

# The Middlebury Campus

Founded 1905

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## Addressing the issues?

Middlebury College President Olin Robison has finally addressed the issue of Paul Cubeta and the alleged sexual harassment which precipitated his retirement. In a letter addressed "To the Middlebury College Community," dated November 8, 1989, Dr. Robison confirmed what many people have suspected: That the Middlebury College administration continues to refuse to acknowledge that the 1988 sexual harassment hearing was handled badly.

Dr. Robison said early in his letter that "there is often a tension between the public's desire to know and the College's responsibility toward its constituent members." Dr. Robison disregards entirely the concerns of the thousands of people who make up the Middlebury community. Students, faculty and staff are all part of this private institution. We are as much "constituent members" of the Middlebury community as anyone else. We have the right to know of sexual harassment cases when they are heard, without the divulgence of specific names or allegations. While the college has a responsibility toward those constituents involved, it also has a responsibility to the wider Middlebury constituency.

The *Burlington Free Press* reported in no uncertain terms that College English professor Robert Hill approached Dr. Robison in the mid-1970's and said, "that Cubeta was harassing male students." Is this the statement that Dr. Robison is addressing when he obscurely wrote that "we are from time to time made vulnerable to allegations

about what may or may not have been known by a particular person at a particular time?"

When Dr. Robison wrote that "at no time to my knowledge has the College failed to respond swiftly and decisively to charges of sexual harassment," he seems to be manipulating semantics sufficiently to gloss an important issue over: What happens when there are no specific charges of sexual harassment, but there are general warnings concerning an individual's conduct? The Campus agrees that "to act on the basis of hearsay is indefensible and immoral." However, it is not hearsay when a member of an academic department raises a valid concern regarding the conduct of one of his colleagues.

Dr. Robison's open letter concludes: "Our response to such charges [of sexual harassment] will continue to be immediate, fair, and consonant with the principles of trust, responsibility, and integrity that give meaning and substance to this community of learning."

Well, according to at least one student involved in the 1988 Paul Cubeta sexual harassment hearing, the administration's response to "such charges" was neither "immediate," nor "fair." The Campus believes that the administration's handling of the case brings up serious doubts as to Middlebury College's perception of the "principles of trust, responsibility and integrity." As for "meaning and substance" in "this community of learning," these phrases are becoming increasingly unclear.

## Just say 'No!' to Pantherdome

The Campus applauds the Middlebury College faculty's recent vote to ask the board of trustees to "disavow publicly all plans for construction of a football stadium." In an eloquent statement to the faculty on Monday, Professor Bruce Peterson raised a valid concern in addressing "the distortion of the proper priorities of this institution," and of what the faculty wants for Middlebury.

Indeed, issues such as limited capacity libraries, faltering science facilities, low support staff wages and inadequate office space overshadow the need for a \$1.5 football stadium. This should be clear to even the least academically inclined members of the Middlebury College administration.

Apparently, the impulse here is not to look a gift horse in the mouth. When President of the Board of Trustees Milt Peterson donated the new fitness center, it was obviously overkill. But it was a gift. Now the college has the opportunity to build, free of charge, the Middlebury Pantherdome. While it is rude to refuse expensive gifts, sometimes those gifts have no place at Middlebury. We need more library space and a decent science

center. Why not ask the magnanimous donor of the new football field to divert his funds to needy academic areas? And if he is adamant, the college could politely decline for now. "We've got some more important priorities," the trustees could say, while not offending some board members. And if it is to be football stadium or nothing, then it should be nothing. A new football stadium will be a great addition to Middlebury sometime in the future, but let's get our priorities straight for now.

As long as various persons continue to offer Middlebury expensive showcases, the college will become weaker in determining what is right for Middlebury College as far as plant development. For the sake of those already here, instead of those who are applying, just say no to expensive and superfluous construction endeavors. The Campus strongly endorses the faculty's proposal to cancel the football stadium. The project, as the faculty's resolution makes clear, "is symbolic of a profound misunderstanding of the appropriate mission of this institution."

## Ex-CIA agent speaks

By George W. Clifton

I am writing in response to Todd Chretien's article ("Beating the CIA at their own game") which appeared in the October 20, 1989 issue of the Campus.

One of the entities of the United States government which has, as its duty, the preservation and protection of the freedom and equality enjoyed in America is the Central Intelligence Agency. Todd Chretien speaks against the Agency as if from experience or profound knowledge of its operations whereas, in fact, he has not served therein. I, on the other hand, have so served and, hence, I put forth herein my views on the Agency as someone who "has been there."

I was never a regular employee of the Central Intelligence Agency. Instead, I served in a strictly covert unit which was put together at the behest of then-Director William Casey, on full approval of then-President Reagan and then-Vice President Bush (himself also a former director of the CIA). I was told, from the beginning, that neither the unit nor my involvement therein would ever be acknowledged. Among the other agents and myself, the unit came to be known as Operation RAT (Retaliation Against Terrorism). My designation was "Domestic Surveillance Agent" because I did a lot of surveillance work within the United States. However, I also traveled to Asia, Europe, Canada, Mexico, and all the Latin American countries except Belize. When I traveled, I always did so with documents and/or a passport not in my own name.

The job of the CIA is to collect intelligence (information) that, basically, comes from foreign lands. In addition, it is charged with carrying out covert operations that are in the best interests of the United States and its allies. Say what you will about covert operations, but they are as "everyday" and typical of countries, especially, world powers such as the United States.

I would really like to go into detail about what I know the CIA does in foreign countries, but to do so would gravely jeopardize both the people and the governments involved. I can say this: "CIA" does not stand for "Criminals In Action" as was written on one of Todd's signs.

The Central Intelligence Agency is an honorable organization charged with an almost impossible task. Yes, the Agency is behind the Contras in Nicaragua, and, the government of El Salvador. But, in so doing, it is not "conspiring to murder and terrorize the peoples" of these countries. It is trying to help people to be free and equal.

In the case of Nicaragua, the Agency, pursuant to American foreign policy, is aiding the Contra rebels to overthrow the Marxist-Leninist Nicaraguan government which is supported by, among others, the Soviet Union and Cuba. Declared or not, there is a war going on down there because there is a segment of the Nicaraguan society which would like to be free and to prosper. It does not want to be another "satellite" of the Soviet Union. The interests of the Contras are in the best interests of the United States and what it stands for.

The United States, by supporting El Salvador, is trying to help that country help itself. By that, I do not mean to help itself be more repressive, backwards, murderous, threatening, human rights-abusive, militaristic, etc. No, I mean to help itself be more like its supporter, the United States of America (I am not saying the U.S. is perfect, just better governed). It is not an easy thing to teach people to be democratic, respectful of peoples' human rights, militarily restrained, etc., especially people who are not used to governing others in that fashion.

The Central Intelligence Agency is

an honorable organization with dedicated, patriotic, conscientious people trying to carry out its mission. There are some degenerates in the Agency. There are some degenerates at Middlebury too. By that, I mean people who are impolite, disrespectful, intimidating, profane, egoistic, violence-prone, etc. But there are good and bad in every group of people.

Todd, would you really have us believe that the United States and the CIA have no role to play in helping rational people in the world who desire a better life to rid themselves of "leaders" such as Khadafi, Noriega, etc.? Should the United States and the CIA never help others in a coup attempt? Should we refuse an ally? Should we turn our head to people wanting freedom and equality? We have helped Britain, France, West Berlin, and the Philippines. Is that it now? Should the line be drawn? Are the French more important than ignorant Salvadoran peasants (I simply mean "medicated")?

Todd, you and your group have abused the liberty you enjoy as a result of my and many other veterans' service to their country. You and your group could, and just might, (from what I have heard) be sued, along with Middlebury College, for infringing on the civil rights (e.g. First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and association as it pertains to those who desired to interview with the Agency) of others. How would you and/or your group feel if someone precluded you from demonstrating? It would not be very fair or very American, would it? Yet, you and your group precluded some students from interviewing with one of the most honorable agencies, which exists today in the United States government. Not every agent is a model citizen but neither does every agent, or even the Agency as a whole, want to foment terror, rape women, kill babies, and then sing "God Bless America" while draped in the flag. And the members of your group, how are they? Is each one of them aware of the constant threat that is directed towards America or Americans each day? Is each one of them well aware of the wealth General Noriega has amassed by selling drugs to today's American youth? How about the General's manner of interacting with his opposition candidates? Does each member of your group know the hate and fury that rage in Colonel Khadafi? Does each member of your group know what Islamic Jihad does to Americans it holds hostage? In short, does each member of your group know the things the everyday-Agent comes up against abroad? How about why he or she makes that sacrifice?

I honestly feel I represent the typical former Marine and the typical former agent for the CIA. I love my country, I love freedom and I love trying to maintain freedom, not only for Americans, but for the world-at-large. I am not a bigot, a redneck, a militarist, a murderer, a rapist, a baby-killer, or a cold-blooded son-of-a-bitch. I am a Democrat, a liberal, a patriot, and a follower of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, Jr. I have hugged and kissed destitute, oppressed, alienated, loving children on three continents. I have cried while on a plane flying away from them and their plight while returning to what they call paradise: the United States of America.

The Central Intelligence Agency is a part of the American bureaucracy. It is comprised of agents. These agents, though, are people and they are human. They are not monsters and Todd, you and your group, including Chaplain Walsh, Professor Dore, and others have done a great disservice to all Americans by degrading them and all they do to try to ensure the continued existence of the United States of America.