Column/Charles P. Brown

CAP exists for the benefit of students

Last in a series

Unfortunately, unless students are forced by the Institute to deal with such problems — whether through an academic warning or a required withdrawal — the problems will compound. Students trying to graduate in three years will take heavy academic loads and do poorly, and may eventually choose to catch up by taking heavy academic loads the next term.

Students in departments because their parents want them to be there may do poorly but stay in that department. Students who have recurring family problems will not have the time to deal with them if they are full-time students.

The bottom line is that if the Committee on Academic Performance puts a student on academic warning, the student will usually do well the following term and go off warning. If the CAP takes a student in a similar situation and does not put him on warning, the situation will usually be put on warning or he will require treatment in the following semester.

Current academic review procedures have their flaws, in particular the problem of advisors representing students they don't even know. But with eyes on warning, academic procedures have their flaws, in particular the problem of advisors representing students they don't even know. But even with flaws, current procedures are better than the alternative of no CAP, and they do work as the advantage of the student.

I have also been told by students that they resent student

COLUMN/CHARLES P. BROWN

OPINION

Reagan undermines freedom

"Expanding contacts across borders that guarantee a free interchange of information and ideas increases confidence; sealing off one's people from the rest of the world reduces it."


This is a statement with which I think we all would agree. The principles of freedom of thought and expression have always been held in the highest esteem in America. They are the cornerstone of democracy, and the foundation of our free society. That is why we have the First Amendment, and it is why we were among the signatories of the Helsinki Accords.

If only Ronald Reagan would practice in America what he preaches to the Soviets. My question is: if he really believes these principles, then why is he undermining them? Why is the Reagan administration currently restricting 300 professors from 39 different countries from entering this country because of their political beliefs? Why is it preventing American citizens from traveling to Cuba and inhibiting the flow of written materials of all kinds from Cuba to the United States?

The New York Times Magazine (September 25, 1983) reported that the Reagan administration had:

- consistently sought to limit the scope of the Freedom of Information Act,
- prohibited the flow of films into and out of our borders,
- rewritten the classification system for written material to assure that more rather than less information will be classified,
- subjected government officials to an unprecedented system of lifetime censorship,
- denied American university students a terrorist state threatening relations their right to publish unclassified information — in a war of technical or scientific nature. (MIT has been directly affected on this.)

These are two areas among those mentioned that I would like to expand upon because they are particularly disturbing: the restrictions on travel and the censorship of government employees.

In regard to the first, the Reagan administration has breathed new life into that regrettable relic of McCarthyism, the McCarran-Walter Act, which in the United States the only Western democracy to permit foreign nationals can be denied visitors' visas for ideological reasons. The victims of this act include figures from all areas of the political spectrum. The one thing they have in common is that the administration is worried they will say something that it doesn't think they should hear.

Recent victims of this act include Nino Pauli, former NATO general and critic of Peresligi II and Cruise missile deployment in Europe; Tomas Borge, Interior Minister of Nicaragua and founding member of the Frente Sandinista; Roberto D'Aubuisson, former right-wing candidate for president of El Salvador; Hortensia Allende, widow of the last democratically elected president of Chile (who was overthrown and assassinated in the 1973 CIA coup); literary figures from around the world, including Nobel Laureates Czeslaw Milosz and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. All of these people have been denied entrance to the leader of the Free World because the present administration is afraid of their visits would be "prejudicial to the public interest."

The second concern I mentioned regards National Security Decision Directive 84, which Reagan signed on March 11, 1983. Directive 84 requires all government employees to have access to any "sensitive compartmented information" (SCI), to submit to a system of lifetime propagation review. The implications of this directive are staggering. Consider the case of a university professor:

"YOU SAY..."