

The Gateway

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1964

Climb Off The Corpse

Students' Council has ridden its own horse to death, but cannot seem to climb off the corpse. Council would do well to drag the dead body out of the roadway so that it can get on with business, and allow Gateway to do the same.

In the VGW issue Gateway made an editorial stand, and council—or several members of council—took it seriously enough to: 1. confiscate the offending issue; 2. call for the editor's resignation; and, 3. call for a public apology for the offending editorial. But the Gateways were eventually distributed and the motions of censure were defeated or "postponed indefinitely."

Quite rightly.

And now council would do well to let the matter drop.

For Gateway has no intention of backing down from a stand we believe in. We have no apologies for saying something that needed to be said.

We do not pretend that the editorial in question said everything there was to say, represented every valid viewpoint, or was the last word on the question of education costs. But the questions we raised are important enough to call for the sort of treatment we give them—even at the risk of offense.

Council has every right to present opposite or complementary points of view. But the establishment's tendency to try to black out its "loyal opposition," this attempt to smother the students' voice of protest, is precisely the way to undermine its own legitimate function and authority. It is precisely the tendency that we will continue to oppose.

Council was hurt by the stand we made. Perhaps others were also. This is bound to happen when important questions raise conflicting opinions and interests. But our obligation is and will remain—to speak out loud and clear.

Paid President Unnecessary

Students' Council has come out in favor of hiring the Students' Union president each summer as a paid, full-time employee. However, the council has conditioned a proposal to this effect by making it "merely a recommendation."

Regardless of what form this proposal takes, it is bad, because it is the first step towards making the student president a full-time paid

employee for the full year.

We feel that the primary purpose for coming to university is academic, and extracurricular activities provide secondary education and training. To emphasize the latter by introducing salaried student positions would be to subvert the former.

We hope the incoming Students' Council will reject the old council's recommendation.

Spectrum

CRAGG COMMENTS

To the Editor:

Mr. Gillespie has made some statements and asked some questions which require answers. Before commenting specifically on Mr. Gillespie's Letter to the Editor, I would like to try to cut through the haze which seems to obscure a proper understanding of the Clarkson, Gordon & Co. report to the Students' Union. The most important single fact resulting from the Clarkson, Gordon study is that the building is financially feasible without any further increase in Students' Union fees. To indicate the soundness of this position, I will enumerate a number of facts which should be of interest.

1. Construction and equipment costs have been estimated on a very conservative basis. In both cases the architects submitted costs which they felt were reasonable. The financial consultant has taken these costs and added ten per cent in each case. Thus, in all probability, the actual cost of the Students' Union Building will be substantially lower than that estimated in our financial study.
2. The Students' Union to date has built up reserves totalling approximately \$144,000.00. These reserves are not in the financial study because the Constitution makes no allowance for their recovery. However, the present Council has changed the Constitution and as a result, these funds are now available.
3. Over the past few years, the operating surplus of the Students' Union has been increasing at a rapid rate. Last year the Union surplus exceeded \$15,000.00. This year the surplus will probably exceed \$20,000.00. The surplus has resulted from more efficient programming, as well as competitive bidding for various Students' Union contracts. Because of these surpluses, we estimate that the Union can meet higher costs of operation in the new building without any serious depletion of programming resources. A recent letter from Clarkson, Gordon & Co., financial consultants, confirm this fact.
4. The Clarkson, Gordon study does not account for revenues generated by the rental or sale of the present Students' Union Building. Although the value of this building to the Administration can only be assessed after further negotiation, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the final price tag for the building will be between \$200,000 and \$400,000.
5. The Administration has suggested to the Students' Union that they could use the theatre for classroom purposes each morning during the week, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 12:00 noon. If this suggestion materializes, an additional \$25,000.00 annually will be available to the Student's Union. This sum is not reflected in the Clarkson, Gordon report.

The above figures should make clear the very conservative nature of the Clarkson, Gordon report. Even future enrolments have been estimated on a very conservative basis. Mr. Gillespie has suggested that the Students' Union for the next 31 years will be

in a very weak financial position. The above would tend to indicate that the opposite is true.

I would like to make specific reference to various parts of Mr. Gillespie's article. Mr. Gillespie suggests that the increased responsibility for future Students' Councils will seriously weaken student government. My experience is just the opposite. Responsible government attracts responsible people. In my opinion, the various executive positions will become more desirable as opposed to less desirable, when the new building opens.

Mr. Gillespie suggests that the Students' Union will be run by professionals, as opposed to students. It is true that a large staff will have to be employed to operate the new Students' Union Building. However, an increased staff need not challenge the integrity of student government. It is certainly true that if the structure of student government does not adapt to the new situation, it will likely be unable to meet the increased demand. However, Mr. Gillespie does not seem to be aware that for the past six months, Students' Council has been seriously considering a new plan of organization which we think will meet the demands of the new Students' Union Building.

We have been very much aware of the problems created by an increased staff. Time does not permit me to outline the solution to these problems as we see it. However, the facts are available if anyone is interested.

Further, it has been in the past and will continue to be in the future the policy of the Students' Council to hire personnel to handle technical responsibilities. This is done on the assumption that if students are free from technical responsibilities, they will be able to spend their time generating new ideas and creating policy. There is no reason why this should not continue to work when the new Students' Union Building opens.

Mr. Gillespie is worried about the bookstore and food services. There are two points which should be made. To begin with, the Students' Union has not requested Clarkson, Gordon to make a thorough financial study of these two facilities. If the Board of Governors returns a favourable decision, the Student's Union will attempt to verify the assumption which has been made about these two areas, that is, that they will return their own debt and operating cost. Second, in those unions with which I have come into contact, the feed service facilities and in some cases the bookstores have been the major stabilizing facilities in the union so far as finances are concerned.

Mr. Gillespie comments on the 25,000 square feet of open space. (Perhaps he has considered the roof area in his calculations.) If Mr. Gillespie feels that he can design a better and cheaper building than our present architect, I suggest that he switch from law to architecture. For the time being, however, we will stick with Richards, Berretti & Jelinek, as Mr. Gillespie is short on a few qualifications.

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