

# NEWSWORKS

## City Hall Reorganization

Most people agree with the idea that S.F.'s neighborhoods should play a greater role in the city government's decision-making process.

I met with Cory Busch, the mayor's press secretary, to find out what plans were being made to communicate with neighborhoods and to effect better participation. Mr. Busch seemed sincere and optimistic about some of the changes. He feels, as many do in S.F., that people really identify with where they live and that greater local participation will enhance the city's government.

"We're compiling an expanded list of community publications and neighborhood groups which we plan to give the same kinds of notices that we now give the general press, of public hearings, legislation, etc."

In addition to this expanded communication network, Cory mentioned that the mayor will spend much more time out of the office, in an effort to reach the community, and a constituent service unit will be established within the mayor's staff. This seven member team will each be responsible for a district, and relay needs and decisions, whether it's zoning, street signs, housing, etc. He sees this group as informational and problem-solving.

Recent trends have been to take some public hearings out of city hall and into the community at more convenient times for people to attend. Some police, fire and community development hearings have been held in neighborhood schools. As an example, he pointed to some legislation concerning preferential parking that was initiated at the neighborhood level and for which the mayor's office circulated information to more than eighty community groups.

"We want local areas to be informed, whether it's through community publications like The Bystander or The Potrero Neighborhood House...and we're even thinking of doing a newsletter, but we don't know how it will be funded. I feel that there are been some mistakes, things we could have done sooner..."

Last year, a private consulting firm was hired through Steve

Thompson, the mayor's budget analyst, at city expense, to survey the public health services. Because of the misinformation by department heads, and perhaps by the private consultants themselves, the changes brought about by this survey included such mistakes as eliminating most of the Spanish-speaking staff at a health facility in the Mission District, elimination of a position in mental health that was not even funded locally (a loss to the city in federal funds). Strange things happen when efficiency experts step on the scene, as many a sorry businessman will tell you.

\$42 million was spent on a new structure for SFGH, but no money was left to staff it properly. As a result, half the emergency service was recently shut down. We have fewer buses in our neighborhoods, and money was only found at the last minute to reopen emergency satellites for medical care, such as Parkside, after their temporary shutdown a few weeks ago.

Cory didn't recall what kinds of community input effected last year's budget, but he hopes some new ideas will prevent disappointments on both sides of the fence. He acknowledges that "often, even when a group provides good input, it doesn't always mean they'll get what they want. There is always a greater need for services than there is money available and tough decisions have to be made. Last year we had a huge budget deficit dumped in our laps and the mayor was left with the problem of coming up with a bare bones budget, and raising taxes at the same time."

Cory Busch's advice is to not only read local announcements but to get on the mailing lists of city commissions or board committees.

There are too many city bureaus, commissions, and agencies to enumerate here, but copies of the new city directory can be asked for by calling the City Office of information, at 558-3755, or for the name of a particular commission pertinent to your interests, such as Housing, Arts, Transportation, etc. The Board of Supervisors is also divided into interest committees with the full board meeting at 2 pm every Monday. Information for that office can be obtained by calling 558-3181. If you're stuck you can

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always dial 558-6161, the city's general switchboard number, and try tracking down the right office for your problem.

As I was leaving I picked up a press release involving a pay package for city employees, presumably for the information of the general public. It was, strictly speaking, a point of opinion rather than a fact sheet. And although I was impressed with Mr. Busch's ideas and sincerity, some attention must be paid to the type of information given out.

**Maureen Flannery**

## Lone Mountain Faces It

A gothic castle on a hill, a surreal setting on craggy rocks and in the sort of clouds a giant might inhabit. The aura of the academic institution hails back to more reflective, scholarly times. Almost mythical. Definitely mystical.

This is Lone Mountain College, famous for its creativity; its art, dance, theatre. Founded as San Francisco College for Women a mere fifty or so years ago, it seems ageless somehow. An eternal addition to the horizon.



But, inside, Lone Mountain these days seems ready to explode. It may not be as perennial as the rough stone walls suggest.

Times haven't been all that good. The school has been operating in the red for the past four years, and undergraduate enrollment has decreased.

Powerful, independent, creative personalities might just be the cause of the dilemma. That tremendous hoard of creative energy pushing against itself, each molecule secure in its own rightness.

The actual dramatics leading up to this crisis evolve naturally from this clash.

Perhaps it all started with money. Lack of it. Resulting were the cutbacks, first in staff and administration, and finally in faculty. Decreasing enrollment in undergraduate studies meant smaller classes, a luxury they couldn't afford, explains the president, Sr. Gertrude Patch. Six faculty were fired, and, as a result, five departments were eliminated—religious studies, French, chemistry, political science and history (students affected by this action are left to cross-register with the University of San Francisco, which sits below Lone Mountain).

Cutbacks are always painful, concedes Sr. Patch, especially when an institution is small

and comradeship is strong. "No matter who had been terminated we would have had repercussions."

But students and faculty argue that their anger resulted not from the need for cutbacks, but from the way the cutbacks were made. They say the administration bypassed the established Educational Policy Committee, which should have a voice in all academic decision-making.

"Our government on paper is extremely democratic," said Tim Lewis, editor of the student newspaper, *The Gazette*. "People are allowed to participate in the decisions affecting them. If the administration had said all along that it was running

things, our reaction would be different. But, instead, it purported to be democratic and just."

After the cutbacks, the faculty unionized; following, perhaps, an example of USF. Now, they are caught in the throes of bargaining for their first contract. Among the issues debated is the question of how internal governance will operate in the future.

The union, though, has had its critics and skeptics. Among them are several students, who fear they might get caught between two powerful forces—union and administration—and that the ideal of creative education might get lost.

But there's even more to our story than unions and money. "Also on the fence is the coming of a new president," said Lewis. Sr. Patch has resigned her post, effective June 30, after 11 years and a lot of change for the college. (In that time, it moved from being a Catholic school with the traditional name, serving white, middle-class women, to a coeducational, innovative institution named Lone Mountain, and a highly diverse student body.)

In addition to her resignation and the search for a new president, the college has just been awarded a federal grant for \$1.3 million, which certainly should take care of some of the money problems. The funds will be used in student development and services.

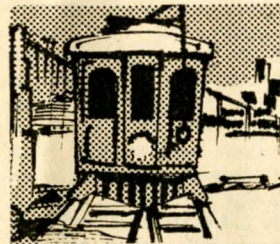
As part of the requirement for receiving the grant, faculty, staff, students and administration held a workshop in January, outlining the school's missions and goals. The completed report contains such eloquent aims as "To foster excellence in intellectual achievement and in performances among students, faculty, administration and staff..."

"It all sounds very good," said Lewis, "I just have little confidence that anyone is going to follow them."

Perhaps other students feel just as jaded. Perhaps they have more cause than anyone else on that campus. "The students have been getting the short end this year," Sr. Patch regrets. "There has been no administrator specifically for them, to act as their advocate."

It does appear that times are about to change. With the grant, a new president, a faculty

## Muni Metro Invades



A quiet day on Haight Street.

Suddenly, the earth shakes, the store windows rattle, the crowds on the curb cease conversation. Roaring down Haight Street are the giant trucks bearing concrete. The noise is deafening.

Approximately 20 complaints a month dealing with transit improvement are received in the Municipal Railway office. Few complain about construction, barriers, or inconvenience. The majority are residents and shopkeepers, driven angry by the noise: the trucks, the machinery screaming throughout the day, the months of deafening noise.

"Sometimes, people have other ideas on how the construction should be done," says Albert Foster of the MUNI Public Relations Office. Most of the suggestions deal with construction working hours, for example: midday Saturday and Sunday and scattered hours throughout the week.

"One hour here and there" would cost the taxpayers a fortune, according to Foster. He admits the construction favors the majority—people using the transit system—but in the end, he says, it benefits all.

How? According to Rino Bei of the MUNI Transit Improvement Program, the construction on Carl Street is only the tip of a giant iceberg: the all-new MUNI-METRO system due for completion in the Fall of 1978.

"We will be receiving 100 brand new subway cars in June of '78," he announced. And in order to prepare for these space-age vehicles, MUNI is replacing the old, worn tracks that will someday be part of the surface track system of MUNI-METRO.

Brand new cars, sleek, long, looking like BART cars, will sail down the tracks on Carl Street and disappear under the Sunset Tunnel. Popping out into the sun near Davies Medical Center, the shiny new N car will ride for 4 or 5 blocks over ground and then enter the subway system in front of the Mint. On the mezzanine level of the Market and Powell BART station, passengers may purchase tickets for the subway cars that will take them to Van Ness, Church Street and Castro, to



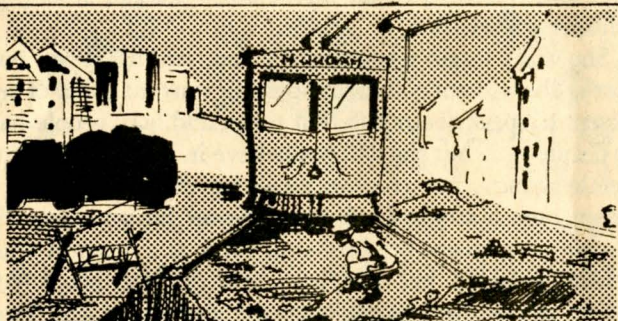
contract, and financial juggling, Lone Mountain is in the middle of reorganization. Will it survive the process? Sr. Patch thinks so. "We're very much alive and well; just feeling a few growing pains."

Lewis was less sure. "Tension is healthy for colleges, but we're

having a nervous breakdown," he said, adding, "Lone Mountain is at a point where it could get tremendously better or really fatalistically worse."

For the sake of the community, the City, the arts, we're hoping for the former.

**Nancy Baker**



the old Twin Peaks Tunnel. The engine of the new N car will be housed in the middle of the train, allowing it to soar around corners and curves with the greatest of ease.

It sounds like a science fiction. Perfectly flawless, incapable.

But what exactly is being built on Carl Street to, eventually, 9th and Irving?

The tracks in this area are old, says Bei. Put down in 1928, they are no longer reliable and must be replaced in order to support the new subway cars. Working three or four blocks at a time, Homer J. Olsen Inc. construction company is digging up pavement and ripping out the old tracks, while portable crossovers carry the trains on route.

According to Foster, there have been complaints covering both the N and L lines. The N Judah has been rerouted to Frederick and Stanyan, and is currently missing two stops.

The Municipal Railway does try, however, not to disturb a neighborhood with frequent construction. Working together with the Public Works Department, MUNI often schedules repairs in an area to coincide with other proposed construction plans. For instance, Homer J. Olsen Inc. was given notice to proceed on November 1st of last year. Starting mid-November, the Olsen company worked on the sewers of the neighborhood before beginning the track replacement.

"We know we're disrupting your life," says Bei. But according to him, the new tracks should last for another forty years.

Next, we can expect the loud noises and road barricades to move up to 5th and 6th Avenues. The current contract will be complete at 9th Avenue, where the tracks will enter Judah Street. The raised trackways on Judah Street are a relief to many drivers and, soon, MUNI plans to extend the raised tracks to the sea. This will save many residents from the horror of driving on the rails, over large holes of cracked cement, tail-gating trains as they clutch fearfully to their steering wheels.

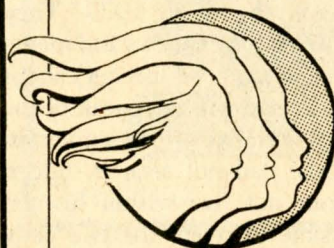
This horror will continue on Carl Street west of Cole. "The road is too narrow," explains Bei. With parked cars against the curb, the street will never accommodate both the trains and the automobiles. As always, the two separate modes of transportation will vie for the limited space. And so the driving populace will be slow to appreciate the transit improvements.

Meanwhile, residents and shopkeepers complain about the trucks and machines invading their neighborhood. The science-fiction dream of the future is still very far away.

(This is the first part of a series on MUNI)

by Susan Baker

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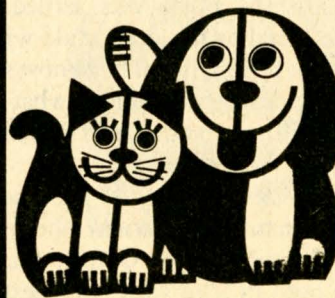
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