, NYPIRG is now the largest public-interest advocacy group in New York.

Through NYPIRG, Stony Brook students have been able to bring about specific changes in the legislature and at the local level. By working with experienced NYPIRG students and staff, other students have been able to learn lobbying, media and grassroots organizing skills as well as the knowledge and confidence to be effective advocates in the political process.

This year, NYPIRG students and staff will work together at the state and local level to promote recycling, fight to cut down the amount of excess packaging entering the waste stream, provide counseling at our small claims court action center, organize the educational community to eliminate standardized tests for children in grades K-2, register students to vote, and increase voter participation by publishing a voter's guide to Suffolk County elections, work to preserve the rights of consumers, and more.

None of NYPIRG's successes have been easy. Students have succeeded because they have worked together to research, organize, and educate their fellow students and their local communities. They have been successful because they have not given up on long, hard battles. NYPIRG students have succeeded in part of the vision to make a better place to live because of the many effective leaders that have been trained and the new active and involved students who come through the office every day.

But we can't stop. There are always going to be important changes needed in our state. As students, we have a right and a responsibility to take an active role in those changes and to make ourselves heard. Even if you only have an hour a week to register students or call a legislator, you will have made an important contribution. By working together, we can promote positive change.

NYPIRG is having a General Interest Meeting on Tuesday, September 24, at 7 PM in the Fireside Lounge in the Stony Brook Union.

Jeremy Potter
Project Coordinator

The GSO News and Blues welcomes letters to the editor and viewpoints from members of the campus community. As a matter of fact, we'd appreciate receiving anything from members of the community, including events of interest. Letters should be kept to approximately 400-500 words and viewpoints should be approximately 800-1,000 words. We reserve the right to edit letters and viewpoints for clarity and style. In addition, items for submission written on Wordperfect and submitted on disk (3.5" or 5 1/4" for IBM-compatible computers) will be especially welcome! Call 632-6492 for more information.

Texas Grad Employees Win Back Health Benefits

By George Bidermann

A three-year battle to regain health benefits formerly granted to graduate-student employees at the University of Texas ended in victory this summer with the passage of legislation guaranteeing access to the same premium-sharing arrangement that other state employees receive.

Officials of the Graduate Professional Association (GPA), an independent, off-campus organization of UT Austin graduate-professional students, lobbied administrators and state legislators to reconcile ambiguous language in a bill passed last year that was aimed at restoring the health-benefits provision for graduate-student employees. According to John Zuern, GPA president, university administrators were waffling on the issue, pleading poverty, until direct action was threatened and executed.

The roots of the problem began in 1988, when the Administrative Council of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board declared health premiums paid by UT Austin and UT Houston illegal. Two pieces of legislation passed earlier by the Texas legislature inadvertently made graduate-student employees ineligible for health insurance; the first exempted them from paying into the state's retirement program, and the second, passed a few years later, declared that only employees who paid into the retirement program were eligible for health benefits. When the contradiction was discovered in April 1988, UT Austin administrators used it to declare that they

would not be renewing the premium-sharing arrangement for the following academic year. Graduate students found this out in an article published in the campus newspaper.

Angry students protested that since the money had already been allocated in the forthcoming budget, the university should provide the funds, and the university backed down, granting a "payroll supplement" of \$115 monthly, with which the students were supposed to purchase individual insurance plans. But the administration stated that it could not afford to provide funds for

of benefits during the 1988-89 year. Finally, completely disgusted with the administration's deceit, members of COGS resigned *en masse* in the Spring of 1989 and formed the GPA with the intention of pursuing legal and legislative recourse.

Both Nancy Jeffries, GPA's first president, and Greg Moses, GPA's research coordinator, worked tenaciously to identify funding sources and call administration bluffs. Students accepted an administration proposal to pay \$90 monthly for the 1990-91 year in "payroll supplements" because

but that the university address issues of multiculturalism, the lack of decent child care, high-tuition costs, and class availability. Hundreds of TA's were planning to hold their classes outdoors in front of the administration building. The night before the protest was to begin, UT Austin's vice-president for student affairs called the GPA to announce that funds to provide for premium-sharing had been "found;" he also asked that the protest be called off, but the GPA went ahead with it anyway.

This summer, new legislation resolving the ambiguities of the 1989 law finally passed the Texas state legislature. All graduate-student employees at Texas public universities are now eligible for the premium-sharing arrangement; students can choose from the university health plan or a number of health-maintenance organization (HMO) plans.

Current GPA President John Zuern says that the GPA's campaign was successful because, "We decided from the beginning that we were going to be a single-issue organization, and we found it easy to galvanize students around this issue. Graduate students have diverse and immediate needs for adequate health care." Zuern credited David Barker, GPA coordinator and strategist, and Secretary Steve Carr with keeping the pressure on and the information flowing. With this battle won, the GPA is now looking to reorganize and find new direction.

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the 1989-90 year. It was then that students were really stirred into action.

Working first within the Council of Graduate Students (COGS, the student government), students persuaded the administration to lobby legislators to propose legislation that would reinstate graduate-student employee health benefits. This was done by the Spring of 1989, but while the legislation was pending, the administration was still waffling on the issue. Freedom of Information requests revealed that the administration was planning to only pay nine months

they believed they could do no better. When the legislation passed in 1989, ambiguous language made it appear that all student employees would be eligible for health benefits; it also provided no appropriations for funding the proposal, and the university was again pleading poverty.

By the Spring of 1990, the GPA had organized graduate-student employees so well that a three-day "teach-out" was planned to demand not only health benefits,

Union Appeal On PERB Calendar—

(Continued from Page 1)

is the union that GSEU has affiliated with; CWA has supported GSEU's fight for self-determination and provided legal and financial assistance since 1983.

Oral arguments in the case will begin in Albany at 9 AM on September 23. A decision is expected to take one to two months.

What will this long-awaited decision mean? A very great deal, according to Julia Miller, GSEU secretary and a teaching assistant in the University of Buffalo's English department. "If PERB rules against us, we will have to decide whether to pursue the issue in the courts or to work to form an extra-legal organization that can force SUNY to negotiate. Given that we've been stuck before PERB for over five years, I think most grad employees will find the latter alternative far more viable."

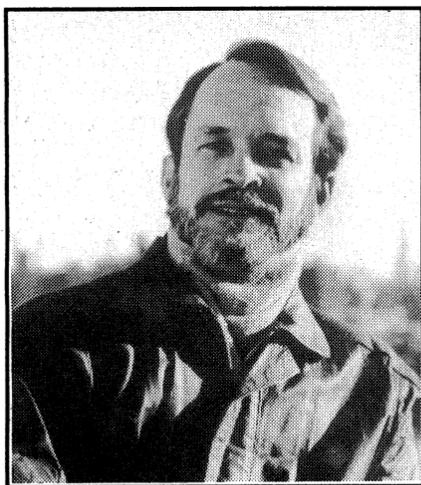
Chan said it is important that graduate-student employees not be too optimistic about the chances of winning in PERB. "The case has dragged on for years, and there is really no real indication that we will win this time. But this doesn't mean that unionization will not become a reality at SUNY. We may have to take the same path that other universities, such as Amherst and Berkeley, have taken. Through direct action and pressure, these graduate student

movements were able to get voluntary recognition. The local administrators finally gave in and agreed to draft a binding contractual agreement."

Likewise, a PERB decision in favor of the GSEU could be appealed by SUNY in the courts and delay a certification election for several more years. Nonetheless, the GSEU remains somewhat hopeful that SUNY will accept a positive ruling from PERB, if that happens.

Should PERB decide in favor of the GSEU and SUNY drops its opposition, it would clear the way for a union certification election as early as the Spring of 1992, an election in which SUNY's graduate-student employees will have the opportunity to weigh the facts and make a choice, according to Miller. "At that time, we will have to consider, on the one hand, SUNY's long history of depriving us of a voice in the way the state university is run, and in the way we as employees are treated," she said. "On the other hand, we will have to consider the very real, very positive ways unionization will benefit us-- materially, economically, to be sure, but also politically. Essentially, unionization will democratize our relationship with SUNY. I think that fact will make the choice a simple one for almost all of us."

"Inventing America: 1492-1992"



A lecture by Geoffrey Fox

Scholar; translator; author of *The Land and People of Argentina* and *Welcome to My Country*

Wednesday, October 2 at 8 PM
Staller Center Recital Hall

This lecture is free and open to the public

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The next issue of the *News and Blues*
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Look for it!

S h o r t T a k e s

And Last Licks.....

Fredonia BSU Officer Victim of Racial Harassment

Student Leader News Service

FREDONIA- A top officer of the Black Student Union became the victim of racial harassment last Friday when the door to his dorm room was defaced with "Nigger," "black piece of shit," "jungle bunny" and other slurs, according to Student Assembly President José Baez. There are no suspects in the incident, and campus police are conducting an investigation, Baez said. The victim asked that his name be withheld while he consults with attorneys and seek counseling.

The incident, which happened late at night Friday, occurred as students of color on the campus were beginning to organize in support of four faculty of color who resigned their teaching posts this summer without explanation. The faculty resignations are widely perceived by minority student leaders as a protest or statement on the state of racial affairs on the campus, though students are attempting to contact the former professors for explanations.

"Fredonia has a racial problem on campus, and a lot of it has been quieted down," Baez, said this week after learning about the vandalism. Students "can't believe it happened in a town like this." SUNY Fredonia is a predominantly white college with just three percent African-American and two percent Latino students enrolled. Out of 862 students of color who applied this year, just 70 were admitted-- less than one out of every twelve.

Binghamton #7 in Money Survey; Stony Brook #32 in Nation

Student Leader

The University Center at Binghamton was rated seventh in the nation of the best college values in Money magazine's annual college report. The magazine, on newsstands this week, says SUNY Binghamton is the logical choice for a "flagship" of the SUNY system

because of the students it attracts: 71% of whom ranked in the top 10% of their high school classes. The University Center at Albany followed a close 11th, ahead of schools like Yale, MIT, and Princeton. Some other SUNY campuses that made the top 100 were the University Center at Buffalo, which ranked 27th, SUNY Geneseo, which ranked 28th, SUNY Stony Brook, which ranked 32nd, and SUNY Potsdam, which ranked 46th. Rice University was rated as the best college buy; SUNY Geneseo had taken the top spot last year. Rankings were based on tuition cost, room and board, and the school's educational quality [probably in that order! -Ed.]

CUNY Student Senate Locked Out In Fear of Anti-Jeffries Protest

Student Leader

NEW YORK CITY- The first meeting of the CUNY-wide University Student Senate in more than six months was canceled when CUNY Central administrators closed the Central Administration headquarters at the last minute, fearing a clash between African-American student leaders and Zionist anti-Leonard Jeffries protesters.

Anti-Jeffries protesters from the right-wing group Kahane Chai were scheduled to demonstrate outside CUNY's Graduate Center in midtown but, according to a CUNY Central security officer, administrators were informed the protest would be moved uptown to the 80th Street office of CUNY Central, where the student meeting was scheduled.

Ironically, Black-Jewish relations were not even on the agenda for the meeting, which had been planned for Sunday at 1 PM. The rally outside the Graduate Center proceeded as planned, and anti-Jeffries protesters also picketed outside the Jeffries home in Teaneck, New Jersey.

The Guns Are Coming! The Guns Are Coming! Duck, Duck, the Guns Are Coming!

Everyone look out, because here comes the onslaught! Not of guns, not yet that is, but of public relations and "advisory committees" that will, most likely, only advise on the arming issue. Public Safety is now taking admirable steps to improve its image (but why not three, four, five years ago?). President John Marburger is set to announce appointments to a university advisory committee that will of course include the token students and study the arming issue. And you can speak out at a public forum on Wednesday, October 2, from 11 AM to 3 PM, in the Stony Brook Union auditorium. This is the second attempt made by the University Senate committee to gather student opinion on arming.

The GSO Senate passed a resolution in October 1990 opposing arming of Public Safety officers. No matter how you feel on the issue, this is one of your only chances to let someone know. Don't blow it.

The GSO News and Blues
is looking for
graduate students
interested in working on
or writing for the paper.

Organizational Meeting
Tuesday, September 24
at 5 PM
Room 201 Central Hall

Or call 632-6492 for more information

NYPIRG

General Interest Meeting

Tuesday, September 24 at 7 PM
Stony Brook Union Fireside Lounge

- Work to Clean Up the Environment!*
- Register Students to Vote*
- Fight Biases in Standardized Tests*
- Fight to Preserve Consumers' Rights!*

Call 632-6457 for more information