

The Gateway

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Stand Up And Be Counted*

On the basis of the first two days of French Canada Week we wonder if perhaps the week is really a study in closed minds.

Have we really communicated with our French Canadian compatriots, has there been any dialogue? Or did each bring to the week an incompatible interpretation of Canada's future, an intolerant attitude towards the other?

If we judge by some of the questions asked our visitors, we might be tempted to say "yes". Some questions have indeed been irrelevant, obviously intolerant, or blatantly ignorant; some have indicated that the questioners must have slept through the speaker's remarks or dismissed them post haste; some have proved embarrassing to anyone aware of the speaker's intentions or remarks.

Many students came for solutions, for pat answers where pat answers cannot be given. Naturally, they were disappointed.

Madame Solange Chaput-Rolland has challenged the youth of English Canada to stand up, to raise our voice, to tell our leaders what kind

of country we want. We cannot do this if we don't accept the "French Canadian fact," if we refuse to acknowledge the "quiet revolution," as it has been called, for what it is. We cannot do this if we reject the aspirations, the aims, of French Canada. French Canada exists, and it exists in the terms Madame Rolland has so passionately outlined.

By all means let us, like the French Canadian youth, turn ourselves inward; let us be serious, reflective, politically minded. Let us stand up and be counted. Let us decide what we, as so-called English Canadians, want, as our French Canadian compatriots are doing for themselves; and then, perhaps, we can find a common solution, a common denominator, and thereby, build a Canada we both want.

But first we must cast away our mis-conceptions, our prejudices, our intolerance, and yes, our envy, of the rising tide of French Canadian "nationalism". And let us not be guilty of thinking, as somebody was, that Bill 60 is the name of the new Pope in French Canada.

Going Up, And Up... **

In the midst of the activity and excitement of French Canada Week let us not forget a problem which may not be as important or as far reaching as the constitutional crisis facing Canada but which is certainly of immediate and serious concern—namely, the expected fee increase.

At present it looks like somebody is doing a little kite-flying. If it hasn't been made apparent already to the kite-flyers, the students on this campus do not want a fee increase. Students' Council has reaffirmed an earlier statement asking for a "freezing of fees", at least until the Bladen Commission on the Financing of Higher Education in Canada reports.

Arguments advanced thus far to support the fee increase ignore one fact—students on this campus are unable to match present costs. A fee increase, especially with rumors of a hike in residence rents, could place an intolerable load on the shoulders of already struggling students.

We sympathize with the Board of Governors. Balancing the budget is not going to be easy. However, let them look for the money somewhere else than in student pockets.

Merely telling us that Alberta has the second lowest fees in Canada is

not enough. Merely telling us students now pay only 20 per cent of their education is not enough. Let them tell us where we will find the extra fifty dollars.

Are they going to make available more money for student aid? Are they going to make present student aid programs more equitable and just? Will they guarantee that no capable student will be turned away because he lacked the necessary funds?

We wonder if the skyrocketing costs have blinded the authorities to the principles on which a university is founded and grows. We wonder if students are becoming merely a source of revenue, mere pawns in a chess game between government, faculty, and administration. Or are they more correctly the *raison d'etre*?

Since tuition fees now represent so small a part of the total university costs, should not our goal be a free education for all those capable of taking advantage of it, rather than a small percentage increase in student cost-participation?

As one of Canada's richest provinces we should be proud of our low tuition fees, and we should endeavor to keep them low, and not use this fact as an argument for increasing fees.



"WHATEVER IT IS—IT'S TWO OF THEM."



by Bruce Ferrier

That is the danger of all-powerful benevolence, that men may relax their mental guard, or growing and living in a condition of tutelage, never learn to develop their individual strength..

—Eric Linklater

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From the pens of intellectuals has flowed a mighty river of criticism of the Welfare State and its concomittant social evils. George Orwell has for men everywhere made the phrase "Big Brother is Watching!" into a chilling reminder of what awaits the unwary.

It is therefore the grimmest of ironies that we students of this university are the inhabitants of a thoroughgoing Welfare State.

Consider the facts: an average student on this campus is fed by the University Food Services and housed by the Student Housing Service. His physical needs are taken care of by the Student Health Service, and his mental needs, by the Student Counselling Service. Any spiritual problems he has he can take to the university chaplains. When he needs a job he goes to the Student Placement Service, when he wants recreation, he goes to the Physical Education Building. The Students' Union organizes his free time, and the Administration, his classes. When he needs money he goes to the Student Awards Office and gets some. A student trying to escape this den of social iniquity will only find himself on a university-sponsored bus tour.

But this is not all. The university social structure bears an overpowering resemblance to that of the Brave New World of Aldous Huxley.

Perhaps there is no Central Alberta Hatchery and Conditioning

Center; but there are social classes more more firmly set than the Alphas, Betas, and Epsilons of Huxley's world. Arts, Commerce, Agriculture, Education—Alpha Plus to Epsilon Minus Minus, and I leave to you the classification.

We do not have soma, but at undergraduate parties there is sloshed around voluminous quantities of what seems to be a more-than-acceptable substitute.

We do not have free love, but—wait a minute, maybe we do, judging from the letters to this paper in recent years.

We do not have recording machines endlessly repeating conditioning phrases to sleeping children—but we do have lectures.

Of course, even with all this, we are still a long way from Ayn Rand's communal anti-Utopia, where the word "I" had ceased to exist in the language. The characteristic of all Brave New Worlds is that the individual has ceased to exist— all mankind moves in unison from its mink-lined cradle to its hygienic desanctified grave. This university still has its quota of individuals, in spite of governmental fire and storm. On your way from Service with a prescription for a tranquilizer, remember this—and pray.

Letters

Letters should be addressed to The Editor, The Gateway, University of Alberta. The Gateway will publish letters under a pseudonym, but in all cases writers must sign their own names and include an address or telephone number.

* A polemic discussion of matters arising out of French Canada Week.

** A polemic statement arising out of rumored fee increases.