

## This is page FIVE

John Miller's rambling denunciation of Remembrance Day (last Friday's Gateway) has touched a few sore spots. His words, however, are not new. There have been numerous such articles written—some considerably more bitter—so they have become almost a cliché.

The old thing about the five-cent poppy and the march on the cenotaphs has long since served any use. In fact, it all boils down to a crummy minute of silence while people stand around and shiver and impatiently wait for that long minute to end.

But it seems we have lost the ability to feel for someone else. No one among the young at this university has suffered for any extended period. Our thoughts are more about ourselves and how we are so deprived and so insecure and so unable to communicate. These are all selfish tremors.

Remembrance Day should be exactly what it says—a day to remember — a day to remember that if we forget too quickly, it may happen again.

There are some who may attack the existence of the Royal Canadian Legions and claim they are pubs and a place where the vets shed tears for themselves in moments of self pity.

It isn't so.

Most of us have felt bitter loneliness on many occasions.

Watch sometimes the students in the cafeteria sitting alone for minutes on end. They buy a drink, a sandwich and sit around looking grossly uncomfortable. They try to look occupied with a book or a paper but it's a front.

Then a friend comes in and watch how our student smiles and his face lights up. Friends do this to people—they make them look a lot less lonely.

It's the same for vets. They know they can find a friend in the legion halls across this country. And they feel a little better when they have someone to talk to.

It's cruel to say vets sit around and drink etc.

It's cruel because it's inhuman and false and there is nothing more cruel than a deliberate misrepresentation.

But Miller's denunciation shows one common tendency among students. Students, all of us, don't feel for others any more—if we ever did. We refuse to respect our friends. We think humility is something to laugh at. We think apologies are subjects of eternal scorn and a sign of weakness.

We have been stoned by the system and the wall to protect ourselves from this punishment has made it worse for each and every one of us.

Kathy Flaherty has said it best, we think. On this page, she writes that "the day we forget our sorrow, and the day we forget all horrors of those past years is the day we start World War III".

It seems impossible to forget when there are Vietnams, etc. But we do and we hate Remembrance Day for reminding us.

—The Editor

## Another harsh reply to Mr. Miller's "myth"

The Editor,

Mr. Miller, in his article has it down quite pat—even to the brainwashing and the tin medals and I'm sick of it!

We're all so bloody righteous; we the generation after the peacemakers, the profiteers of past mistakes. Who gives us the right to stand back and say it is all ludicrous: the honour, the fight for freedom . . . they did buddy; those brainwashed fools who did believe they had something to fight for, at least in the beginning.

Sure forget it! It should never have happened, nobody should have died, but they did die and in the hundreds of thousands. No one is glorifying the horror, least of all those drunken sops as you call them. They were there, they went through it . . . did you?

Have you ever bothered to get up and stand out in the cold at the Cenotaph on November 11th. Mr. Miller? I imagine, you would consider it too ludicrous to watch; I mean all those old men, standing like statues, shivering in the cold,

and the not so old, fathers, uncles, husbands also standing stiffly . . . remembering. They aren't remembering 'good old days', you don't lay wreathes for that! They remember close friends and the ones they never knew who didn't come back.

Because you can see the stupidity of what happened now, because you can trace the course of what was done and what shouldn't have been done, is not reason enough to forget. The men are to be remembered as an example of what must not be allowed to happen again, to us.

Get off your safe, illuminative high horse Mr. Miller and stop preaching. Let the veterans remember whatever they want, however they want, they know more about it than you do. We can't remember, we never experienced it, but as long as there is a Remembrance Day, and a poppy there is a memory of war . . . and nobody is glorifying that!

B. Dickie  
Ed. 3

## An easy solution

The Editor,

I bow my head in salute to the inquiring mind, courage, and diligence of John S. Williams (arts 3) who discovered the fate of the little hamburger heater oven in the Tory common room. The permanent loss of this delightful gizmo is indeed a tragic loss to the starling, frost rimmed winter student. Something must be done to cause its reappearance—it must not pass away.

John's suggestion of an accessory mine detector circuit to prevent recurring burnouts due to non-technical students' attempts to heat 'metal objects' has merit but from the depths of a more technical education than arts 3, I would like to suggest a more sophisticated solution to the problem. The Hudson's Bay Company

certainly cannot spend \$1,500 on new ovens very often, and I sympathize with their problem. The problem must certainly exist everywhere these ovens are installed and so I offer this modification suggestion to the company—it is not a new idea and I take no credit for it.

Insert a fuse in the damn thing! Modern electronic devices are not adequately equipped with fuses; this is obviously such a device; it needs another fuse in the output circuit, to take care of the machine when it falls into the hands of fools and students. Hudson's Bay Co. take note—if you don't put a fuse in that circuit, some fool will do the same thing with your other ovens, warning signs or no.

Donald Saurez  
Sci 3

## Open letter to a thief

I'll skip the polite greeting. I'm not in the mood for niceties. It's only an hour or two since you made off with my most valuable belonging—my sheepskin coat. Since we'll probably never have a face-to-face encounter, I've decided to write to you.

Aside from feeling damn angry that my coat is gone—I feel a curiosity, a need to speculate on what type of person walks into Rutherford Library, plucks a valuable coat from the cloakroom and walks out with no thought to the person who wore it in.

What motivated you? Was it

the value? Did you do it for kicks or do you feel the cold more than I do?

I'm not trying to touch your conscience—I doubt if you have one. But watch for me—I'll be watching for you. Enjoy the coat, if your friends are the type who don't wonder when you suddenly emerge with a slightly worn sheepskin coat. You taught me an expensive lesson tonight—one I'll never forget.

I'm angry, I'm sick; but I feel sorry for you. Somewhere along the line you've lost more than a sheepskin coat.

Maureen Ebel

## I would like to comment

The Editor,

I would like to comment on "The 'Myth' of Remembrance Day" which appeared in Friday's Gateway.

Whether the men joined the armed forces during the two world wars were brainwashed into it or not is immaterial. And whether the men who died were heroes or not is unimportant. The fact is, they *did* die because they con-

sidered the cause important enough.

How many of those men didn't shudder when they added up the odds of survival on the battlefield?

How many men died without even pulling the trigger?

The day that we forget our sorrow, and the day we forget all the horrors of those past years is the day we start World War III.

Kathy Flaherty  
arts 1

## The TA's hash it out

By Peter Boothroyd

When your nerves are jangled and your spirit near broken from university games, there's nothing like a small conference at Banff to restore your faith in man, to recreate yourself and to do some important learning for a change.

Last weekend, twenty of us graduate teaching assistants enjoyed such a conference. We were talking about the role of the graduate teaching assistant in this university and were in part grubstaked by the Graduate Students' Association and the Board of Governors.

Certainly there were differences among us. Those of us in the social sciences and humanities thought that students should have more to say about what they learned. The scientists were less sure. Some of us thought that the present university system has to be completely changed, others thought that the system has only minor faults.

But despite the diversity of outlooks, there was agreement on a number of points. For instance, all of us found the

grading system a drag. When some suggested that informality in the classroom was more conducive to learning and suggested that we should be addressed by our first names, one of the wily political scientists pointed out that so long as marks were decided by the TA, such informality actually might cause more anxiety. This is one problem we kept coming up against marks.

We all agreed too that more communication must go on between the TA and the professor he is working for and that TA's in all disciplines have a responsibility to encourage continual criticism of the class—constructive or otherwise.

Some had institutionalized "bitch sessions" in their classes and found them very useful. It was recognized, though, that many TA's would be adverse to encouraging criticism in the classes for the same reason the professors in charge usually are adverse to discussing the purpose of the course with the TA's. The system is one of fear and vested interests.

## Is the atmosphere more pleasant?

Perhaps because we enjoyed the weekend ourselves so much, we recommended that the Graduate Students' Association ask all departments to organize retreats similar to ours every year, in early September for faculty and TA's to discuss the purpose and conduct of the courses being taught. At something less than \$30 a head for a three-day occasion at Banff, this means that the average department would use little more than two months pay for one TA—a rather sound investment which would benefit everybody.

Other suggestions were:

- each department should make clear at the beginning of the academic year what the duties and responsibilities of TA's are in that department.

- TA's who feel that they cannot carry out their teaching responsibilities properly or who are judged unhelpful by the students (perhaps with the concurrence of the department head) should be replaced and given another job at equivalent remuneration.

- in each department some sort of informal procedure should be instituted whereby TA's can get together periodically with the professors to whom they are responsible to discuss the purpose of the courses they are teaching and ideas for fulfilling this purpose in practice. (Such procedures have been instituted in pharmacology and sociology, for instance.)

- at least once a year, all faculty, graduate students, undergraduates and anyone else concerned should get together for a teach-in. Here the purpose and conduct of the programs and individual courses in that department would be evaluated and new ideas could be generated.

- the university should recog-

nize that the role of the teacher is as important as that of the researcher by giving credit to graduate students for classroom teaching. All teaching should be combined with informal seminars on teaching theory and methods. (It was agreed that professional educators should *not* be brought in to tell people how to teach.)

While these recommendations were thought to be important—they might lead to more continuous evaluation of this mammoth institution—most of us thought that the greatest value of the weekend was for those who attended. We were all trying to figure out how to handle the tensions associated with the role of teaching assistant in the present system, such as the necessity of teaching certain materials and assigning grades, prevented us from properly carrying out our responsibilities to the students themselves. In order to seriously consider how we could improve our teaching entailed considering a whole new conception of the university.

Yet we have to work within this system now and this requires talking about possibilities for improving things in this year's classrooms. The question which could not be answered was: do attempts by the teacher to make the classroom atmosphere more pleasant and personal only result in increased anxiety and confusion since the teacher still holds the power of academic life or death over the students.

On this we could only commiserate with each other and agree that whatever else, the teacher must be himself. Being oneself might mean sharing the tensions inherent in teaching in this system with students.