

# Two tiers and tax dodges

I would first of all like to point out that I am basically opposed to a fee differential for foreign students. It is a direct threat to university autonomy, as the Alberta Committee For Equal Access to Education correctly claims. There is also little doubt that foreign students contribute materially to the University of Alberta, especially at the graduate level. Rightly or wrongly, a fee differential would create the impression that foreign students are unwelcome in Alberta.

The real argument for fee differentials for foreign students is that they currently enjoy an unfair tax advantage over Canadian students. The cost to the government of supporting post-secondary education is recovered mainly from the income tax paid by graduates when they get a job in Alberta. Foreign students usually get their degrees, then leave the country

without working in Alberta. It is not clear, though, how a fee differential that amounts to less than 5 per cent of the total government expenditure per student per year would help to rectify this situation. A more equitable solution would probably be to allow foreign students a work visa upon graduation. Curiously enough, the *Gateway* et. al. have completely ignored this argument advanced for a fee differential, as well as its rebuttal.

A fee differential would probably cause more harm as a symbolic, rather than a practical gesture.

However, the campaign waged by the *Gateway*, the Alberta Committee For Equal Access to Education, and other groups has done nothing to convince me completely, but rather the opposite. The campaign is riddled with contradictions and gross distortions of fact.

I was willing to believe that a fee differential would discriminate against students from poorer countries until the Alberta Committee For Equal Access to Education made it known that foreign students are required to bring sufficient funds yearly into Alberta to support themselves without taking a job. (often more than \$3000.) If some foreign students are so poor, where do they find that money? There aren't even that many Canadian families that can afford to spend \$3000 plus per year to send their children to university. The allegation that a fee hike for foreign students would prevent many Third World students from attending the University of Alberta seems in large part to stem from the stereotyped conception of the Third World as being a region inhabited completely by starving paupers. It ignores the fact that the lower standard of living said to exist in the Third World is

simply a statistical average drawn among millions of people or even entire nations. Many people there are extremely affluent, even by Canadian standards, at least enough to undertake a university education for their children in Canada. Places like Hong Kong and Malaysia are good examples. I find it hard to believe that a fractional increase in the total cost of attending the U of A is going to discourage as many foreign students as the Equal Access Committee and others seem to imply. If, on the other hand, the money comes from outside sources such as grants and scholarships, the poverty or wealth of the student quite obviously is irrelevant.

Another story that occurs regularly in the *Gateway* and Equal Access Committee broadsheets is that foreign students are being made the scapegoats of an alleged program of cutbacks in the government's post-secondary education budget. It is charged that foreign students are being forced to make up the difference in their fees. I would be very interested in knowing who started the "cutback" rumour, since the *Gateway* (and the Young Socialists) repeat it as if it was unchallengeable common knowledge. The projected 1977-78 budget for post-secondary education is about \$311 million, a 10.9 per cent increase over 1976-77. An 8.8 per cent increase is projected in the portion of the budget going to universities. The increase in the 1976-77 budget over the previous year is exactly the same.

The "cutback" argument is quite false, even if the post-secondary education budget did not increase relative to other government spending. However, the increases in the budget in other fields is of the same order.

I also object strongly to the characterization of the fee-differential proposal as "racist." I have not heard one argument for fee differentials that makes any reference to race. The charge of racism is based on highly questionable or completely illogical assumptions. The argument seems to go that since some foreign students are not white, and that they, as a group, are poorer than the Canadian students, a fee-differential for foreign students discriminates against the non-whites. A large number, about 20 per cent, of

foreign students, are American or European. The non-white students are not necessarily poorer, as has been pointed out earlier. While the non-whites may be "a highly visible minority," this has absolutely nothing to do with whether or not they are Canadian. The Equal Access Committee's campaign does have a lot to do with the pre-conceived notion that because a person is coloured, he is necessarily poor. If the government was motivated by racism, it could easily have formulated bureaucratic technicalities that would exempt Americans and Europeans from the fee differential.

P. R. Wrenshall  
Grad Studies

**Ed. Note:** First off, your assertion that the *Gateway* regularly publishes stories that foreign students are being made the "scapegoats" for education cutbacks are wrong.

In fact, if you would read the paper instead of looking to reaffirm your biases, you would find only one article (Gary Watson, September 16, 1976) which makes that assertion. Any others have been made in the form of letters to the editor or editorial content, neither of which are news copy.

Your argument about cutbacks is inane and nearly anyone involved with any aspect of the university's budget within either the university or the dept. of advanced education will show you that in real money terms the gov't. operating grant is *decreasing* since it does *not* meet inflationary increases for university supplies, i.e. library books, laboratory equipment, utilities, etc. Increases for such supplies run over 15 per cent generally; in specific instances as high as 50 to 75 per cent (with a 10.9 per cent increase from the gov't.)

Your final argument about how the differential fees do not have a racist impact is a nice theory, unfortunately not supported by data from nations which have already instituted differentials. In any case of two-tier tuitions, the largest group of students to drop off in attendance are from Third World countries (if you'd like the figures, contact the foreign student advisors office, Room 2-5 University Hall). Not surprisingly, most of those students have a skin color which is not white.

## I never said THAT

I read last Tuesday's article "Court Case Hogwash" with considerable amazement. I was especially surprised because I was the person you quoted as the basis of the article.

First, let me correct your assumption that I was interviewed as a "spokesman" from Save Tomorrow; Oppose Pollution (STOP). I have left STOP a number of months ago and I assured the reporter I was only a "member" of the organization. I was interviewed in my personal capacity as a concerned environmentalist present at the Great Canadian Oil Sands (GCOS) trial.

Secondly, it is true that I spoke to you about the fact that incriminating evidence about a toxic water effluent reviewed at the GCOS trial was dismissed, in part, because company employees who frequently fished along the river had never found dead fish.

I went on to tell your reporter that a particular material need not kill fish to be dangerous. I said it was "... hogwash from a scientific point of view" to assume that a material is not deleterious just because dead fish have not been found.

Now ... this is altogether

different from saying that the whole court case was "hogwash." We have here a classic example of the baby and tub being thrown out with the bathwater.

Thirdly you said STOP had discovered that the GCOS effluent was "severely damaging the native rainbow trout population." The native species that has been tested for the trail were brook sticklebacks and not rainbow trout. Rainbow trout were tested, but they are not "native"

species. Besides this, when the reporter talked about "damage" to native species I continually referred to the tests conducted in the laboratory and not tests in the Athabaska River.

Finally one last point ... It is not STOP that is initiating the "appeal." The Crown is doing that. It is one thing to say STOP pressed to have the law suits launched in the first place, but it is quite another thing to give us the credit for the appeals.

Lucien Royer

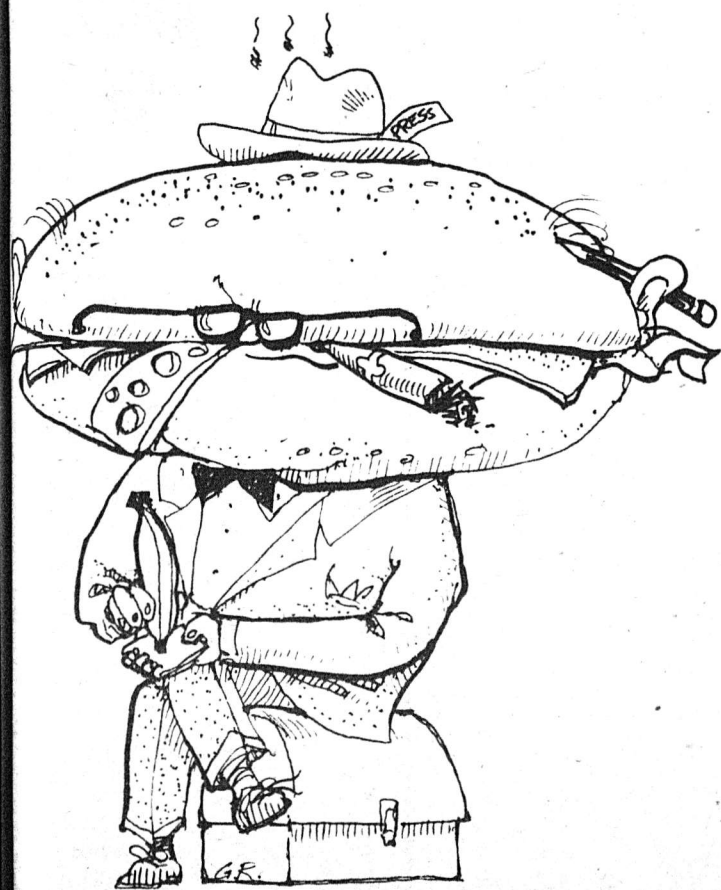
## Label is the issue

I would like to reply to the letters in the *Gateway* of March 31, by Ewin Nelson and Kevan Warner, attacking the Ken Luckhardt letter of March 29. It seems to me that anytime someone brings up a topic of a political nature where Canada is directly or indirectly involved, others attempt to divert the issue. One such way of doing this is by saying "well how about this issue or how about that." Fighting Apartheid in South Africa is only part of a struggle against capitalism and imperialism.

Mr. Nelson, on the other hand, seems to be claiming that by boycotting Carling O'Keefe, the livelihood of workers is

threatened. On the contrary, it is in the interest of the workers to boycott Carling O'Keefe. The Apartheid system in South Africa is maintained by international capital Carling O'Keefe plays a role in maintaining that system, and the consumption of such products (made by such companies as Carling O'Keefe) also helps to maintain that system. As long as boycotters of Carling O'Keefe are purchasing other Canadian-made products, it is ridiculous to suggest that Canadian jobs are at stake; they would simply be transferred from one beer company to another.

Vidya Thakur  
VENCEREMOS



## CHARLES LUNCH

Here's the latest on all your favourite stars here in the glamour city of the world — Ottawa ... Pierre and Margaret aren't splitting, says a Sussex Drive spokesman, but will be seeing a little less of each other. They've agreed to bump into each other some time in 1979... meanwhile Maureen McTeer, who still refuses to admit that she's Joe Clark's wife, has agreed to make a guest appearance on 'The Romper Room Show.' She'll be a Don't-Be who'll warn the kids about the hazards of political life ... Minister of Agriculture Eugene Whelan has agreed to stop leaving his bubble-gum under the table at cabinet meetings. Eugene also promised not to make pig-calls during the Speech From the Throne ... Minister of Health, Fitness and Adidas, Ione Campagnolo has released figures showing that 65% of all Canadians under the age of 30 are in better shape than all the Swedes who died last year. "The only stroke I can get out of George is a coronary!" she said ... Jack Horner has announced that

he won't cross the floor of the Commons to join the Liberals. Instead he'll form his own new splinter party, the 'Jack Horner, God Love 'Im' party. His constituents in Crowfoot have warned him not to come home as anything other than a Conservative, so I guess Jack'll be the new member for Antigonish-Gaspere after next week's byelection ... the search goes on here in the nation's capital for the missing NDP party, which hasn't been seen in weeks. Leader Ed Broadbent says he left it in the House in February for 'just a minute,' but when he returned it had wandered off somewhere. Have you checked the broom closet in Trudeau's office, Ed? ... Air Canada, otherwise referred to as 'The CBC with jet-lag,' has announced another money-saving idea for travellers. If you fly more than 700 miles from home, and stay at least three months, provided you book the flight three months in advance with a non-refundable \$50 deposit, and agree not to carry any luggage, then you are guaranteed at least

\$1.25 in savings. Charters to Halifax are eligible for even greater savings, provided they pretend to enjoy the Maritimes...

Peter Gzowski, host of the CBC's popular '90 Minutes Live' show, has sent out an urgent appeal for more viewers. 'If my ratings sink any lower, the test pattern on CKEY will beat me out of the top five in Toronto,' he cited. So far five senior citizens in Niagara-on-the-Lake have agreed to down a Gravel or two and suffer through the show. 'It's the least we can do for the CBC,' said one — 'after all, didn't they give us Razzle Dazzle and The Forest Rangers?' They certainly did ...

Speaking of the CBC, have you heard that one reason for the popularity of 'As it Happens' is the nude dancing that Barbara Frum does during newsbreaks? She's the hottest thing on radio since Peter Gzowski! ... That's it from Excitement Central. Stay tuned now for a special report on the break-up of Rene Levesque's marriage, entitled "Separation - Rene's Obsession."