

ACADEMIC SELF-DETERMINATION

- A few last questions to Students' Council.
- Do you know who controls your university's purse and policy?
 - Do you realize that your Board of Governors is a board of civil servants and businessmen?
 - Has it occurred to you that this fact makes a difference to the kind and quality of education served up to you here?
 - Do you care?

The Board of Governors is composed of:—
 President of the University;
 Chancellor of the University;
 President and V.P. of the Alumni Association;
 Deputy Provincial Treasurer;
 Deputy Minister of Education;
 Chairman and six other persons appointed by the Lt. Gov. in Council. These are the thirteen who hold decision-making power.

Do you know that (with the exception of the President of the University) practising academic-types are excluded by statute from appointment to the Board of Governors? (And the role of President is certainly that of an administrator, rather than an educator).

In short, effective control of your university is in the hands of non-academics. The Board of Governors may control decisions of any magnitude, great or small. Have you any assurance that these folks understand what education is all about?

Why should university policy be dictated from across the river?

It seems to us—in theory at least—that the "community of scholars" concept implies a certain degree of independence, a certain measure of self-government. We are aware that universities, by and large, are not self-governing, but we are not therefore convinced that universities ought not to be self-governing.

We are aware too of the feeling in councils across the river that because they provide the dollars they can legitimately expect to control the product.

But university education should not necessarily be subject to the same forces of consumer demand as apply to corn flakes and canned salmon. It may be that the interests of nations, tomorrow, as well as those of individuals, today, will be better served when the

dollars are turned over to academic communities with absolutely no strings.

Worst of all, perhaps, we are aware that for real scholars the duties of administration are likely to seem more burden than blessing, so there is a certain feeling of relief that other folks are willing to run our business affairs, just so they leave us free to commune with our muses and computers.

But profs and students might get used to charting their own course. And we might find our universities turning out to be rather more lively sorts of places than they are at present. We like to hope so.

The problem at present is a tendency toward stagnation.

It seems that there is an inevitable tendency among political appointments to bed down snugly with the tried and "proven" status quo. It seems possible that future boards of governors may resemble past boards of governors—tending to be somewhat autocratic and adverse to rocking of the boat—traditional, conservative, stuffy, unimaginative.

We have no assurance, of course, that a self-governing academic community would turn out to be a radically different sort of place than the U of A at present. But it is likely, at least, that the old comfortable structure would be critically reviewed, and new approaches considered.

- Possible specifics might include:
- flexibility of patterns and time-tables;
 - structure of university administration;
 - relation of administration to faculty;
 - general re-orientation of university purpose or philosophy;
 - admissions and grading standards;
 - the examination system.

This is a problem which we would like to see council bite into. We speak not so much to this year's council—which is now defunct—as to our next year's council. Such a project might appropriately be taken on by Council's Academic Relations Committee.

The political implications involved will provide folks with an argument that we are intruding into an area beyond our competence. But with such a judgement we will disagree.

This is an area in which we well may get slapped down. But it might be worth getting slapped for. Let's get some fresh winds blowing.

ACADEMIC DOLLARS

When undergraduates in their digitized anonymity fill in scholarship forms, they do so with trembling.

The estimates of students on the budget section of these forms is matched against mysterious "average" budget figures whose origins are obscure and exact values unknown to most students. Those who guess low i.e. below the mysterious budget figure are not warned that they may run short of funds during the year. But those unfortunates who guess high, who question the divinity of these supposed "average" figures, do not escape with impunity. In some cases they have been heavily penalized in terms of scholarship dollars.

The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship form is a joyous delight to McCarthyites everywhere.

Students must take an oath before a Notary Public pleading penury. This oath is then compounded with similar oaths from the students' parents, even if the students have been independent and self-sufficient. And presumably students should be independent, even if not self-sufficient.

The atrocious document is finally signed by witnesses.

Yet even prostrate before their seeming benefactors weighted down with multiple oaths, some students are not believed (i.e. those who happen to guess high).

These tactics have succeeded as well as those used by the late fire-breathing senator from Wisconsin.

Honest students are intellectually nauseat-

ed; dishonest ones undeterred.

At the present time scholarship is determined solely on the basis of the almighty weighted average. Rank in faculty which is equally indicative of aptitude and application is disregarded.

As a result students in such faculties as Law and Medicine are discriminated against. Students may rank in the top ten of their class, yet not obtain scholarships.

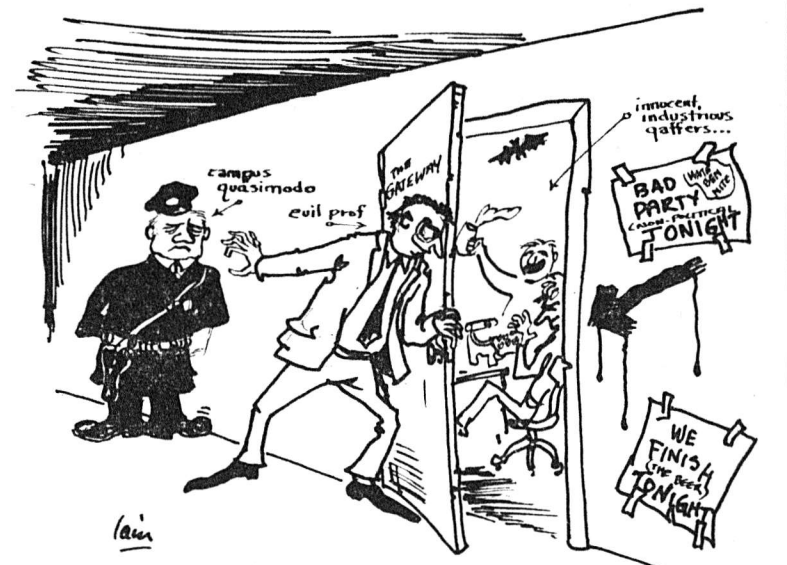
At graduate and faculty levels too, the letter of the law is fulfilled while the spirit goes wanting.

The University of Alberta has lost several top-flight scholars and potential faculty members because of this same niggardly attitude of false economy.

Professors are not money-grubbers and personal salary does not really mean that much. But the chance to pursue their own interests with the time, facilities and funds necessary is a powerful incentive and attraction.

Preoccupied with the status quo and seduced by administrative busywork, the leaders of our university have not consistently kept sight of true goals and values. Some have adopted the base business attitude: maximum production and profit for least cost.

Unless the vision of excellence is recaptured, unless standards of false economy are rejected—oil will not be the only precious resource that Alberta exports to the United States.



Give 'em another minute, Ludwig—then we ask for those term papers . . . !!



(Overheard by an id hid well)

I don't care what you say. There IS greatness in mediocrity. That fellow who never has anything to say, ever, may have a secret greatness in him. He may be mediocre all the way and still be great somewhere.

You can't be serious. If the greatness is there it will find its way out. You can't hide greatness in any realm, and that greatness is not found in a mediocre of anything.

No, the way I look at it, the person who gets a 60 is at least trying which is a hell of a lot more than you can say for the person who gets an 85 without much effort.

Oh, cut it out. You mean to tell me that an idiot who tries to put a sentence together is superior to the person who dashes off a King Lear between seasons?

Certainly. He is at least sincere, which is saying a lot more than he is using the brains he was born with.

This may be the age of the common man. Fine. Let's not take anything away from him. But the common man is common because he's mediocre. He doesn't stand out in any crowd. Let's not put him on a pedestal. Let us now praise famous men's the name of the book in question, not "let us now praise the brass keyhole society." Let us praise the maker, the teacher, the scientist, the artist; not the civil servant, the organization man, or the adgray flannel imagination man.

Why not? You snobs who feel that because you have brains you have everything make me mad. There you sit sneering at anyone who can't match wits with you. Someday the world is going to get back at you. The Ivory Tower may have its benefits but if you neglect the man in the street too long he'll smash your tower.

Can't you see what made him go there in the first place? Mass cult, as Dwight MacDonald calls it, has led to mass snobbery. Mass snobbery, perhaps the most significant manifestation of our world, the adoration of the self-damned, has directed itself against the worthy. The leader cannot be accepted in the world where Joe Doakes is honored for being not outstanding above all. What type of world is that for the man who has the humility to devote his life to teaching what he knows to others? You see, you sent him there.

And who in the hell is Dwight MacDonald?



HELPFUL MALES

To The Editor:

We may not see powerful white chargers. We may not see shining armour. A lack of these does not mean that knights no longer exist.

I move about the U of A campus in a wheelchair. Does anyone realize just how very many stairs the campus boasts? As an awe-stricken frosh, the realization staggered me. The prospect of travelling from class to class, up and down those ever-present stairs was frightening. I needn't have worried, thanks to the

U of A male population. All year I've been helped up and down stairs several times a day by people I don't even know.

Truly the age of chivalry is not dead. I would like to sincerely thank everyone who has helped me.

Betty Lou Dupont
Ed. 1

INDIGNANT FEMALE

Through The Editor:

Dear Do-Fay Der,

They call me sir.

(Miss) Okcana Chomiak