

op-ed

Improve existing facilities *Remembering Peter*

Library, Loyola have priority over new acquisitions

BY PAT GOWER

In an attempt to better serve the student body, the University has recently announced plans for an expansion of its facilities. These include a possible addition to the John J. Long Center and the building of a new dormitory. Considering the fact that there are more pressing areas where funds are needed, they seem to be misguided efforts.

The library, here on campus, was designed many years ago when enrollment was much smaller. As a result there is overcrowding to the point where some nights a student can't even find a place to sit.

Not only is library space inadequate, but also the number of books has not increased in proportion to a rising class size. There are too few volumes, and even those are outdated.

In addition, many back issue magazines are missing and the microfilm system is a farce.

There can be no argument over the poor condition of Loyola Hall. The last issue of *The Aquinas* gave a detailed account of poor ventilation, excess noise and overall decline. How can the University expect to maintain high

educational standards when lectures are given in nothing more than outhouses?

As a final concern, Eagen Auditorium cannot be overlooked. Many high schools have auditoriums of superior quality than the one here at Scranton. The lack of staggered seats makes enjoying an otherwise fine performance quite a

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challenge. Anyone who went to the Fall Revue is well aware of this.

In light of these facts, the prudent observer might think the University is expanding too fast and in the wrong areas. A wiser policy would be to upgrade existing facilities and then make plans for other ventures.

Pat Gower is a senior physics major from Rockville, Md.

BY KAREN RAFFERTY

Things are much the same since Peter Cheung's death a year ago Oct. 29. The Haunted House is adding the finishing cobwebs and on Thursday evening a cast of ghouls and ghosts will be on hand for mischief and fun. But this year, the cause is one that was never dreamed of last year. It was probably the only detail that Peter had overlooked.

The last few weeks of Peter's life were consumed by one purpose: to make the Haunted House a success. It was not unusual for Peter to be completely dedicated to a project. He did everything whole-heartedly. Those who knew him will attest to just how large that heart was.

One of my last memories of Peter is the Thursday night of the Haunted House. Everyone, for the most part, had left. I was walking around picking up, and I came upon Peter. He was sitting on the window seat in a cold shadowy room. Quiet and pensive, he was obviously tired. When I sat down by him we talked briefly about the house.

I asked him if anything was on his mind. Like a child on Halloween, he held his flashlight under his chin giving his face a soft orange glow. Then smiling, he replied, "Look, I'm happy." A short time later those sparkling eyes would close.

I only hope that Peter has found a happiness at least equal to that which he gave. That alone would be greater than the peace most of us could ever wish for. Sometimes still when I wonder where Peter is, I think of that haunting image. I can almost hear him telling once again that he is happy.

Karen Rafferty is a senior biology major from Dunmore, Pa.

Watt's inflexible position led to his demise

BY LOUIS MITCHELL

Just before Secretary James Watt had resigned on Sunday, Oct. 9, support for him had dwindled to 11 percent in the country. Opposition had reached 49 percent. It had been painfully clear for some while, that his time had run its course in politics, which is essentially a short and risky extension for those who indulge. Staying active and vital in the public eye is not only dangerous, it requires self-sacrifice and compromise.

The entire Watt episode illustrates something most fascinating about the American political system. Its permanent adversary nature can create divided personalities in the people who practice politics.

Privately, Mr. James Watt is doubtless a charming man, gifted with humor and poise. His partisan position, however, on the farther right of the Republican spectrum seems to have created in him an irresistible compulsion to taunt the opposition and to outrage people who disagree with him. Extremists — conservatives and liberals — adamant in their beliefs, often have this self-righteous tendency — a tendency which holds any other point of view in contempt. Mr. Watt's dividing of the country into Americans and liberals, his squalid and racist crack about blacks, Jews and the handicapped, seem to stem from not so much innate bigotry in his nature as from this irrational compulsion to bait, needle, and consequently offend the opposition.

Watt often appeared to resemble a name-calling cheerleader, or a Jacksonian

swasher. In this, Secretary Watt became a casebook on how not to conduct the public dialogue. In short, the eloquent gentleman wrapped himself in the persona of inflexibility who ruled out completely any dialogue or possibility of reaching compromise.

But therein lies the rub. Since any elected administration has to engage constantly in dialogue with Congress, since almost all successful legislation is the result of compromise, and since compromise seems to be the best public and political means of achieving compatibility, Mr. Watt's support on Capitol Hill as well as in the public mind waned.

Clearly, there was no reasoning with the man, at least as he chose to portray himself. Therefore, with the reasonable dialoguing process of another American election approaching in 1984, Congressional Republicans finally saw Watt as a liability to the already jittery present administration.

This final estimate of the Interior Secretary among his natural allies is indeed an inverse compliment to the well-established, highly-tuned, and vigorously tried American political process. Very professional practitioners still do see it — and so do those who have given up on it to some measure — as a reasonable, workable process. Even its sharpest critics, bellowing from their own adamant chains admit its viability. Thus, Mr. Watt has stigmatized himself as an unreasonable man.

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