

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

It was less than a lustrous surprise to see the inflationary new dues schedule approved by the APSA membership, as reported in the Winter 1981 *PS* (received on March 21, 1981 or "Winter in Spring"). But the last straw was the contention in the 1981 Program Committee Report that the forthcoming New York convention hotel room rates (@ \$40-57, singles) represent a bargain, and that the Big Apple "can't be pared any more. . ."

All this brings up the larger issue of how to put the APSA on a sound financial footing. Apparently, some of our colleagues do not realize that a new day has dawned outside, which calls for efficiency, cutting costs, balancing the budget, and bringing inflation under control. The APSA is setting a poor precedent by ignoring efficiency, raising membership dues, and continuing to hold its annual conventions in the most expensive hotels in the most expensive locales in these United States.

The remedies to APSA's financial woes, which affect all of its membership, might include the following:

- (1) An immediate 10-15 percent cut in APSA's administrative staff;
- (2) A 10-15 percent reduction in the new dues schedule;
- (3) Cost-effectiveness of all Association programs; and
- (4) Holding annual meetings in less expensive hotels in less expensive cities in less expensive sections of the country.

As to conventions, lists of hotels and one or two dozen cities in the South, Southwest, Northwest, etc., should be drawn up, and meetings alternate, depending on the lowest bid.

What the Association needs badly is not

necessarily a Rousseauian "return to Nature" (or the "boonies"), but a return to common sense. And it should not take an Einstein to figure out that holding conventions in the most expensive cities is an unnecessary drain on both personal and Association finances.

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To the Editor:

The letter of Jacobs, Kerr, Odel, and Yee (*PS*, Winter, 1981) does them little credit. What is at stake in this case is not only Professor Stastny's future as a scholar and teacher, but the future of tenure itself. For that reason, if no other, the criticisms leveled against Central Washington University by the APSA's Committee on Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom apply with equal force to the letter writers themselves.

Several important issues are to be decided on appeal before the Washington Supreme Court; issues which were ignored by a lower court judge who took the view that the relationship between tenured professors and administrators is an ordinary employer employee relationship. Such issues include the following:

(1) Are university code provisions listing "insubordination," "grievous or willful violation" of university regulations, and "gross misconduct" as dismissible offenses (without definition) constitutionally valid?

(2) Is dismissal of a tenured faculty member for "respectfully refusing to accede" to a denial of a request for four days class absence to present his research findings at another university, a disproportionate and hence unconstitutional penalty? Professor Stastny had never been formally disciplined in his 14 years at the Univer-

sity, and he had made arrangements to have all his classes covered.

(3) Can evidence obtained by covert surveillance of a faculty member's classes be used as one of the bases for dismissing him, especially when such evidence had been repudiated by the responsible Dean?

Many of us in NCDAR had read through thousands of pages of testimony from the administrative hearings in the Stastny case, as well as all the legal briefs on both sides before deciding to become involved. We concluded that Professor Stastny's dismissal was unwarranted. We are pleased that an investigation by the APSA came to the same conclusions on this matter that we did, and remain convinced that a hidden agenda lies behind the actions of the university and the department.

The letter by Yee and other department members was an exercise in persuasion. However, university officials have also attempted to intimidate their critics. In the meantime Professor Stastny lacks the funds to pay the legal expenses of his appeal. (His principal attorney is Professor David Danelski of Stanford University.) The University has even attempted to block his receiving unemployment compensation.

Because all of us have a stake in the outcome of the Stastny case, we urge every political scientist to make a contribution —no matter how small—to the National Committee for the Defense of Academic Rights. Please send a check today to NCDAR, P.O. Box 177, West Somerville, Massachusetts 02144.

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