

new chancellor, it appears that Phyllis Wise, whom many admirers of the Chief hoped would be a force of sanity and common sense in UI leadership, held surreptitious meetings where administrators devised the insidious elimination, or "phasing out" (as they may prefer to call it) of the school's "Alma Mater" song in favor of an obscure tune written for the university by John Phillip Sousa.

Responsible for the nearly religious fervor with which these administrators are moving are the complaints of another unduly influential special interest in the UI system lead by an appropriately named director of the

Race and Ethnicity; Council on Gender Equality; Diversity Administrative Coordinating Team; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Concerns; and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Planning Committee.

Notably absent from the list are any committees focusing on academic quality, affordability or faculty retention.

One faculty member who was not retained, a notable professor of military history cherry-picked by Illinois' only other Big Ten school, Northwestern, once advised me on the morning of the Chief's retirement announcement, "You have to act fast on this because now [anti-Chief activ-

the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is democracy of the dead. Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who happen to be merely walking around."

Right. And it will be interesting to see if those ancestors of the University of Illinois will be asked for their votes to retire the beloved "Three-in-One" and institute some frivolous mascot to represent Fighting Illini athletics.

Paul Schmitt is a former student member of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees and former president of Students for Chief Illiniwek.

GUEST COMMENTARY

A residency requirement might help police situation

By **DANNEL MCCOLLUM**

I was shocked to see the Champaign police video of the arrest in June of a young black man for jaywalking in Campustown. The apparent physical violence of the arrest and the use of pepper spray for so trifling an offense seemed clearly over the top. Unfortunately, the Champaign police review of the arrest was perfunctory at best. Once the video of the arrest became public last month, the dismay of the public and city council members was immediate.

In an attempt to get ahead of the public outrage, the city manager asked for an independent review of the incident by the state police. That agency, apparently uncomfortable dealing with Champaign's hot potato, in record time returned what could be described as a whitewash of the incident, concluding that the CPD's handling of the arrest was within department training and procedures.

Like many on the Champaign Police Department, the arresting officer does not live within the limits of the city, a situation which I believe is part of the problem. In the 1970s or early '80s, in the

department professionalize into a highly competent force with many outstanding members. But the exodus of officers from the city has had unfortunate consequences. Rather than a "we" feeling between the police and the public, it has become instead a more "us" and "them" situation, which has caused many to perceive the force as more like an army of occupation. To some extent, this latest event is an example of what can result.

give and take of labor negotiations, the city managed to gain a residency requirement — to work for the city the employee had to live in the city. But in the municipal election of 1987, the unions lobbied hard to get the residency requirement abandoned. Gaining the support primarily of several newly elected council members, the requirement, a concession gained through collective bargaining, was to my dismay unilaterally abandoned by the council. As the newly-elected mayor and a seasoned council member, I was appalled. If the city was good enough to work for, it was good enough to live in.

More to the point, I believed that it was important for city employees, especially those involved in public safety, to share the urban experience by being directly in contact with their fellow citizens and conversant with their problems. But taking advantage of the concession, many workers moved out of the city. At present, four out of five Champaign police officers live outside of the city.

As a long-term resident of the city, 74 years and counting, I have seen our police

department professionalize into a highly competent force with many outstanding members. But the exodus of officers from the city has had unfortunate consequences. Rather than a "we" feeling between the police and the public, it has become instead a more "us" and "them" situation, which has caused many to perceive the force as more like an army of occupation. To some extent, this latest event is an example of what can result.

There are no miracle answers to the current difficulties in police-community relations. But certainly a reinstatement of the residency requirement, at least to the extent of living within the confines of Champaign-Urbana, would be a major step forward. From my point of view, it should be a condition of employment, a right of the city to impose, outside of labor negotiations. Other strategies should be pursued as well — the status quo is not working.

Dannel McCollum, a former Champaign mayor and a Democratic candidate for the state Senate in 2002, is a historian and a freelance writer.