Lowcountry Forum

The Student Political Club of the College of Charleston is sponsoring a forum on Charleston development entitled "Blueprint for Development" to be held on Wednesday, April 8th at 7:30 p.m. in the Stern Student Center ballroom.

Six panelists will be given eight minutes each to express their opinions on current development projects and the future of Charleston. While peninsular development will be emphasized, coastal development issues will also be addressed.

The six panelists are: Henry F. Caufield, Executive Director of the Preservation Society; Joseph P. Griffith, Jr., Partner in Ailstock and Griffith, an investment and development firm; Nancy D. Hawk, Co-chair of the Lowcountry Open Land Trust; Arthur Maybank, President of the East Side Neighborhood Council; Lawrence O. Thompson, Director of the Office of Downtown Revitalization; and D. Reid Wiseman, Professor of Biology, The College of Charleston.

Several panelists will accompany their speeches with slide presentations, and Mr. Thompson has offered to put a model of the planned Waterfront Park on display. Questions from the audience & a reception will follow the one hour presentation.

The Reports of Faculty Committees

Faculty Advisory Committee to the President

Meeting of 5 March, 1987, Minutes

At the beginning of the meeting, President Lightsey invited & addressed several questions posed by committee members. These concerned the issue of maintenance in College buildings, the reason for recent power outages--incurred during necessary work on the realignment of loads on the various lines--& criteria for the selection of honorary degree recipients and/or commencement speakers. The latter was the principal focus of the meeting.

President Lightsey next addressed, in the form of "worst case" scenarios, current & impending budget cuts at the College of Charleston. He emphasized that every attempt will be made to absorb these losses through reductions in administrative costs & an increase in student fees. This discussion prompted a question concerning the possible establishment of a separate Board of Trustees for the College. The President indicated that there is much interest in this possibility on the part of the Alumni and the legislative delegation.

The Committee then addressed some of the questions posed in NEWSpeak by one of the recent candidates for Speaker of the Faculty. Topics discussed included decentralized budgets, sources of travel funds, the hiring of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs, and the status of the position for the Vice-President for Institutional Advancement.

Before adjourning, the Committee scheduled meetings for the consideration of candidates proposed as recipients of honorary degrees.

Chair, Julian Harrison III (2-8081)

The Speaker Elect's Soap Box

Please express your ideas before you leave for the summer!

It is common knowledge that the summer months produce little communication between and among the faculty. Please feel free to write, call, drop by, or interrupt me in the coming weeks--before we disperse to our summer venues [The new Speaker's venue is to remain on campus during the summer.—Ed.] to express your ideas, priorities, complaints, agenda items, and anything else of which you wish to think. Our fall term begins abruptly and we all need to be ready when it gets here—especially me. Talk to me. Tell me what is on your mind. I wish to serve to the best of my ability as your Speaker. Thank you.

[Please submit items of a public and academic nature for inclusion in the next issue of NEWSpeak.—Ed.]

The Speaker's Soap Box

Editorially speaking, this has been a slow month. The ranks of The Fifth Column have been depleted to the vanishing point. Such is the lot of a poor journalist. This situation can be attributed to manifold causes: the hubbub surrounding President Lightsey's installation, with more building dedications than you could shake a stick at; the ponderous parade of candidates for the Senior V.P. for Academic Affairs position; and maybe even end-of-semester jitters.

Faculty Committee chairs please note our Bylaws require that you submit a spring semester report of com-
committee activities, and that the new committee be convened no later than April 24th. Your report may be published in the final edition of NEWSpeak, for which April 27th is the copy submission deadline.

In the white space that remains [and at this writing needs desperately to be filled--Ed.], I will return to a topic that is near and dear to the hearts of you all: how to improve that prodigiously ponderous, and somewhat dangerous--you could get a hernia--document known as the Faculty-Administration Manual. I am convinced that it was designed not to be read. And, while it does provide everything you didn't want to know about what faculty and librarians are expected to do to survive, nowhere in its 400 some odd pages can I find a code of conduct for departmental chairs.

Now the chairs are a rather invisible part of the College administrative machine. They seldom appear in your classroom, and only call department meetings once a month. On the other hand, they do become a factor in the lives of us all in connection with the many evaluation processes spelled out in the Manual.

One of the most important roles of the departmental chair is in convening and presiding over departmental evaluation panels, and in representing matters considered during theirs otherwise confidential committee meetings to the appropriate committee of the Faculty, and to the chief administrators of the College. In fact, the system gives to the chair, or the chair's representative (and probably could not do otherwise), an inordinate degree of influence in representing the will of the majority of a departmental evaluation panel.

Unfortunately, the latter function has in the past been the subject of some abuse. And in the absence of specific procedure, there has been no check on what may be viewed as improper practice. Accordingly, the Faculty Welfare Committee will at our April meeting move an amendment to the Manual to require that a departmental evaluation panel majority report be represented by someone who has not abstained or voted in the minority.

Not included in the Welfare Committee's memorandum is the rationale for the proposed amendment: it is in the interest of both the College and those members of the Faculty who will in the future be candidates for tenure, promotion or third-year evaluation, that the report of a departmental evaluation panel be presented by a member who has voted in the majority. The proposed Manual amendment would help to deter panel chairs from emphasizing exclusively the minority view (which has happened more than once in the past), and would prohibit a member of the panel who has voted in the minority from serving as acting panel chair.

As always, the presumption is that the chair will do what is proper. The proposed amendment to the Manual simply makes clear what is considered to be improper.

In no real way does the Welfare Committee's motion infringe upon the secrecy of a departmental panel vote. That one has voted in the minority, or abstained, are not the only reasons one might have for not wanting to present the panel majority report. Other commitments (not an unusual occurrence) could prevent the chair from making the presentation, or he might feel that another member of the panel might better represent the majority opinion. Whatever the reason, a chair has the prerogative to ask a panel member to serve as acting panel chair without having to specify why the request is being made. Similarly, a panel member so asked has the prerogative to decline such service without specifying a reason.

In the last analysis, those who reject the above arguments will need to resolve for themselves the question of which is more important--the fair representation of a majority opinion and a reasonable degree of due process for the candidate, or the procedural autonomy of the chairs and secret decision making.

Spring Semester Calendar

April

7 Jewish Studies Film "The House on Chelouche St."
10 Maymester/Summer Sessions Pre-registration ends
13 Faculty Meeting -- Faculty Committees elected
14 IBM Users Group meets
15 Fall book requests due at Bookstore
21-22 Fall Preregistration Fixup
23 Outgoing chairs convene new Faculty Committees
24 Classes end
27 Final issue of NEWSpeak Submissions due
Outgoing Faculty Committee Reports due to Speaker Council of Chairs Meeting
28 Final Exams begin

May

4 Faculty Meeting
7 Final Grades due
10 Commencement
11 New Faculty Speaker takes office Evaluation of Chairs due from Faculty
12 Former Speaker vacation begins IBM Users Group meets
13 Board of Trustees meets

[The following six pages were left blank intentionally for late-breaking news. Nobody broke any.--Ed.]