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# THE MESSENGER

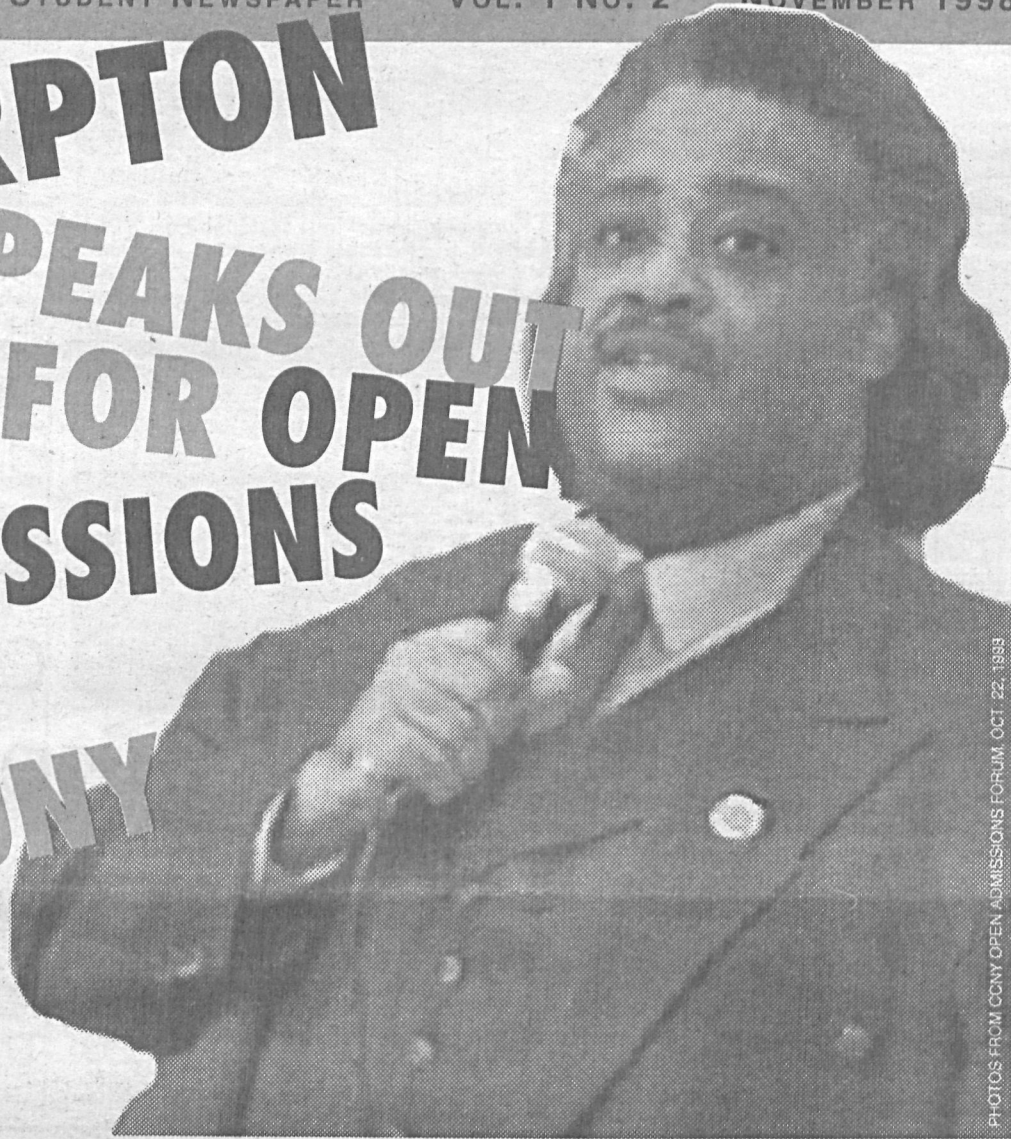
AN INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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UNIVERSITY OF HARLEM

## SHARPTON SPEAKS OUT FOR OPEN ADMISSIONS AT CUNY



PHOTOS FROM CCNY OPEN ADMISSIONS FORUM, OCT. 22, 1998



Prof. William Crain



Prof. James Smalls



Shannon Arrington, student



Prof. Jeanne Olliviere

**O**N OCTOBER 22 the Reverend Al Sharpton spoke at City College in defense of Open Admissions at CUNY. Sharpton connected the Board of Trustees attack on remedial classes to the larger attacks Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has launched against working New Yorkers. He also forcefully pointed out the need for students to not just learn about history, but to help make history by joining together to defend Open Admissions. He said, "You will not be judged by how well you know the 1960s, but by how you operate in the 1990s."

Over 130 students attended the event in NAC 0/201, which was sponsored by the CCNY Coalition to Defend Open Admissions and the Day Student Government (DSG). The event was part of an ongoing campaign to educate the CCNY student body about the threat to remedial classes and Open Admissions at CUNY, and to build an independent student movement to fight for access to education.

**WHAT IS OPEN ADMISSIONS?**

As started in 1970, the Open Admissions policy allows any New York City high school student who obtains a diploma a spot at CUNY. Those students who do not pass one of the three placement exams are placed in remedial courses until they can. The point of the Open Admissions policy was to allow access to a college education to students that were traditionally provided a sub-standard high school education by the public school system.

Open Admissions was implemented after Black and Latino students at City College started successful protests against the exclusionary nature of the CUNY system which in 1969 was comprised primarily of white students. With the change, one barrier in the racial apartheid of New York education had been smashed.

The new policy put forward by the CUNY Board of Trustees last spring would end remedial classes at the senior colleges. The Board's decision would turn the three assessment tests into

entrance exams. You can't pass the tests? You can't enter CUNY's senior colleges. The Board's vote to end remediation officially returned apartheid and class war to CUNY.

According to CUNY's own study, five colleges, including City College, would lose half their entering students under the Board's new policy. The CUNY report declared that under the new Board policy minority students will be worst hit. The report stated 55% of Latino, 51% of Asian, and 46% of Black students who would have been allowed entrance under present admissions criteria will be barred from entering the senior colleges. Whites too will be blocked, with 38% kept from entering by the new policy. In total, 12,000 students—46% of 1999's entering class—will be barred if the policy is successfully implemented.

The Board's decision has been temporarily blocked by a lawsuit brought by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

**PROTEST!**

**AT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

Tell them "Thanks for Nothing" for cutting our educational opportunities to shreds



Herman Badillo—Turkey?

**Are they TRUSTEES or are they TURKEYS?!**

**MONDAY, NOV. 23  
535 E. 80th St.  
4:00 PM**

**Meet on campus in the NAC Rotunda at 2:30 PM to go together**

**GOBBLE!  
GOBBLE!**

# Free speech showdown

## Students and DSG fight administration efforts to block free speech with bogus postering policy.

By David Thurston

**F**REE SPEECH at City College is under attack. Since the beginning of this semester, the administration has been ruthlessly enforcing a flying policy that prohibits posting anywhere other than on what very few bulletin boards are available.

Campus security guards have tried to stop students from posting flyers and have repeatedly taken flyers down. The staff of the Finley Center, the administrative body that oversees student club activities, has also been strictly enforcing the policy. One student saw Security Director Timothy Hubbard walk around tearing posters, "as if the Director of Security doesn't have anything better to do," the student told the *Messenger*.

Not only have flyers been torn down and groups reprimanded, but the administration actually took the step of having a cleaning crew coat the columns in oil to render masking tape ineffective.

All of this has been done in the name of creating a cleaner campus. Finley Center Director Wendy Thornton, in a memo to the City College community dated October 19, wrote that the new postering policy was necessary "to make the City College community aware of the wonderful events that are held without sacrificing the beauty of its facilities."

In reality, this is a political attack on student activists and other students. Instead of taking the obvious step of hiring more maintenance workers to maintain a cleaner campus, the administration has singled out students' rights to poster

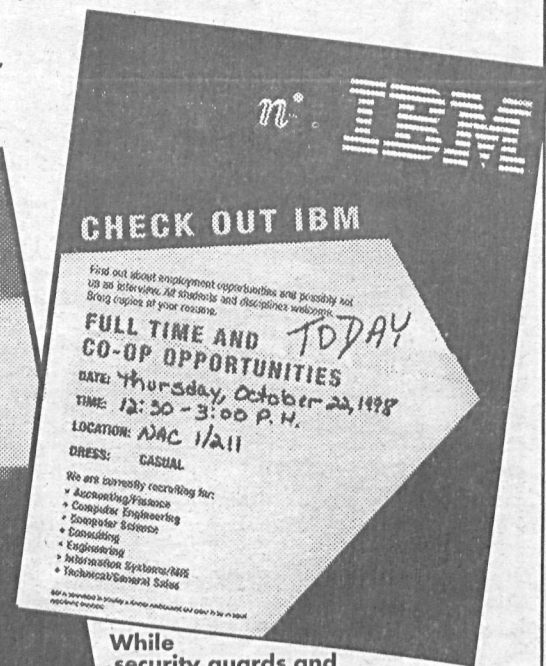
on their campus.

The posters of student groups pursuing political issues haven't been the only targets of the postering censors. One *Messenger* staffer saw attempts by members of the campus radio station WCCR to advertise their recent party rebuffed as Security and Finley Center employees ripped their posters down as soon as they were put up.

These actions on the part of the administration prompts the question of why Finley Student Center, which ostensibly is supposed to help student clubs put on events, is blocking student efforts to make those events successful. Moreover, the administration's vision of a clean campus involves destroying campus life. What they fail or refuse to see is that a campus, filled with flyers advertising all sorts of forums, movies, performances, and demonstrations is a healthy and vibrant campus, not a "dirty" campus.

These restrictions on students right to speech are hardly isolated incidents. Over the summer, City College was all over the papers after the discovery of recording devices in a room regularly used by student activists. (See the previous issue of the *Messenger* for details.)

What makes these restrictions on flyer-ing particularly outrageous is that they appear to be a violation of City College's own governance charter which gives the Day Student Government the right to set flyer-ing policies. Student government officers say they never approved this policy. While the administration claims to have meeting minutes in which the policy



While security guards and Finley Student Center employees make the campus ugly by tearing down student posters announcing events, posters recently put up by an IBM representative were left unmolessted.

was approved, it has yet to show them to Rafael Dominguez, DSG's Vice-President for Campus Affairs who requested a copy of the minutes weeks ago.

The key difference between this new policy and the one that preceded it, is that the earlier policy allowed flyers to be posted on the well-traveled first and second floors of the NAC.

When informed of the postering situation, student-rights attorney Ron McGuire said he thought the administration's actions were "illegal". "If a college has historically permitted an area to be used for unautho-

rized postering, then the college has created a 'limited public forum' which cannot be closed unless closing the forum is necessary to achieve a compelling public interest," wrote McGuire. He declared the NAC Rotunda such a free speech area.

Since the beginning of the semester a number of student groups as well as faculty have seen their postings removed vigorously. The attack on political debate and discussion has been thorough and dramatic. Yet the right to free speech remains central to building any real political movements on the campus. It will take pressure from all of us to secure the right to speak freely at CCNY. ■

# Never elected!?

## For two years running USS chair Misanoor Biswas got CCNY administrators to intervene on his behalf after losing GSC elections.

Portions of this article are adapted from an article by Keith Higginbotham in the *Hunter Envoy*, Oct. 13, 1998

**M**ISANOOR BISWAS, the University Student Senate representative to CUNY's Board of Trustees (BoT), is in the middle of the controversy surrounding the nullification of the CCNY Graduate Student Council election last semester.

At the center of the controversy is a meeting that Biswas attended at the office of CCNY President Yolanda Moses on June 1. In attendance were Moses, Biswas, and Martha Flores, a Graduate Student Council member who had lodged a formal complaint against the New Millennium slate over the alleged inappropriate use of the graduate student newspaper, the *CCNY Messenger*, for campaign purposes.

Biswas claims that he was called to the meeting by Moses and was only asked to participate in his role as USS representative. "The meeting," said Biswas, "was only to discuss the charges against the New Millennium slate and the *Messenger*."

Members of the New Millennium slate claim that the meeting between Biswas, Flores and President Moses was in fact a joint effort to oust the New Millennium slate from power by canceling the election they had won and rescheduling a special election this fall to most benefit Ms. Flores and Mr. Biswas's aspirations to return to the Chair position and USS position, respectively.



Misanoor Biswas used City College administrators to nullify GSC elections that kept him off the council two years running.

It should be noted that members of the New Millennium slate and staff of the *Messenger* were involved in the recent lawsuit against President Moses involving video surveillance of student activists.

Biswas dismisses charges that he was involved in any such planning to cancel and reschedule the GSC election. "I was totally against the nullification of the election last spring. After all, this put me at risk of losing my seat on the Board of Trustees."

Biswas also told the *Hunter Envoy* that the special election results this fall

reflected almost no change over the nullified election. But Brad Sigal, editor of the *Messenger* and a GSC member from the New Millennium slate, labeled Biswas's statement as "absurd."

"In the nullified election," said Sigal, "the New Millennium slate held a vast majority of the seats and thus would have held all executive positions within the Graduate Student Council. The results from the special election have left New Millennium with less than 50% of the seats on the council. We don't even have keys to the office now."

Biswas's claim that by pushing for a cancellation of the elections he was jeopardizing his USS seat on the Board of Trustees is simply a lie, according to Sigal. This is because, like last year, Biswas did not win in the GSC election, continued Sigal. He was one of the three candidates who tied for last place in vote tallies. There would have had to have been a runoff election this fall anyway between Biswas and the two other last-place candidates. So Biswas had nothing to lose, and everything to gain, from Moses cancelling last spring's GSC election.

Even if Biswas had beaten the other two last-place candidates in a runoff this fall, he must have believed that he would not have been chosen as USS delegate by the New Millennium slate. So in fact the only way that Biswas could have held onto his USS seat was by President Moses canceling the election entirely, and running a special election in the fall to re-elect an entirely new council.

The election cancellation gave Biswas all summer to find new people to run with him so he could have enough votes to get the USS seat he so-desperately wanted. And that is what happened.

In the spring, Biswas ran with only one friend, Mohammad Iqram. In the fall special election, he had found four other people to run with him—all running unopposed from the School of Engineering. This assured that even with the New Millennium slate holding onto its seats, Biswas would have the votes needed to broker a deal with whoever he needed to in order to get his cherished USS seat back. He played both sides of the fence, attempting to simultaneously cut deals with both New Millennium member Ydannis Rodriguez and Independent Martha Flores. He ended up siding with Flores.

The special election was held very early in this fall's semester. A letter was sent out to graduate students from V.P. Morales encouraging them to become candidates. In this letter, Morales stated explicitly that the election was being held so early so that the GSC's delegate to the USS could run for the USS chair position. Morales would not have thought this up on his own unless Biswas had brought it up explicitly to him and/or to President Moses. Since Biswas in fact met with Pres. Moses on June 1 to discuss the elections, it is highly likely that a deal was brokered between Biswas and the administration. And in fact, Biswas did get the USS seat he wanted, and went on to run unopposed for the chair of the CUNY-wide University Student Senate. ■

## Prof. William Crain Psychology

We are considering a vision statement, "City College for the 21st Century," which has lost sight of a major part of our historic missions—access and opportunity. It's not just the the September 1998 draft omits the rhetoric of access. The plan also proposes new admissions policies and reductions in remediation (from two semesters to one) that will close our doors on many deserving students.

I recognize that some faculty are frustrated by gaps in student preparation. Although the careful research by David Lavin and others indicate CUNY's remediation policies are generally quite successful, several City College faculty have told me that they wish that our students' remedial needs could be more fully handled elsewhere—in the community colleges, high schools, and summer immersion institutes.

But consider what this means in the current political climate. We can tell students that they can go to the community colleges before coming to City, but the community colleges' remedial courses are already over-enrolled, and the Mayor and his CUNY task force are poised to cut or eliminate these courses altogether. We can say that we will work with the high schools to improve preparation, but it's unlikely that there will be sufficient funds. We can rely more heavily on summer immersion courses, but current data indicate that these courses produce only small improvements in college work.

In this climate, we must protect students and their opportunities. Through no choice of their own, most of our students have attended underfunded, overcrowded inner-city schools which haven't given them anything like the college preparation that wealthier students receive. Until now, our college has stepped in and given our students a real chance to acquire skills and move forward. I believe we should actually expand remedial offerings within our curriculum, stepping up innovation in this area. But

# 21st Century vision? Myopic!

## Two CCNY professors critique President Moses's plan for a new admissions policy

at a minimum, we have a responsibility to hold the present level of remedial opportunities in place for our students until we can be sure the proposed alternatives are real and working.

As you may know, some of our sister senior colleges have already reduced access. Baruch College and Queens College, in particular, want to become elite colleges that serve only the better-prepared students. It is tempting to join this trend. But please remember the true source of our greatness. We have achieved excellence while maintaining very open access. Technically, to be sure, we are not an Open Admissions college. But we have contributed significantly to Open Admissions in the larger sense. We have given thousands of students—especially students of color—a full chance to develop their minds and pursue their dreams. Let's keep doing so.

## Prof. Michael Green Chemistry

*The following are excerpts from a document that was distributed to the Faculty Senate.*

**T**he most critical issue facing us at the moment is a political attack that takes the form of an attack on

remediation; becoming a "Research University" won't solve this problem in any very direct way, and probably not in any indirect way either. If we lose too many undergrads, we won't have a school of any sort. The "Blueprint" states that research universities ought not to be in the business of providing any remediation. Actually the City College document doesn't state that there should be no more remediation; it does limit it to one term.

We actually do a tolerably good job of remediation. Most of our successful students have been through at least one semester of remediation, even in the sciences and engineering ... We cannot afford to risk losing these students. However, moving remediation to community colleges is likely to use up financial aid, ambition, and resources of these students, causing many to fail to go on to the more advanced levels where they actually succeed. We must avoid allowing our model to exclude large numbers of students.

This said, there are some students who really are not ready to go to college. I do not know if we get a large percentage of these at City now; much of the controversy deals with setting the boundary between the two groups of students. If it is not resolved in any other way, it may be resolved by simply lowering standards for passing what were formerly placement, now entrance, exams. Perhaps this



is not such a bad idea ... However, it seems to be a rather slap-dash way of doing things, and, paradoxically, might lead to pressure to lower the starting point for the present courses. ... While we have to keep the barriers at entrance from being too high, we do not want to weaken the education of the students who graduate.

However, the new City College document goes too far in the direction of limiting admissions. The proposed entrance requirements are unrealistic for CCNY, in several ways. The requirement of 24 semester hours of Regents credits will be impractical for students at many high schools, which may not offer enough credits, or may fail to offer them in a form of use to the majority of the students. The requirement for SAT scores, with the criterion for admission apparently intended to be over 1000 ... would discourage many students, even if the SAT is used only as an alternate route to admission, with no mandatory score for students who qualify by other criteria; worse, the SATs are considered (with good reason, from what I understand) to be racially discriminatory; that is they fail as predictors of college performance for minority students, who, in the long run, do better than predicted, when compared to the majority students with the same scores.

Furthermore, SATs are no use as predictors of performance of students who are not native speakers of English (the Vietnamese boat refugee who was our valedictorian a few years ago would not have been admitted under the new criteria). All in all, we are more likely to raze rather than raise standards at the college. We should raise a standard on which ACCESS is emblazoned in letters as large as EXCELLENCE; very likely we will have both, or neither.

Moving to call ourselves a "Research University" may help with part of our political problem, by giving us higher prestige with respect to the public posture of certain politicians, but it will not by itself help with our most fundamental problems in undergraduate education and the way our policies affect our students. It may also not help with our political problem if we can be written off as a second rate attempt at an elite institution. We must remember that we are the target of an attack on all public higher education ... Those whom we wish to impress are in too many cases our enemies, and will respond by ignoring any attempts we make, or by raising the bar if we show any signs of succeeding. Those who would be hurt are those whom we might otherwise hope to find on our side; it is up to us to recruit sufficient support from those who now have little power. It may be our greatest strength that we can in fact do this.

Pursuing Research II status may not be meaningful if it applies only to science and engineering departments. It probably will not hurt, but it is not necessarily our highest priority ... If pushed too hard in the absence of sufficient resources for an adequate balance of efforts between undergraduate education and research, we could hemorrhage students; lacking students, there is no City College. The alternate excuse for wrecking us would be lack of students, and the opposing politicians may be leading us directly into this trap.



**CUNY Board of Trustees meeting last April was disrupted by pro-Open Admissions protesters. Far left: Eric Odell leaps on the meeting table, denouncing the implementation of educational apartheid. Left: SAFE Team slams Odell to the floor.**

## Activist's Trial Date Nears

By Keith Higginbotham  
Hunter Envoy

**I**N A LEGALLY QUESTIONABLE attempt to speed up the trial of student activist Eric Odell, New York County Assistant District Attorney Holly Levinson attempted to add fresh assault charges to Odell's case and refused to turn over a written record of the prosecution's version of events and medical evidence relating to the trial until ordered to do so by the sitting trial judge.

Odell is charged with 3rd Degree Assault on a Police Officer, Resisting Arrest, and Criminal Misconduct, all resulting from disruptions of a CUNY Board of Trustees meeting on February 23, 1998. SLAM had organized a protest outside to call attention to the Trustees' moves to cut remediation, and outbursts inside resulted in two arrests, one detention and the eventual clearing of the room.

A CUNY SAFE officer allegedly broke his wrist during the events, but information has been scarce as to the particularities of the incident. Odell was charged as

responsible, however a SLAM activist from Hunter explained, "everybody protesting inside the boardroom that day took a pledge of non-violence. It's inconceivable he would have done anything beyond expressing his discontent with the Board."

The District Attorney's version of the incident portrays Odell as wildly flailing and kicking at police officers once he was on top of the table, a view contested by all student witnesses. Under a relentless attack by McGuire that spanned several hours, Levinson at one point seemed near tears in her frustration. McGuire was clearly distraught at the reluctance of prosecutors to turn over basic evidence as required by disclosure laws. Including what is technically referred to as "entry evidence," or material shared between prosecutors and defense before the start of the trial, X-rays of the officer's wrist, a photograph of the officer in question, and a detailed summary of events, have not been forthcoming from Levinson. In late July, Levinson said she would turn these materials over, but had thus far not followed through.

The Judge decided that the SAFE officer would have to appear to answer questions McGuire had been attempting to obtain for over six months. Late in the afternoon, Levinson turned over to McGuire a hastily scrawled statement written with a red, felt-tipped pen. It was undated and unsigned. McGuire addressed the judge by saying that he had never "in his entire career" been presented with something so unprofessional. The judge returned Odell's case to the original hearing judge, who upon hearing of Levinson's actions, held the trial over until mid-November.

After Levinson had attempted to go straight to trial, bump up the charges and turn over handwritten notes, Odell's lawyer, Ron McGuire, expressed his shock and outrage at the grandstanding maneuvers to the hearing judge.

In most cases, protesters are not brought to a full trial and the prosecutors decision to push this is exceptional. Numerous Hunter & CCNY students arrived at the courthouse to support Odell. The next hearing date is November 20, 9:30 am at 100 Center Street, rm 170. For info, contact Hunter SLAM! at 212-772-4261. ■

# Tell Old Pharaoh



Let our people go...  
**to school!**

**CCNY students and the Harlem community demand continued remedial classes and open admissions at City College and all of CUNY! Call President Moses at 650-7285 and tell her: *No retreat on open admissions!***

**CUNY is for  
the people!**

Produced by the Messenger, an independent student newspaper at City College

# CCNY Pres. Moses: *Where are you leading your people?*

Mayor Giuliani and the CUNY Board of Trustees are working hard to adopt policies of educational apartheid at City College and throughout CUNY. In May '98 Trustees adopted a plan to end remedial education at CCNY and other senior colleges. Remedial education is a central pillar of open admissions, which allows any student with a high school education to attend CUNY. The Trustees' plan, if implemented, will keep out tens of thousands of mostly Black and Latino students. Yolanda Moses, City College president, has so far played a willing role in carrying out these attacks.

Go down Moses  
Way down to City Hall



# WHO RULES CUNY?

## A Student's Guide to the Board of Trustees

Just who are the people who have the power to decide whether we can get into school or not?

By Christopher Day

ON MAY 26, 1998 the CUNY Board of Trustees voted to end CUNY's 27 year-long commitment to Open Admissions, the policy that has guaranteed admission to CUNY to any New York High School graduate or GED holder. [That vote was blocked this summer by a temporary injunction successfully sought by CCNY Psychology professor William Crain. The Board, however, could reinstate its decision if the suit ends favorably for the Board.]

Opponents of Open Admissions have argued that it has led to a lowering of academic standards and low graduation rates at CUNY while defenders have pointed to CUNY's leading role in providing a college education to Black and Latino students who have been cheated by the substandard education offered in the New York Public Schools. The Board of Trustees voted to phase out all remedial classes at CUNY Senior Colleges over the next four years. This would force all students in need of any remediation to attend a two-year Community College. Since Mayor Giuliani has declared his intention to dramatically reduce enrollment at the Community Colleges this would mean a de facto end to any semblance of equal access to higher education in New York City.

So who are these men and women mak-

ing decisions about our futures and about the futures of our younger sisters and brothers? Who are these people slamming the door of opportunity in the face of our communities?

Most CUNY students have little or no idea how decisions are made at CUNY or who makes them. The people who make those decisions would prefer to keep it that way. The highest decision-making body at CUNY is the Board of Trustees. The CUNY Board of Trustees consists of ten members appointed by the Governor of the State of New York, currently George Pataki, and five members appointed by Mayor of the City of New York, currently Rudolph Giuliani. There is a single student representative, the President of the University Student Senate, as well as a non-voting faculty representative from the University Faculty Senate.

As appointees of elected officials, the Board of Trustees are, in theory, supposed to represent the interests of the people of New York. In practice, as we shall see, they represent a narrow slice of New York: a financial and political elite that is overwhelmingly hostile to the principle of broad access to higher education to poor and working class people in New York City. What follows is a series of profiles of the members of the Board of Trustees with information on how to contact them and let them know what you think about what they are doing.

### OUR ENEMIES ON OPEN ADMISSIONS

#### HERMAN BADILLO



Mr. Badillo is the Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. He was reappointed to the Board of Trustees by the Governor in 1994. He had served earlier on the Board from 1980 to 1982. In 1970 Badillo was the first Puerto Rican elected to Congress, but he had already long since established himself as a loyal flunky of New York real estate and financial interests. He currently also serves as Special Counsel for Fiscal Oversight of Education on behalf of Giuliani. He is a partner in the law firm of Fischbein, Badillo, Wagner, and Harding which has made a small fortune working as lobbyist for clients who have business with City Hall. Badillo has served as the Mayor's most loyal attack dog on the Board of Trustees and has repeatedly publicly disparaged the university he was supposedly appointed to defend. He was a key supporter of the elimination of Open Admissions and many figures at CUNY have called for his resignation.

Mr. Badillo can be contacted at:  
Fishbein, Badillo, Wagner and Harding  
909 Third Ave. 17th Fl.  
New York NY 10022  
Tel.: (212) 826-2000  
Fax: (212) 826-547-5444

#### SATISH BABBAR



Mr. Babbar was appointed by Mayor Giuliani in 1996. He is also Assistant Commissioner for Technical Affairs for the City's Department of Buildings, and as such totally dependent on the Mayor whose orders he follows.

Mr. Babbar can be contacted at:  
Department of Buildings  
60 Hudson St., 14th Floor  
New York, NY 10013  
Tel.: (212) 312-8324  
Fax: (212) 312-8319

#### JOHN CALANDRA



Mr. Calandra was appointed by Governor Pataki in 1996. Calandra made the formal proposal to eliminate remediation at Senior Colleges that was passed in May. He works for the law firm of McDermott, Will and Emery which specializes in defending the interests of Fortune 500 companies in all forms of litigation. Based on his voting record on the Board of Trustees it is fair to presume that he does not leave his allegiances to this tiny corporate elite at the door when he is supposedly serving the interests of CUNY. Calandra's claims to expertise on educational issues apparently rely on his two

stints as "Principal for a Day" at two schools in the Bronx.

Mr. Calandra can be contacted at:  
McDermott, Will, and Emery  
50 Rockefeller Plaza, 13th Floor  
New York, NY 10020  
Tel.: (212) 547-5489  
Fax: (212) 547-5444

#### KENNETH E. COOK



Mr. Cook was appointed by Governor Pataki in 1997. He voted for the elimination of remediation and generally votes with Paolucci. He is a retired Junior High School Science Teacher.

He can be contacted at:  
404 Hawthorne St.  
Brooklyn NY, 11203  
Tel.: (718) 953-0016

#### ALFRED B. CURTIS JR.



One way the Mayor seems to use to control his appointees to the Board of Trustees is by appointing city employees. Alfred B. Curtis had already demonstrated his loyalty to the Mayor in his capacity as Commissioner for the New York City Department of Youth Services where he presided over the gutting of many community-based youth programs, when he was appointed to the Board of Trustees in 1997. He currently also serves as President and CEO of the United Nations Development Corporation, another position he owes to the Mayor. Mr. Curtis has a long record of loyal work for the financial elite of New York. He worked for five years as Assistant Vice President and Operations Manager for Chemical Bank. He voted for the elimination of remediation.

Mr. Curtis can be contacted at:  
U.N. Development Corporation  
2 United Nations Plaza, 27th Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
Tel.: (212) 888-1618  
Fax: (212) 588-0759

#### RONALD MARINO



Mr. Marino is another shill for Wall Street and real estate interests on the Board of Trustees. Marino is Director in the Public Finance Division of Smith Barney, Inc. and used to serve as Deputy Commissioner in the Office of Development for the Department of Housing Preservation and Development. He voted for the elimination of remediation.

Mr. Marino can be contacted at:  
Smith Barney, Inc.  
390 Greenwich St. 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10013  
Tel.: (212) 723-5643  
Fax: (212) 723-8939

### Target: Stone

One of the vilest villains in CUNY's attempts to cut off educational access (and they are numerous) is Board of Trustee member Richard Stone. Stone, who seems your usual wet noodle liberal, had been wavering for months on ending remediation, before casting the deciding vote against remediation. He declared the vote, "one of the most difficult decisions I have ever made in my life." In sum, Stone, a Columbia University law professor, voted to end remediation at an inner city college system, while his own elite Ivy university continues to offer remediation for comparatively more affluent and better prepared students.

Since Stone teaches just down the street at Columbia University, and since he was the swing vote to end remedial classes, the CCNY Coalition has decided to target him. If you want to make just one call or fax, or write one letter, send it to Stone (contact information with his biography).



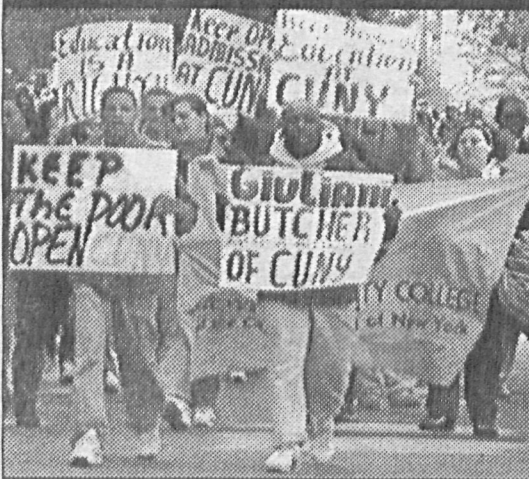
## Leftward Ho!

An anti-corporate rag full of coverage of CUNY, Rudy, and, economies financial and political. This month's issue, a double-issue!, features full coverage of George Steinbrenner's attempt to steal hundreds of millions of taxpayer's money for a new stadium for the Yankees, the most profitable baseball team ever. Subscriptions are \$6.36 for 12 issues (it pays for itself). \$10 helps pay for copies given out on the street. For those of you who can't afford it, stamps will do.

Leftward Ho!  
532 LaGuardia Place #295  
New York, NY 10012

# JOIN ←

## THE CCNY COALITION TO DEFEND OPEN ADMISSIONS



Come to the weekly CCNY Coalition meeting at 8:00 pm every Thursday in NAC 3/201. Help spread the word and organize to defend remedial classes and open admissions to CUNY.

We are a group of students who are organizing and speaking out to save access to education at City College. We believe the current threats to do away with remedial courses and open admissions reflect a racist view that people of color don't have the right to education. Think about it - politicians and CUNY administrators are trying to bring educational apartheid to our city.

**ANNE ATTURA PAOLUCCI**

Ms. Paolucci is the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and was appointed by Governor Pataki in 1996. She is the Director of the Doctor of Arts Degree Program in English at the private St. Johns University in Queens. While she is a conservative academic, she is not considered as rabid as some of the other Trustees. Paolucci backed an earlier proposal by CUNY Chancellor Kimmich that would have had restricted entrance to CUNY, but less severely than the plan that was passed in May with the backing of Mayor Giuliani. Paolucci voted for the Mayor's plan as well.



Ms. Paolucci can be contacted at:

166-25 Powells Cove Blvd.  
Beechhurst, NY 11357  
Tel.: (718) 767-8380  
Fax: (212) 794-5678

**GEORGE J. RIOS**

Another appointee of the Mayor who depends on him for his job, Mr. Rios is also Commissioner of the City's Department of Records and Information Services.

He was appointed to the Board of Trustees in 1996. He is a former Corporate Officer at The Equitable and a former Deputy Director of the do-nothing Civilian Complaint Review Board of the New York Police Department. He is a former Public Affairs Representative of Con Edison, a former Director of the East Harlem Redevelopment project. He has sat on a wide variety of boards of various other organizations. Some things apparently run thicker than blood. George J. Rios has had a son attending City College while he has faithfully participated in the step-by-step destruction of that institution by the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Rios can be contacted at:

Department of Records and Information Services  
31 Chambers St. Room 305  
New York, NY 10007  
Tel.: (212) 788-8607  
Fax: (212) 788-8614

**NILDA SOTO RUIZ**

Ms. Ruiz has worked in the past as an instructor in bilingual education theory and practice at Hunter College. She has worked for thirty years a teacher and then administrator for the New York City Public Schools. Tens of thousands of public school students who were educated under her watch will be denied admission to CUNY if the resolution she voted for survives its challenges in the courts. But Ms. Ruiz's accomplishments as an educator and administrator may not be the primary reason she was appointed to the Board of Trustees by Governor Pataki in 1996. Ms. Ruiz is the wife of Israel Ruiz who challenged Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer a couple years back. Mr. Ruiz was Pataki's college roommate.



Ms. Ruiz can be contacted at:

Board of Education of The City of New York  
Office of Monitoring and School Improvement  
110 Livingston St. Room 303  
Brooklyn NY 11201  
Tel.: (718) 935-3281  
Fax: (718) 935-5689

**RICHARD B. STONE**

Mr. Stone is currently a Professor of Tax Law at Columbia University. He was an associate in the Washington law firm of Covington and Burling before he worked as Assistant to the Solicitor General of the U.S. Department of Justice in the Nixon Administration and later as Tax Counsel for the law firm of Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen and Hamilton. He has served in a variety of positions in Jewish community organizations. He was appointed to the Trustees by Mayor Giu-

liani in 1996.

Mr. Stone can be contacted at:

Sunrise Securities Corp.  
135 East 57th St. 11th Floor  
New York, NY 10022  
Tel.: (212) 799-2413  
Fax: (212) 421-5944

**FRIENDS (OF A SORT) ON OPEN ADMISSIONS****MISANOOR R. BISWAS**

Mr. Biswas is ostensibly the representative of CUNY students on the Board of Trustees by virtue of his position as President of the University Student Senate (USS), a

position he is only eligible for as a consequence of being the USS delegate from the Graduate Student Council of City College. When the election that put him in THAT position was overturned in an effort to keep Open Admissions activists out of the Graduate Student Council, Biswas somehow retained his position as USS President. While he said some dreadful things to the media about remediation, Biswas did the right thing and voted against its elimination last May. Generally Biswas seems bewildered in his position and frequently abstains from important votes, as he did when the Board of Trustees voted to merge the CCNY School of Education into the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences over the objections of the School of Education.

Mr. Mizanoor can be contacted at:

University Student Senate  
101 West 31st St. suite 900  
New York, NY 10001

**EDITH EVERETT**

Ms. Everett was appointed by the Governor in 1976. She is Senior Vice President of Gruntal and Co., Inc., a member firm of the New York Stock Exchange. She is on the boards of The Council on Economic Priorities, Human Rights Watch and several Jewish organizations and is an alumna of Brooklyn College. She missed the vote on remediation but was apparently ready to fly back from Israel if there was any chance of a close vote. There wasn't and she didn't.



Ms. Everett can be contacted at:

Gruntal and Company, Inc.  
650 Madison Ave. 10th Floor  
New York, NY 10022

**JOHN MORNING**

John Morning is a Director of the Dime Savings Bank. He also sits on the boards of a variety of other educational and cultural institutions including the Brooklyn Academy of music and the Museum of Modern Art. He opposed the Mayors initiative.

He can be contacted at:

333 East 45th St.  
New York, NY 10017  
Tel.: (212) 687-1914

**JAMES P. MURPHY**

Mr. Murphy is the former Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. He was appointed by the Governor in 1974. He is a former Executive Vice President and Director for Public Policy and External Relations of the Fleet Financial Group, Inc., and before that was Vice President for Public and Urban Affairs at Chemical Bank. He currently serves as a consultant for Fleet Financial Group. He opposed the elimination of remediation at CUNY.



Mr. Murphy can be contacted at:

1150 Park Ave. Apt. 15F  
New York, NY 10128  
Tel.: (212) 860-7555

**BERNARD SOHMER**

Mr. Sohmer, a former CCNY administra-



tor, sits on the Board of Trustees as Chair of the University Faculty Senate. He does not have a vote. He is a Professor of Mathematics at City College.

He can be contacted at:

University Faculty Senate  
535 East 80th St.,  
New York, NY 10021  
Tel.: (212) 794-5538  
Fax: (212) 794-5508

**UNKNOWN****KATHLEEN M. PESILE**

Whether Ms. Pesile will be a friend or an enemy of CUNY students on the question of Open Admissions is not known because she was only appointed to the Board in June of this year by Governor Pataki. Governor Pataki was apparently concerned that the financial sector of the economy was underrepresented on the Board of Trustees when he appointed Ms. Pesile. Ms. Pesile is the former Vice President for Global Markets and Mergers and Acquisitions at J.P. Morgan & Co. from 1986 to 1993. She is also the former Chairperson of the American Bankers Association. Ms. Pesile current-



ly heads her own financial services firm, Pesile Financial Group.

Ms. Pesile can be contacted at:

101 Fieldcrest Ave., Suite 601  
Edison, NJ 08837  
Tel.: (732) 417-2413  
Fax: (732) 417-0577

**SUPPLEMENT**

VOTE AND CONTACT NUMBERS NOT KNOWN

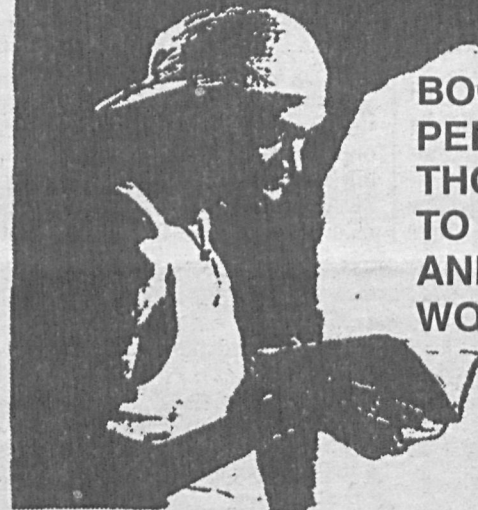
**MICHAEL C. CRIMMONS**

Appointed by the Governor in 1996. He has worked extensively in higher education. In 1988 he assumed his current position as Director of the University Apostolate and

Coordinator of Campus Ministry of the Archdiocese of New York; from 1988-91 he also served as Chaplain at the College of Mt. St. Vincent in Riverdale. Since 1990 he has been Associate Vicar for Education of the Archdiocese. He has served as Pastor of St. Malachy's, the Actors' Chapel, since 1991. From 1970-88 he served as Associate Pastor in several Manhattan parishes. A Manhattan resident, Rev. Crimmons graduated from Georgetown School of Foreign Service and received a Masters of Divinity from St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers and an M.A. in Religious Studies from St. Joseph's Seminary and College.

**It's Right to Rebel!**

--Mao Tsetung



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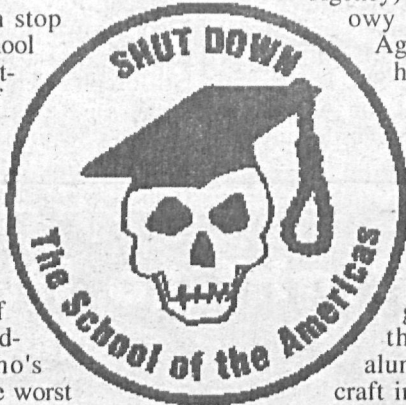
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# School of the Americas Terrorizes Latin Americans

By Errol Schweizer

IMAGINE THIS. Deep inside another country there exists a school whose sole purpose is to educate and train foreign soldiers and police in the methods of psychological warfare, torture, assassination and "low-intensity warfare." Imagine if graduates of this school had committed mass murders, abductions, fixed elections, and deposed democratically elected governments. Imagine if most of their victims were teachers, religious workers, student leaders, union organizers and peasants. And imagine, because of their deep connections to influential politicians of a world superpower, many of the graduates were immune to prosecution and many of the crimes they committed went unsolved.

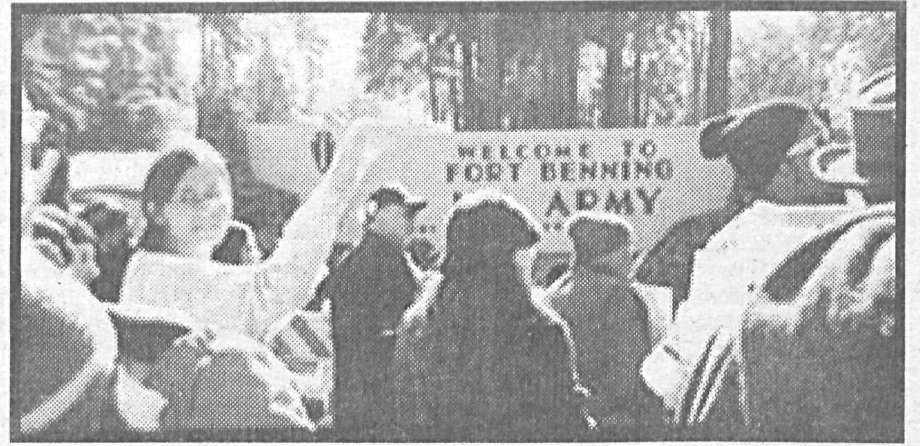
Well, now you can stop imagining. Such a school exists and it is not located in the mountains of Siberia or in the Libyan deserts. It is right here in the United States, in an army base in Columbus, Georgia called Fort Benning. Its name is the School of the Americas. Its graduates read like a who's who list of some of the worst criminals and torturers this side of Nazi Germany: Roberto "Blowtorch Bob" D'Aubuisson, the Salvadoran general responsible for the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero and many others; Manuel Noriega, ex-Panamanian dictator and international drug dealer; former



Bolivian dictator Hugo Banzer, who seized power in a violent 1971 coup; 10 of 12 Salvadoran officers responsible for the El Mozote massacre, which left up to a thousand peasants dead; and thousands of police and army officers responsible for heinous human rights violations in Colombia, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Honduras, Guatemala, Chile and El Salvador. These graduates are the point-men for U.S. foreign policy, the go-to-guys who make sure that the whims of Wall Street executives are followed in lock step. They are trained to effectively nullify any opposition.

This academy, called the "School of the Assassins" by its critics, is funded by American tax dollars and hires instructors from the ranks of the U.S. armed forces and various intelligence agencies, such as the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) and the even more shadowy NSA (National Security Agency). These instructors have had first hand "experience" in the methods they teach. The SOA has produced over 60,000 graduates; they have been responsible for the suffering of millions in Latin America. Over 2,000 officers graduate every year, with the majority of recent alumni now practicing their craft in the mountains of Chiapas and the jungles of Colombia.

Although the SOA continually gets its funding approved by Congress, every year opposition to it grows. Just this year, a bill that would eliminate funding to the SOA was barely voted down in Congress. And on November 22, 1,000 people have



An earlier protest at the School of the Americas in Georgia, demanding that it be shut down.

pledged to enter Fort Benning in protest of the SOA, performing civil disobedience in a solemn funeral procession in order to speak out for SOA victims. Every year around this time, thousands of activists of all ages and backgrounds gather at the gate of this sprawling military complex to voice their opposition to the SOA.

Many of the activists involved in this campaign have sacrificed much of their own lives to shut down the school. One organizer and leader, a Maryknoll priest named Father Roy Bourgeois, has spent the better part of the last six years in prison, locked up for trespassing into Fort Benning time and time again. Over 20 other activists have served six month prison sentences for "crossing the line" into the base a second time. These people who have given so much of themselves are not typical activists; they are religiously pious men and women, many over age 50, many of them WWII, Korean War and Vietnam War veterans, many

of them loving parents and grandparents. All of them are deeply opposed to what is taught at the SOA and are dedicated to seeing shut down for good.

Not all of those gathered at Fort Benning on November 22 will risk arrest; many will be part of a thousands-strong vigil outside the gate to support the marchers. Many will go down to Georgia on November 20 to paint banners, contact the media and do other prep work for the march; but the organizers need all the help they can get. Now is the time to act, with federal attention being drawn to a stronger and more vocal resistance. If you are interested in joining the struggle, check out <http://www.soaw.org>, the website of the School of the Americas Watch, a non-profit group that organizes the demo every year. Contact them for buses in your area going down to Georgia on November 20-22 so they can finally close the School of the Assassins. ■

## Sharpton continued

Psychology professor William Crain.

### WHO IS AL SHARPTON?

AL SHARPTON is a reverend and a grassroots activist. He has a long history of standing up against the oppression and discrimination of Black people. From Howard Beach, to Bensonhurst, to the Giuliani-era rash of Black police brutality victims, to the City University of New York, to the Million Youth March, Al Sharpton is consistently a presence in struggles against white supremacist institutions and individuals.

Rev. Al Sharpton is also, more recently, a politician. He attempted to get the Democratic Party's nomination for Mayor of New York City in 1997, failing to force a runoff with Ruth Messinger by only a few votes. He also ran for the Democratic Party's nomination for U.S. Senate a few years earlier, taking a surprisingly large portion of the vote.

Sharpton's recent association with the Democratic Party departs from his prior independence as an activist. While he has embraced some Democratic candidates that are not very progressive (like Chuck Schumer and Maryland Gov. Parris Glendening), he does not spare anyone criticism for taking the wrong stand on an issue of social justice.

Al Sharpton is one of the few recognized progressive leaders in the Black community. His vocal support of Open Admissions at CUNY will help to rally the Black community to the movement for access to education, and for this he has provided an invaluable service to the students of City College.

While Sharpton has entered the ring of electoral politics, he has not abandoned the mass movement to do so. For example, in his recent run for mayor, a vote for Sharpton was explicitly seen as a vote against the police brutality of the NYPD

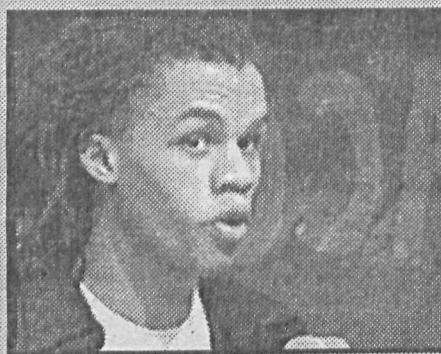
and in support of Abner Louima, the Haitian victim of NYPD torture. Sharpton used his campaign to force all the candidates to speak to the issue of police brutality under Giuliani. Even while he operates in the Democratic Party, Al Sharpton can still sometimes play a role in helping to build an independent mass movement for progressive social change in New York.

### BUILDING BLACK UNITY IN SUPPORT OF OPEN ADMISSIONS

THE EVENT on October 22 brought together some of the main Black leaders at CCNY, past and present, as well as many Black students and students of other nationalities. Rev. Sharpton embraced Prof. Leonard Jeffries and James Smalls, both of whom have played major roles in creating and building both Open Admissions and Black Studies at CCNY. Smalls criticized the organizers of the event for not highlighting the struggle to save CCNY's embattled Black Studies Department, the future of which is still under litigation after Pres. Moses's dismantling of it in 1995. He pointed out that the question of access to education is directly linked to the question of what people are being educated about once they get here; Black Studies was created as a result of the same movement that brought Open Admissions.

### BLACK UNITY ON CAMPUS

THE NEED for Black unity on campus came out clearly during the event. Shannon Arrington, former president of ROOTS Pan African Student Organization, pointed out the necessity for Black people to unite in order to effectively take on any issue such as open admissions in coalition with other people. While there are multiple organizations for Black students at CCNY, there is not one umbrella organization that unites all Black students. At most campuses across the country there is a Black Student Union (BSU) that plays this role. The



Above, Reverend Sharpton greeting City College students after forum. Right, David Thurston moderates discussion on Open Admissions. Far right, student speaks out during open mic.

absence of such a group at CCNY clearly weakens any attempt to give voice to concerns of CCNY's Black community; this is particularly clear in the struggle to save Open Admissions.

### THE STRUGGLE GOES ON...

THE STRUGGLE over remedial classes and

open admissions is not going to go away. The forum on October 22 was one step in the ongoing effort to mobilize CCNY students to take control over our educational future. By bringing progressive Black leaders and students together in dialogue, the event moved us forward in that struggle. ■



## Suker punished continued

eyewitnesses, when the security guard came about 10 minutes later, Suker got off the bus, and that was the end of the story—or so it seemed. A week later, Suker received a certified letter from V.P. for Student Affairs Thomas Morales, charging him with violating four counts of the Henderson Rules in the bus incident, and convening a judicial hearing where Suker would face suspension.

### WHY DAVID SUKER?

SUKER IS well known by the administration for the truth he brought and continues to bring to light—the fact that the CCNY administration, including President Yolanda Moses, is in support of gutting access to education at CCNY. But Suker has played a much deeper role than just a political activist at CCNY. For the past four years, David Suker has been a key part of the fabric of student life at City College. He has devoted almost every waking hour of his time to building political and cultural activities on campus.

Suker was a founder of the CCNY Coalition to Stop the Cuts in 1995. He almost single-handedly resuscitated the Graduate Student Council from a lifeless body to the vibrant and active institution it is today. He helped numerous students form cultural clubs and receive funding for their activities from the unwieldy CCNY bureaucracy. He helped new slates get elected to the undergraduate Day Student Government. He was a key organizer of events such as the Talent and Fashion Show last year and is a fixture at events by clubs such as Salsa-Mambo Club, African Dance Association, and Hip Hop Club. He has helped out behind the scenes at almost every cultural and social event at CCNY for the last four years.

He has also been a main organizer in every CUNY-wide political event since 1995. He was key in the 1995 and 1996 citywide protests of thousands of students against tuition hikes and budget cuts. He was a founding member of 1995's CUNY Coalition and the CUNYwide SLAM network founded in 1996. He played a lead role in the group Students for a New USS (SNUSS), which attempted to bring new blood into the usually corrupt CUNYwide student government in 1996, and was partially successful. He attended every demonstration against the Board of Trustees last spring, and was arrested at a march protesting Herman Badillo.

In the midst of all of this he became a



Vice President Morales pleased at driving out yet another student from CCNY.

father, and has played an active role in raising his daughter, Serenity, who has also become a fixture on campus.

Finally, Suker is involved in two lawsuits against CUNY. He is a plaintiff in the lawsuit against CCNY for spying on activists last spring with a hidden surveillance camera outside of NAC 3/201. This lawsuit brought great embarrassment to CCNY officials in the press. Second, Suker is a plaintiff in the lawsuit filed by Prof. Crain that blocked CUNY's attempt to end remedial classes in the senior colleges.

These lawsuits seem to be the straw that broke the camel's back for CUNY's administration, who likely gave a green light to CCNY officials to concoct an incident to once and for all get David Suker out of commission as a student activist. The ruling that was brought down—prohibiting him from participating in student government or clubs—seems tailored precisely to silence his activism.

### CCNY'S KANGAROO COURTS

SUKER HAS BEEN the main target of the Henderson Rules at CCNY since 1995, but these "rules" give administrators a blunt tool with which to smack whoever they deem threatening.

The Henderson Rules are enforced by an undemocratic and shadowy body called the Faculty-Student Disciplinary Committee. This committee is hand-picked by V.P. for Student Affairs Thomas Morales. At Suker's hearing, members of the public were forced to sit outside while the committee deliberated, until they were invited in one-by-one to give testimony. *The Messenger* was told by the committee chair that a transcript of the hearing would not be made available

to the student press. According to Suker, all testimony about the pattern of administration harassment against him was ruled out of order, while V.P. Morales was allowed to give committee members a copy of Suker's past disciplinary record and was allowed to verbally malign Suker's character. Unsurprisingly, this committee came up with a guilty verdict and a harsh punishment.

Any facade of an unbiased hearing went out the window when V.P. Morales exited the room after the hearing laughing, saying, "I hope you have some tissues for David!" Then when this reporter (who was also a witness) asked Morales what the next step in the judicial process was, Morales replied, "I hope you never have to find out!"

### ASSAULT ON STUDENT RIGHTS

THE ATTACK on Suker is one of the latest attempts by the administration to silence students organizing to save their school. In the recent past, the administration's actions have included bugging NAC room 3/201, where student organizers discussed plans, and hiring cops to arrest and mistreat about 50 CUNY students who went on hunger strike in 1995 at City College to protest the proposed budget cuts and tuition hike.

Presently the administration has declared, over the heads of Day Student Government representatives and against the school's governance charter, a new poster policy—limiting flyers for campus events to just a few bulletin boards in inconvenient locations.

This policy effectively impedes the ability of students to call actions on a mass level and, of course, political groups, especially those fighting to defend open admissions, have been targeted first. Posters put up by the campus radio station for a party were also removed. Meanwhile, posters put up by an IBM representative two weeks ago were left unmolested. The CCNY administration has made clear what "truth" it will allow in the open and which it will fight to silence.

It is not surprising that the administration is taking a hard line against students who attempt to organize, especially now when attacks are coming down on working people generally from lay-offs to cuts in health care, education and social services we have fought to create. We can not and must not allow them to succeed in their efforts to silence us. Students must defend David Suker's right to expose the truth without punitive repercussions and protect our right as students to defend our school. ■

would look bad if she ever decided to run for city council. But the GSC has a large budget surplus which we can tap into if we go a bit over-budget. This is a clear example of Flores putting her personal political ambitions ahead of the interests of the graduate students who worked for the GSC, and then were not paid for those hours.

### DON'T LET FLORES DIVIDE THE GSC

THE ONLY WAY Flores can continue her personal reign is to keep everyone else divided. She cannot be allowed to do that. Do not allow her to spread rumors about council members without telling you exactly who said or did the thing she is claiming, and when they said it and what the context was. Do not let her buy your political support by promising graduate student monies in return for your support.

I want to see a GSC that (1) meets regularly, (2) plays an active role in fighting for student power and increased access to education at CCNY, and (3) supports activities that help students succeed in their education. With Flores in a position of power, these things will not happen.

The GSC should not be in the business of sending GSC members on trips to Puerto Rico and Albany where Flores went in the middle of the last year, or anywhere else to hob-nob with politicians. We should not be spending \$5,000 on receptions that less than 50 students will attend. We should not be spending thousands of dollars on programs to honor administrators and security guards who make it more difficult for students to do activities on campus. We should not let the chair of the council—whoever it may be—spend GSC money to buy allies and advance their own political career. Those days must end. ■

## GSC coup continued

Ms. Flores didn't call meetings because she knew her pet projects would be voted down, and that projects she didn't like would get voted in. So she ran the Council improperly and continued to fund activities through a loophole that allows the chair of the Council to spend up to \$150 in "petty cash" without approval from the Council. So Ms. Flores paid for activities she supported (that weren't approved by the GSC) by writing out disbursements for \$150, but then other activities couldn't be passed because there was no meeting to vote on them. The most ridiculous example of her using petty cash for herself was that she spent \$600 on tutoring for Psychology students (including, of course, herself) by writing four separate disbursements for \$150 each. This is but one example.

### BUYING ALLIES WITH GSC MONEY

Ms. FLORES would also try to buy allies with the GSC's money using this same "petty cash" loophole. She would repeatedly offer people \$20, \$50 or other amounts of money to type memos for her, do her research for her classes, etc. She also paid people to work at her pet events like the City Men award, in an attempt to buy peoples' loyalty. I know because she did it to me when I was a new student last fall. She paid me to type memos and to work at her City Men ceremony. She also asked me to do research for her for a Psychology paper. Soon I came to realize she was using me and trying to buy my political loyalty. This is unacceptable, and is

revolting coming from a person who now suddenly likes to talk about "ethics" and criticize other people for supposedly being "unethical". Her practices give her no room to throw around allegations about ethics.

Ms. Flores also repeatedly refused to sign disbursements to allocate money to activities that the GSC had already approved, and therefore she was obligated to sign. (The GSC Chair has to sign off on any GSC expenditure of funds). This was a blatant abuse of her powers—the chair does not set GSC policies, but only carries out the will of the general body. She repeatedly refused to sign expenditures for the graduate student newspaper unless she was able to see the entire content of the newspaper first. But she was not charged with editing or censoring the paper—only with signing the bureaucratic paperwork to pay for an expense that the GSC had already approved.

Ms. Flores also would use her position as chair (which allowed her to sit on various university funding committees) to try to sabotage programs and projects of people who didn't go along with her. In meetings that I attended, she argued to cut funding from the graduate student newspaper, from the Pre-University Program, and other graduate student-run activities. She also arbitrarily refused to sign the paychecks of all GSC employees last spring at the end of the semester.

At the end of last year, Ms. Flores started saying that she wanted to run for a City Council seat in Queens. That's fine. But she let her future personal political ambitions come before the good of the GSC and graduate students. She refused to sign for GSC staff's paychecks at the end of last spring because she was afraid it would put the GSC over-budget, which she thought

# MY NEIGHBORHOOD



FREE WRITING  
BY EBONNIE  
ROBINSON



PHOTO: ROY DECARAVA "TWO MEN, ONE WORKING, ONE SITTING. 1987"

My neighborhood is not all that bad. Take it from me, because I've lived there most of my life. Even though the drug dealers live down the hall from me my neighborhood's not all that bad. Even though the homeless people sleep by my door my neighborhood's not all that bad. Even though a video store down the block, that sells pornography tapes, my neighborhood's not all that bad. Even though shooting goes on in the children's playground my neighborhood's not all that bad. Even though a lot of the girls have sex with men old enough to be their grandfather my neighborhood's not all that bad. Even though someone was raped in their apartment in my building my neighborhood is not all that bad. Even though the people have animosity towards you and malign you behind your back my neighborhood's not all that bad. Even though her man wants you, he tries to kick it with you, and you brush him off my neighborhood's not all that bad. Even though your male friend tells you how sexy you are and knows you're going to church my neighborhood's not all that bad. In my neighborhood I've seen people shot at a block party, I wasn't hurt, my neighborhood's not that bad. I'm alive and my family's well, my neighborhoods not all that bad.



## The Boss Tries to Steal a Home

**Mayor Giuliani wants to give what George Steinbrenner craves: hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to build a new stadium in Manhattan. Why the Giuliani-to-Steinbrenner double play needs to be broken up.**

**G**EORGE "THE BOSS" Steinbrenner III, the New York Yankees' principal owner, wants to move the team from Yankee Stadium in the Bronx to a new, to-be-built stadium on Manhattan's Upper West Side. The team's Yankee Stadium lease with the City ends in 2002.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, often a guest in the owner's box at the Stadium, wants to hand over hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars to Steinbrenner to help build the new stadium. Estimates put the price at over \$1 billion for a dual-use stadium and \$800 million for a baseball-only venue. The pricetag would likely balloon with the costs of acquiring the site and building new direct highway ramps.

**T**HIS PAST APRIL, a 500-pound expansion joint fell from underneath the left field tier boxes at a then-empty Yankee Stadium. The joint's crash signaled another, more intense round of grandstanding on the part of proponents of a new stadium for the Yankees.

"[W]e've got to be sure it doesn't happen again. If that means a new stadium, we'll have to see," said a deceptively understated Steinbrenner. For a decade Steinbrenner has threatened to move the Yankees unless a new stadium is built. The Boss has spoken with New Jersey officials about a new baseball stadium near Giants Stadium in East Rutherford. "If someone was sitting there at the time that beam came down, that person would now be dead," a perceptive Giuliani said at a press conference at the stadium. "It does indicate the stadium is old."

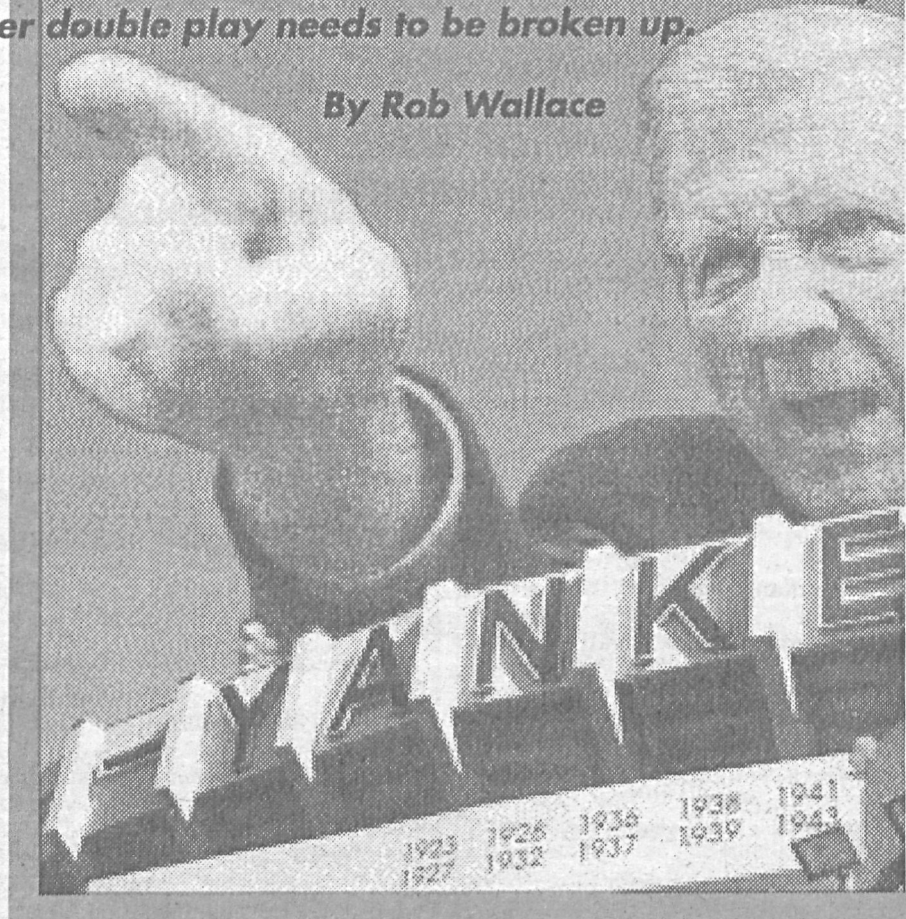
In earlier comments, Giuliani was less circumspect in his support for a new stadium for the Yankees: "I think [Steinbrenner's] right that they are entitled to a new stadium, and I believe the Mets are entitled to a new stadium." Just two weeks after the 500-pound joint crash-landed, the Mets announced a proposal for their own new stadium to be built near Shea Stadium, their present home in Flushing, Queens. The proposed Mets stadium, with retractable roof and field, would cost \$500 million. The Mets would like the public to cover 75% of the stadium's costs.

That same April Giuliani outlined a proposal to raise \$600 million to help build stadiums for both the Yankees and Mets. The money would be taken from the city's commercial rent tax and placed into a public corporation called the New York City Sports Facilities Corporation. From there the money would be dispensed toward building the stadiums. The commercial rent tax is paid by 11,000 large corporations below 96th Street in Manhattan that pay annual rents of over \$100,000. The tax is expected to produce \$600 million in City revenues through the years 2000, 2001, and 2002. The tax would thereafter be phased out for good.

Giuliani's plan represents an attempt to avoid incurring more City debt. Borrowing money from the rich—rather than taxing the rich—is the most common way cities generate cash needed for new major infrastructure projects or renovations. Cities issue bonds and repay their lenders later with interest. The problem is New York City's debt service already accounts for 9% of its operating budget and is likely to expand to 11% by 2002. According to New York's Independent Budget Office, a debt margin exceeding 10% is considered financially risky for a city.

So instead, Giuliani wants to try the second way of financing stadiums—pay-as-you-go. Money would be given to the Facilities Corporation only as it's collected from the commercial rent tax.

But pay-as-you-go also incurs debts. Giuliani points out pay-as-you-go would not require new taxes. But when revenues



By Rob Wallace

aren't collected, or in this case when they are diverted toward funding stadiums, they can't be used for services that many New Yorkers need. That \$600 million, if put toward the stadiums, can't be used for renovating subways, keeping hospitals open, or helping restore the \$1.3 billion in cuts Giuliani ripped through City schools.

Giuliani's pay-as-you-go plan highlights another problem. Why is the commercial rent tax being phased out anyway? Why are some of the richest corporations in the world receiving yet another tax break? Aren't these the very corporations that racked up huge profits the last ten years by cutting into working people's salaries and benefits? Moreover, many of these large corporations already received tax breaks from Giuliani.

Some examples: In 1994 Viacom, Inc. received a \$15 million tax deal for its new 44th Street headquarters. Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette, a subsidiary of Equitable Companies, took in \$29.5 million in tax breaks after threatening, like the Yankees, to move its company from New York. The following year Equitable scored a \$9.3 million tax deal. In 1996 the City coughed up \$6.76 million, along with \$4 million from New York State, to Conde Nast for its new 42nd Street headquarters after the publishing conglomerate threatened to move outside the city. Bear Stearns, the global investment bank, received a \$75 million break after promising not to move out of New York for the next 50 years.

Such prioritization on the part of the mayor—tax breaks for the rich, budget cuts for social services—begs the question why Steinbrenner is "entitled"—Giuliani's word—to a new stadium. Aren't Steinbrenner's Yankees one of the richest sports franchises in the world? How did we get to the point where city officials are ready, even delirious, to handover millions in public dollars to The Boss? Where would any of these companies extorting tax breaks and other "corporate retention" deals from the City go anyway? To that center of the media world, Bayonne, New Jersey?

**T**HE GEOGRAPHIC location of its home, its fiscal arrangements with the City, and the extraordinary success of the team over the decades have contributed to making the Yankees the richest team in baseball. According to *Financial World*,

the team was worth an estimated \$241 million in 1997. But it may be worth more. Cablevision, which broadcasts many of the Yankee games and already owns the Rangers and the Knicks, is currently making a pitch to buy the Yankees for \$650 million.

According to Mark Rosentraub, author of *Major League Losers: The Real Costs of Sports and Who's Paying for It*, the Yankees raked in \$28 million more than any other Major League Baseball (MLB) team in 1996, the last year team earnings data are available. With its unprecedented 12-year, \$500 million cable and TV contract, the Yankees organization can afford one of the costliest team payrolls and still "settle" for one of MLB's highest profit margins.

According to Rosentraub, even without any taxpayer money whatsoever, the Yankees organization could build a new stadium that costs as much as \$500 million and still make profits between \$7.4 million and \$31.7 million a year. But with Giuliani's proposal, a new West Side stadium would be even more of a no-risk proposition for the Yankees. Rosentraub says if the Yankees took up \$300 million of the costs for a \$1 billion stadium, as they have indicated they are willing to do, they could take out a \$300 million loan at 8% interest over 30 years to cover their share. The Yanks would then end up coughing up \$26.7 million a year to pay back the loan, less than half of the \$60 million in expected additional profit from the new stadium.

Despite his team's wealth, Steinbrenner wants a new stadium to increase gate receipts. Earlier this year Steinbrenner complained fans weren't supporting the Bronx Stadium even with a winning team. Caught off guard by a question from radio morning host Don Imus on WFAN in July, Steinbrenner promised he wouldn't move the Yankees if attendance hit three million. The Yankees just missed the three million mark this season.

A source inside the Yankees told 1010 WINS, the newsradio station, that after his WFAN interview, Steinbrenner directed the Stadium's ticket office to refrain from promoting Yankee ticket sales as it had done in the past. This was Steinbrenner's way of keeping his promise; to assure the three million mark would never be reached. What a creep.

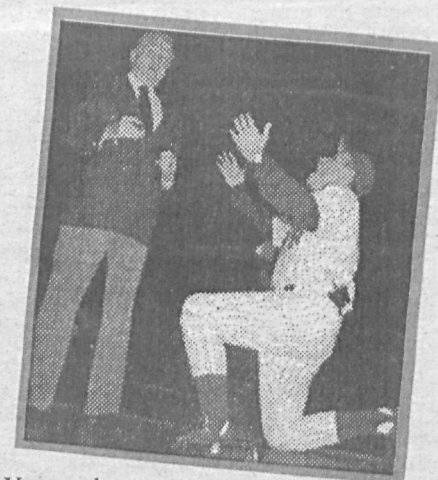
A new stadium with 200 luxury suites, each at \$150,000 rent per year, would

result in some \$30 million in revenues for suites alone. The current stadium has 19 suites. It also "only" has 6,600 club seats at \$45 per game. Club seats are more comfortable than general admission seats and have waitstaff service. At a new stadium additional club seats could be added, and at a higher price. As at new stadiums in Cleveland, Baltimore, and Arlington, Texas, ticket prices at a new Yankee Stadium would increase. New York City residents would therefore be subsidizing a stadium only the affluent and corporate promotions departments could afford.

Already Yankee Stadium increasingly services affluent and suburban fans, in what *ESPN Sportzine* characterizes as a national trend. A report issued this September by the Independent Budget Office included results of a fan survey conducted at Yankee and Shea stadiums. At Yankee Stadium, only 33% of fans came from the five boroughs (only 6% from the Bronx). A zip code analysis of survey respondents showed city Yankee fans averaged \$48,955 in household incomes, while those from elsewhere, the great majority, earned \$63,662. Shea attendees displayed similar characteristics.

How then do sports leagues get public officials like Giuliani to kow-tow to their whims? The leagues manipulate supply against demand. Despite the competition that occurs between the base lines, Major League Baseball is a monopoly. No other baseball league operates in competition with MLB. As a monopoly, Rosentraub notes, MLB can make sure fewer teams exist than cities, pressuring municipal governments to compete with each other. The cities must offer subsidies in order to attract teams away from other cities. It often leads to a bidding war that collapses already strained city budgets.

The problem for the Yankees is the New York market's uniqueness. Even as the Yankees share New



**Y**ork with the Mets, the market comprises 19.8 million people in the city and the surrounding suburbs, by far greater than any city in the country. The Yankees took in \$69.8 million in TV and radio revenues, first in MLB. The Mets were third, after the Los Angeles Dodgers, with \$30.9 million. No other market in the country could possibly provide Steinbrenner the stratospheric profits the Yankees earn. Huge, virgin regional markets no longer exist, as was the case in the 1950s when the Dodgers and Giants left New York for California. There is then no where else to go. In other words, the Yankees need New York. Steinbrenner is not in a position to threaten the New York area with abandonment.

**H**OW DO we keep the extortion sports team owners exact around the country from happening here ever? Two permanent solutions come to mind for New York. One, the City could just outright buy the Yankees. As a public corporation, the team could still profit enough to attract the best ballplayers and lower ticket and beer prices. A second possibility is to open Yankee ownership to Yankee fans.

In sum, the question shouldn't be how much more profit can we help Steinbrenner make. The question should be how can we make the Yankees New York City's own.