

Wednesday

STATE NEWS

East Lansing, Michigan

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10c

Partly . . .

. . . cloudy and warmer
with a high temperature
near 60. Fair tonight.

ATL Dept. In Uproar Over Call For Firing

By ANDREW MOLLISON
State News Executive Reporter

Cross currents of controversy swirl through the American Thought and Language Dept. as its members discuss administrative authority, artistic and academic freedom, and the rights of non-tenured faculty members.

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Three non-tenured instructors, two of them closely connected with *Zeitgeist* magazine, learned Friday and Monday that their contracts will probably be terminated in August.

William Gary Groat, John Kenneth Lawless, and Robert S. Fogarty were told that

the ATL department's elected advisory committee, the ATL chairman and the dean of the University College recommended that they not be rehired.

The three men say that they cannot find out why.

The department's six-man advisory committee, which voted in a secret ballot to recommend the three firings, also agreed not to discuss the decision until it has been confirmed by the Board of Trustees.

Sources close to the committee indicate that the committee split 4-2 against Groat and Lawless, and possibly 3-3 on Fogarty.

All day Tuesday faculty members filed one by one into the office of department chairman T. Ben Strandness to urge that the committee reconvene.

Strandness told a reporter, "Frankly, the whole matter is still being processed. It's hard to pass the buck to the dean."

University College Dean Edward A. Carlin said that he had already confirmed the recommendations and sent them on to the Provost's office.

"They've never turned down my recommendations yet," Carlin said.

The recommendations must, according to University regulations, be acted upon by the Board of Trustees before Dec. 15. Board approval of central administration recommendations is considered to be *pro forma*.

The internal pressures which are now building up within the ATL department are partly due to the manner in which news of the terminations was spread.

Groat was the first to learn of his dismissal. Alerted by rumors that he was about to be fired, Groat, at Strandness' urging, went to Carlin Friday.

Carlin confirmed the rumors.

Groat, editorial adviser to *Zeitgeist*, an

off-campus publication which arouses a great deal of controversy, thought that his connection with the magazine had something to do with his firing.

So did others, apparently. A note was posted on the ATL bulletin board Monday morning. It charged that "presumably *Zeitgeist*, 'boat-rocker,' 'unfriendly cuss,' and 'insufficient progress on Ph.D.' were involved."

The note further stated: "The customary procedures on Ph.D. candidates has been to warn them at the beginning of their third reappointment that they must have the degree by the sixth or seventh year." Groat, after graduating magna cum laude from Western Michigan University in 1957, received his M.A. in English from the University of Wyoming in 1959.

He was an English instructor for one

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ATL controversy

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additional year at Wyoming, and from September 1960 to June 1963 he was a graduate assistant in English at Northwestern University.

While at Northwestern he completed preliminary work on his Ph.D. He came to Michigan State in 1963 on a two-year contract running through 1965. The contract was renewed in 1964 for another two years through Aug., '67.

The note on the ATL bulletin board defended Zeitgeist's "intellectual and emotional commitment to youth and literature," and asked concerned faculty members to sign.

Seventeen signatures had been appended to the statement by 5 p.m. Monday, despite an adjoining memo from Strandness which said that the statement was misleading.

Lawless, meanwhile, also went to see Dean Carlin, who told Lawless Monday morning that he, too, had been recommended for termination of contract.

Lawless has had several poems in Zeitgeist. A short story by him in the summer issue of Zeitgeist was vigorously attacked and praised by local social and literary critics.

Lawless joined the ATL faculty one year ago, on a two-year contract. He has an A.B. in Social Science from Albany State (1961) and a M.A. in American history from the University of Pittsburgh (1962).

A graduate assistant at Pittsburgh teaching American history during the 1963-65 school year, he was a Mellon Fellow from 1963 to 1965.

In 1965 he completed his preliminary work on a Ph.D in modern European history while at Pittsburgh.

At 3 p.m. Monday a third instructor, Fogarty, was called into Dean Carlin's office. He was

told that a recommendation to terminate his contract had also been forwarded to the central administration.

He, like Groat and Lawless, said that no reasons were given.

Fogarty, a graduate of Fordham College (A.B. in American Civilization, 1960), entered the University of Denver's graduate school in 1960 on a National Defense Education Act fellowship. He received his M.A. in American history in 1962.

He finished his preliminary Ph.D work in 1963, and his revised dissertation is now in the hands of his committee.

Since coming to Michigan State as an ATL instructor in 1963, he has taught ATL courses, including honors sections, and history courses in MSU's extension program.

This term he is teaching Social Science, and next term he is scheduled to teach an American Studies course. Colleagues say he received a \$700 raise this summer.

Fogarty has had articles published in North Eastern Quarterly and the New York Folklore Quarterly. He has a contract with a publishing company for a book tentatively titled "The Utopian Novels of Ignatius Donnelly."

A member of the ATL advisory committee stated emphatically that all three men's cases were decided by the October 1 deadline.

This would rule out widespread speculation that Fogarty was thrown into the package as a sacrificial lamb, so as to divert attention from an attempt to squelch the two Zeitgeist men.

Tuesday, department members who oppose one or all three of the terminations, as well as those mystified by all the rumors and petitions floating around the department, visited Strandness.

The result of these individual conferences is not yet apparent.