editorial

It is laudable that Mike Ekelund's public spirit has moved him to accept the Social Credit nomination for Edmonton Norwood. However, fulfilling the mandate of the party will compromise his prior commitment to the Students' Union. I urge him to reconsider his present situation.

Last year Ekelund campaigned vigorously for the position of VP academic and won, despite a rider in his election platform exempting him from two months office. It was clearly stated during the election that he had made plans for May and June of 1978 and had no intention of giving them up if elected. Fine; the students *knew* he'd be gone and accepted him anyway.

However, the implicit assumption was that upon his return Ekelund would make up for lost time in his vital academic portfolio. As VP Academic Mike is a member of a number of committees and boards, all of which met regularly over the summer. As well, the first months in office are recognized as crucial to the smooth functioning of the SU exec and Students' Council. It is safe to say, then that Ekelund's first absence was noticed.

On that basis alone, Ekelund owes students the balance of his term. On Wednesday he promised to make his salary for the election period contingent on unanimous Council approval. It is a noble, but empty, gesture. The issue here is not money, it is responsibility. And complicated by a lack of viable alternatives.

In late February, even if he does resign, there is no chance of finding an adequate replacement for Ekelund as VP Academic. So, he will retain his SU position because, simply, we have him or no one. And Ekelund willingly admits that his effectiveness during this time will be drastically affected. In the end there is no option available to ensure that the students' academic interests are maintained for the rest of this year.

Mike has argued that his involvement in provincial politics is as important as "organizing demonstrations and making demands of the government" because it is a direct effort to change the problematic Lougheed government. But any gains made by Ekelund and the Socreds on behalf of students will almost certainly be countered by losses on campus due to his absence.

It's a fact that Mike will miss a lot while campaigning. He has glibly stated that he won't be getting much sleep in the next month. Provincial election or no it seems that cleaning up his duties as VP Academic alone would have cut significantly into his remaining time. And remember, Ekelund is still, although barely, a student.

The final objection should properly come from the Social Credit party itself. I don't think the SC realizes the extent of Ekelund's commitments to the SU. Otherwise it would find his nomination inappropriate, if not objectionable. After all, the party's image among students will be damaged as much as enhanced by Mike's untimely exit from student politics.

It *is* unfortunate that the provincial election has been called now, in the middle of a school term. And while I do wish Mike well in his political career outside of the U of A, in view of the circumstances he is wrong to leave now, for any amount of time. Therefore I must reserve my encouragement for a subsequent election.

Loreen Lennon

the Gateway

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If it happens on campus it's news to us.

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Apathy: yours for $35.50 a year

On Friday, February 9, 979, a new Students' Union executive was elected by the 25% of the students who saw fit to vote. This is appalling! Are there no students interested in where their Students' Union fees go? Do they suppose that the fees are simply dumped into a pot which is snatched from their hands to further someone else's interests? Are there no students who care what happens to their services on campus that are provided for by the students union services? Where are those students who used to care about life on campus and life in general? Have the 25% of us who voted become the only people on campus who've decided that to live one must be involved and care about who makes the policy that must inevitably affect us all?

Well, to those of you who voted, I say 'Thank You; and to those who didn't I say both 'Why? You may have changed what you perceive as wrong with the way things are now' and 'Don't you dare gripe about the way things are being handled later on in the year, for when you **had** your chance to change it and make things the way **you** wanted them **but you didn't take that chance.**

Finally, my congratulations to the elected executive. May you have a good and productive year in office, even with such a slim percent of the student population supporting you. At least you **managed** to get that slim percentage to support you. Have a good year and good luck!

David A. Trenton
Arts I

Secret spoiled

I am sorry to say that I made the error of voting in Friday's election. Sorry because I found the balloting procedures as ridiculous as some of the candidates' platforms.

The problem was this: after filling in my preferential ballot, I refolded it and gave it to the staff at the balloting station, in my case in the Rutherford Galleria. The staff proceeded to open my ballot and examine it! I have voted in SU elections using the preferential ballot before but I have never seen this before. I asked what they were doing. Making sure you filled in the form correctly was the reply. I then looked at the ballot box. It was full. Completed ballots were piled high beside it.

Notwithstanding the fact that some of the electorate deliberately spoil a ballot, for whatever reason, it is absurd that the Returning Officer cannot adhere to the time-honored procedures of the secret ballot. We are, most of us, adults here and I would think we know how to vote. After this fiasco, however, I would wonder why we vote (those few of us who do, and the number will become smaller if this continues).

I would ask that you take this issue up with the DIE board for a ruling. I would think that another election is in order, one administered by a reasonable returning officer.

Kirk N. Lambrecht
Arts IV

Letters

Letters to the editor should be addressed to the Gateway, Room 282 SUB, Edmonton, or dropped off at our office. Please include your name, student I.D. number (if applicable) and phone number. Please limit letters to 250 words or less. If you wish to write a longer piece, come to see us. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for libel.

Res problems need constructive criticism

In response to the letter perpetrated upon the *Gateway* Feb. 6 by six scientists I would like the opportunity to point out contradictions and fallacies in their arguments.

To begin with, the purpose of Ms. Brown's proposals is not to protect the rights of students. Rather, it is a basic right of people to control their own destiny and the proposals do not provide for the financial autonomy necessary for independence. Neither do our counter-proposals reflect a desire to "tenaciously hang onto the prevailing social order (we) have so effectively cultivated." We realize changes are necessary and are attempting to implement them. Regarding criteria for seniors, alcoholic tendencies do not figure in their selection, stereophonic capabilities are not considered and they must be full-time students which recessitates a longer than six hour school week. As for a GPA of four, this is a minimum, not a maximum, standard and does not purport to exclude students with a higher average. Actual criteria include organizational capabilities, a sense of responsibility and utility to the floor members they serve.

In a more personal vein, I resent being included in the supposed "fair proportion" of "rednecks", "non-academics" and general mental midgets you claim composes student government in Lister Hall. I am not a self-claimed expert in Freudian psychology so I will ignore your remarks in this area and will trust your expertise in this sort of simple medical matter. Obviously you are much better at unbiased analysis than I.

Some form of organization is needed in an institution of twelve hundred people to retain a sense of order and I am proud to be a member of a student government which caters to this need. And personally I am sick of taking "anal expulsion" from laboratory philosophers who are happy to criticize without doing a damn constructive thing to improve their situation.

By the way, was the Med Show an academic success?

John Little
Mackenzie Hall