

fear and loathing; Elections '84



That's it, no more. The agony of D.S.U. elections is over for one more year. The succinct submergence into student politics has been alleviated and life is returning somewhat to normal. Except for those maybe not so lucky few who have emerged from the holocaust and can rightly extoll their virtues as those who have won.

A foreboding tension swept across the campus after the final presidential forum, but there was nothing to be said or done until that final ballot had been counted. All of the inside political prophets understood that the outcome of the final, ever so fateful forum had made the presidential race unbearably close. It was apparent that Gigeroff and James team had enhanced their standing more so than any of the other two teams. They said that in their opinion the forum was not a clear cut success, but of course their opinion is subjective.

Because of the preceding events the final outcome was expected to be close, but no one predicted the incredibly fine margin that would actually occur. Informed inside sources, drawing upon their vast electoral knowledge, were anticipating a second ballot win for one of two teams. MacDonald and Machum had just about conceded defeat but still looked for any shifts in the polls.

Three votes was the margin in the official recount. The first,

unofficial count had a margin of five and therefore a recount was obviously in order. The ensuing time between counts invoked a heavy, tense atmosphere that thickened as every second passed. There was talk of the necessity of the tie-breaker vote, cast by the elections returning officer, that was hidden away securely somewhere in the depths of a safe. All speculation focused on the unknown, except to one, markings on that ballot.

In the end that ballot was not of importance. The final results stood with Alex Gigeroff and Rusty James victorious by three votes. If only, said the other candidates, two persons had been influenced to vote differently. It is not possible to rationalize the outcome because of the immense amount of variables in the statement 'if only.' But would it have been easier to lose by a larger margin or should one not even consider the possible solace of this thought?

The election party had the atmosphere of a subdued aftermath. The final result was not immediately accepted; it had been too close. The participants of the quiet event broke into various political spheres and meditated on the state of the union and its potential for the upcoming year. Different predictions were put forth, depending upon one's sympathies and reservations, but a feeling of hope loomed on the horizon.

But what of the victors? Putting aside rumour and speculation,

how will the new president and vice-president, Alex Gigeroff and Rusty James, serve the electorate? They feel the trepidation that has resulted from their election but are determined to work in the best possible manner in their own distinct political style. They presented themselves in a way that is unique to them and remain adamant in continuing the tradition. There will indeed be pressures placed upon them from the various factions within the DSU but there are objectives to be met and the progress toward these goals cannot be impeded. People, said Rusty place pressures upon themselves: unnecessarily and he wishes to avoid such a useless impediment. Personalities should not clash and there must be an inherent cooperation by all parties to get the job, whatever it may be done. It would not be appropriate to go 'right for the jugular' on any issues that appear blatantly wrong, a fact that this team realizes. Research and open-mindedness are the key and they want to shun all preconceived notions, yet at the same time they do not want to disregard experience. Open-mindedness, for them, is not what your opinions are, but how you hold your opinions.

It is hard to say at this point what the representation will consist of on next year's council. There will be many new faces. It is imprudent for the incoming executive to say who will be their advisors and what appointments will be made for positions such as vice-president external. People are approaching for the positions

and it would be beneficial if the other contenders of the election who did not win, honour their commitment to stay active in student politics.

There are fears circulating that the newly elected executive does not have much credibility with the university administration and therefore lacks bargaining power on behalf of the students. The reply to this is simply that the image people portray and their true effectiveness are not one and the same thing. The politicians know what Alex Gigeroff and Rusty James intend to do, and I might add they know that they were not elected to build mounds on campus.

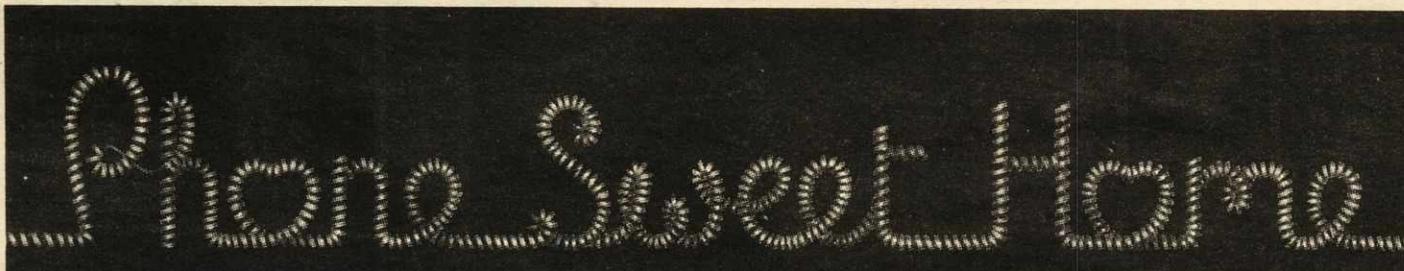
Their serio-comic approach is not to be discredited. They have great ambitions for the future and the first is to replace total irreverency with partial irreverency. Interpret this phrase as you will but it has great implications for apathy toward the importance of student politics. They do not wish to jump on the apathy bandwagon and give up after a few tries to solve this perennial problem. They are being realistic about the average student as they have been there and understand the mentality. Their personal resources and imagination is a key ingredient to get people involved.

In reflecting again on the final forum, they believe it helped them a great deal. Alex and Rusty discussed the reasons involved and have pinpointed the crucial one as being that they remained as students—people rather than

politicians. They restated their approach as being serious but 'hey, we can have some fun with this as well.' It was important not to dwell on their attributes but to use one's imagination to prove these attributes. "We never said we can do this we can do that," said Rusty. "We said this is what we are like, vote for us if you like us." They spent less money than the other candidates, did less campaigning, had no 'strategy meetings' and did not have a campaign manager except for a goldfish named Flavius. This does not reflect a lack of concern but emphasizes a different approach, possibly the "seasonable approach."

Rusty would enjoy continuing his column in the Gazette for the duration of his time in office. It is an integral part of his life and he wishes to continue this exultant comical dissertation. Both will have political dealings every day of their term of office. Their social and political lives will not change but they hope for an interface of the dichotomy of these distinct entities. They both look forward to the challenge of working in political circles, and the slow integration into the inherent political elitism of political life.

What does the future hold for D.S.U. politics? There is quiet optimism that the newly elected officials will not submit to the pressures of the oft-unappreciated job. It has been done before as witnessed by the two previous administrations. Congratulations to the new executive council and here's to upholding the tradition.



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Congratulations to the Ford Bronco II winners in the Long Distance "Phone Sweet Home" Contest. We wish them many years of great driving. And to the other students who participated - our thanks. It was good to hear from all of you. And remember, there are other people who like to keep in touch with you - back home. So "Phone Sweet Home" regularly! Good luck in your exams, and have a super Summer.



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