

the Gateway

EDITORIAL

It's not fare.

The city of Edmonton is in the grips of a transit strike. The peak hour traffic jams, the cause of hundreds of headaches before the strike, have now been increased tenfold. People hitching a lift, rarely seen before the strike, are now commonly seen.

Taxis are working overtime and the accidents that infested rush hour traffic in the city have now turned into a plague. To add to everyone's melancholia even more is the proclamation from the transit officials, the city and labour minister Les Young that this strike could last from two to three months.

The number of people who use, or used to use, transit on a regular basis was approximately 260,000. All of these people will be inconvenienced to some degree, some, of course more than others. Many relied on the transit system to get them to and from work. Students used the buses to get to school and back home again and for others the buses were the only way they could get out of the house to go shopping or visit friends. How many of the people in the work force will miss days of work and thereby lose money needed to pay the rent or for food or bills? How many students will miss assignments, or tests or exams? How many people will not be able to get out of the house? How many will miss appointments? Everyone has something to lose in the event of the transit strike and so everyone has something to say on the matter. The overriding question on many peoples minds is: Who is to blame?

The question of blame being placed on either party, the city or the union, is usually answered by which side in the dispute public opinion does not favor. In this case public opinion seems to be on the side of the transit workers. Ergo, the city is to blame for the terrible mess we all find ourselves in at the moment.

But this simple form of logic cannot be applied to a situation as complex as that of the transit dispute.

The city's offer, considered by many as to be much too low, is, upon closer examination, rather interesting.

The city delivered an offer which would have seen the transit workers wage raised immediately to a level of 12 dollars an hour. That in itself is certainly not bad, but that hourly wage would have gone up to 12.70 an hour in the first six months of next year and there would be a further increase of 1.70 at the beginning of the last six months of 1983. Thus, the transit workers of this city would be making 14.40 an hour by June of 1983. They turned this offer down deeming it totally unacceptable. I leave it up to you to deem it acceptable or not.

The unions stance is that their members deserve parity with the transit workers of Calgary right now. This would see their wage immediately increased to 12.70 an hour not just 12. By the beginning of 1983 the transit workers would be making 14.40 an hour. According to the union, subsequent increases would follow quickly after that. The city is not willing to give the union and its members the subsequent increases or parity right now. By their offer the workers would be making the same wage as Calgary but there would be a six month time lag from increase to increase.

Because the city won't give the transit workers parity with Calgary right now they have gone on strike.

Should they have gone on strike? Should the city have increased their offer? Who is to blame?

Again, the question of blame cannot enter into the situation. It is not as important as the inconvenience, the lost man hours, the missed exams and missed appointments the strike will cause.

The city is calling on motorists to extend courtesy and pick up hitchhikers.

But how long can motorists continue to extend this courtesy without becoming impatient and discourteous?

More importantly, how long should they be expected to extend this courtesy? Two months? Three months?

The most important aspect about this situation is for both sides to sit down, talk and hammer out some kind of agreement. The only good thing to come out of a strike is its ending.

None wins in a strike situation, everyone loses. The longer the strike goes on, the more people will lose.

Andrew Watts



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Lack of good facilities down in hell

Some people want to surrender their weapons to the police, but some policemen are probably hooked up with organized crime. If they aren't, just why did I find this woman with a small device that gives off police calls when I was on a date with her back in the sixties?

The Bible speaks of the wickedness of man and on this matter it certainly is telling the truth. Someone has been making war on the young people of the U.S. ever since 1941. When F.D.R. found out that he could let the Japanese kill thousands of our people without any outcry from the voters of the U.S. no man of military age was safe.

Now that the wars have stopped the same people who sucked the blood out of the young are now getting into the dope, prostitution, gambling, and boot legging rackets. When the voters come up for judgement just what will they use for an excuse for the years of meanness and cruelty to America's manhood?

I am afraid that the voters of the U.S. have the idea that they can go to the voting booth and make a fool out of the Lord by voting in a monster. It was bad enough that F.D.R. let the Japs sink our Pacific fleet, but did he

have to give Russia all of Eastern Europe?

If the voters are wise they will get a handle on the police so that some one will be around to fire the boys raking it in from prostitution and dope. They will

find a way to get rid of presidents and congressmen who prove to be duds. If they don't I don't want them complaining to me about the heat, hard work, and lack of good facilities down in hell.

Sincerely,
 Bill J. Bloomer
 North Carolina

Morality squad strikes

Re: Progressive Store Strips Magazines

Each week I pick up the Gateway and wonder what the leader of the U of A's own campus morality squad, Suzy Bizon, has done to make the world just that much better to live in.

It seems that this week the target of Suzy's fanatical crusade for campus enlightenment has been the removal of two mags from the newstands of a Progressive bookstore. Thanks Suze, but I find your personal moral judgements are infringing on my right to choose what is and isn't trash for myself.

The world according to Suzy is uncomfortably reminiscent of the Salem witch trials. Must there always be a scapegoat? (Hitler thought so.)

Why, if it wasn't for the trashy magazines, or the engineers, how would Miss Bizon find meaning for her existence? Seriously though, if Suzy's true motivation is to act as our eyes and ears and clean up the world, maybe her never-ending energies could be directed at real (instead of imagined) exploitation, like child pornography. And that's the way it is.

Warren Clark
 Science 2

Censorship insults student

May Ms. Bizon of the Women's Center open her eyes.

Whether the action results from "one individual trying to do something about what (she) perceives as a problem" or from the imposition of a "majority morality" through Legislation, the fact remains that the suppression of any form of literature is indeed censorship. This particular censorship insults student intellect by

implying we are incompetent at evaluating sexism in fictional literature.

May Mr. Biochi of Charing Cross Books be aware that if he wishes to introduce consistency in his selection of literature, he must remove either his Pro-Socialist or Pro-Capitalist literature. Perhaps the communist-oriented students will forward a petition

L. Hennig
 Commerce II