

editorial

Those of you who were fortunate, or unfortunate enough (depending on your views of student politics) to attend last year's student election forum in Turtle lecture theatre (an administrative screwup by the Zoeteman people forcing the forum into the 500 seat lecture theatre rather than the 1000 seat SUB Theatre) witnessed one of the strangest election campaigns in the history of U of A politics. Star of the show was one Rene Le Larke leading an entourage of equally strange candidates of the Conceptual Reality Alternative Party (CRAP). Their platform was never defined — the strong point and paradoxically the downfall of the campaign — but it generally followed the entropic pattern of the theatre of the absurd: outlandish costumes, a speech in Lithuanian punctuated exclamatically with cries of anarchy, freedom, autonomy; an ostensibly drunken speech by a darkskinned candidate, Milfred Campbell, advocating full implementation of the now famous Hohol two-tier foreign student fee structure, a refusal by Le Larke to leave the stage after the allotted five minutes for speech-making, followed by Le Larke's request that the 500 students vote on whether or not he should continue to speak, which democratically allowed him to continue, whereupon the masked politico attempted a move to more serious campaigning directed at promising to uphold the university's autonomy in the face of the provincial government's obvious desire to seize the power now invested in the university itself; the list goes on ...

Whereas the Spark, Reynolds and Young Socialist slates had been preparing for several months, CRAP was formulated only four weeks before the polls opened. The campaign was conceived as a farce and executed as a farce. It sought to appeal to jaded students in their last year who had suffered three or four years of uncompromised wishy-washiness on the part of previous S.U. executives, or to younger students who had perceived, perhaps from observing the general trend in Government, Business, and Labour towards a centralized, concretely defined, decision making policy inevitably top heavy with bureaucratic compartmentalization and reams of reports and task force recommendations, the ineffectiveness and hence the farcical nature of student politics in the seventies. The CRAP slate recognized the farce and didn't pull any punches so far as their intentions were concerned.

During the last week of campaigning CRAP fever spread across campus like shit from the fan in god's anteroom. Suddenly everyone, including the CRAP candidates, were discussing the possibility of the slate actually winning. Yes winning!

And they did do remarkably well. Rene Le Larke lost by a handful of votes. Jay Spark, who Le Larke had called "Zoeteman's protege," pocketed only 20 per cent more votes than the madman Rene. In the more serious faction of politicians, serious meaning conservative, a windy *Whew!* ruffled finalized, procedurally expedient documents from the desks of the enterprising young paperpushers.

Rene Le Larke is now disguised as Manfred Lukat and warming the seat of vp. services on the Spark executive.

Lukat joined the S.U. executive just five days before the decision to lockout CUPE 1368. He voted with the rest of the executive, dressed by a new c.a. for Reed International, demonstrating the chameleon presence in his DNA, quick to camouflage him and ensure his survival in the branch of corporate politics.

But wait; there are rumors that Lukat has said he had no choice in the CUPE matter, that he was not officially ratified to vp. services until July 17 and yet was given full voting privileges July 2. Shall we allow Pynchon paranoia to intervene?

Could it be? As the rumor Lukat does not deny has it that Spark and Lukat were in cahoots long before CRAP was formed? And that CRAP was formed as the integral unit of an ingenious conspiracy to assure Spark's victory by appealing to voters who otherwise would have chosen Reynolds, initially felt to be Spark's closest rival? That the CRAP candidates were victims of their own cynicism, pawns set up for the Big Con? That the marriage-engagement of vp. services-elect, Shirley Armstrong, to outgoing Zoeteman vp. services, Jan Grude, which thereby created the vp. services vacancy now filled by Lukat was part of the plot which ensured Lukat his payment for services rendered and hence raises suspicions of a Spark/Zoeteman connection with god knows what other avenues of power somehow mixed up in the intrigue? That the move to Turtle lecture theatre was ultimately a last minute decision forced into being because had SUB Theatre been used another 400-500 people would have gone home saying, "Hey, maybe there is something to CRAP?" And those people spelling political doom for Jay's hopes for victory, would have left Lukat in the uncomfortable position of full responsibility for the 23,000 students on campus?

Ah, but this is pure speculation, conjecture, crap.

We look into the events of the coming year with interest and expect to see Mr. Lukat in many costumes. The only question is: are they kept in Mr. Spark's closet?



Y.S. Opposes Lockout

The recent lock-out of the Students' Union employees in CUPE local 1368 was blatantly anti-labour. Students and workers share the same problems and fight the same battles against cutbacks, inadequate housing, inflation, and wage controls. The Students' Union should be building student/labour solidarity, not destroying the basis of our mutual cooperation and support.

To our knowledge, no other students' union in Canada has ever locked out its employees, for they understand this principle.

Labour also understands the importance of student/worker solidarity, often siding with students in their struggles. Last year, members of CUPE 1368 united with U of A students in protesting the racist tuition fee increase for new foreign students.

The U of A Students' Union alone appears blind to the necessity of consolidating this relationship. Instead, it prefers to play a game of sand-box corporate politics using the livelihoods of its employees as pawns. In the interests of its so-called "management team," the students' union executive depriv-

ed CUPE employees of their wages and jobs for several weeks, forcing them to subsist on meagre union lock-out pay.

The Young Socialists have consistently opposed the lockout and other practices designed to intimidate the members of CUPE 1368 — such as the firing last year of union local's president, Govind Sundram. YS student councillor, Nick Cooke has spoken out against the Student Union's anti-union at-

titude at council meetings. We were instrumental in forming the Students' Union Employees Support Group which organized student and community opposition to the lockout.

We now call on the Students' Union to cease its anti-union practices. In these times of cutbacks and wage controls, labour's fight is our fight. Our fight is labour's fight. Build student/labour solidarity!

The U of A Young Socialists

Gateway

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