

# There is no time left for a sandbox students' union

Since the inauguration of this year's students' council, the union has made its first real steps, faltering though they may have been, towards fostering in the minds of its constituents the belief that students can no longer in good conscience afford the luxury of a student-as-student existence.

The executive in particular has labored to convince students that they are also citizens, that the university itself is not as comfortably separated from the "real world" as students have found it so convenient to profess.

In addition, the executive has consistently pushed its ideal of the student-citizen into the confines of the institution itself. If the student is indeed a citizen, then he should have a powerful voice in the running of his affairs.

The election campaign students are now witnessing is probably the best indication of just what direction the union has taken and how thoroughly it has convinced the electorate it has chosen the right course.

It certainly has failed in part to communicate its ideals to the student.

However, even a glancing appraisal of many of the candidates' platforms reveals some startling

changes in the thinking of those running for office. Some stands which Mr. Leadbeater hinted at last year in his successful quest for the presidency, stands which in his words, he "almost had to apologize for", have this year become motherhood and apple pie planks in several platforms.

Mr. Leadbeater "apologized" basically for saying the union cannot and should not attempt to be "non-political". He openly promoted the unpopular Canadian Union of Students because he believed in a national voice for students and made it clear he could not support the university's \$25,000,000 capital fund drive because he disagreed with the fundamental corporate controls which hold sway over the university, the corporations being the main contributors to the fund.

He talked about students controlling their destiny with parity on U of A's governing bodies and about how archaic the tenure system is.

So, when "political" considerations find their way into more and more platforms which are by definition aimed at selling the candidate to the students, it becomes abundantly clear that increasing numbers of students are removing the university-as-ivory-tower blinders from their attitudes.

## President

To branch directly from our introduction into the candidates for president—we support that change in attitude. We support a union which will work harder to promote that change. We want a president who believes in that end.

For that reason, we support **Tim Christian** in his bid for the presidency.

Mr. Christian is the only one of the three candidates for the union's most influential post who demonstrates an awareness that unless we do involve ourselves in an organized fight to expose and correct the cancerous ills which have infected our society, the cancer will run its tragic course unimpeded. His warning that there is "very little time left" may even be optimistic.

It may indeed be too late now. In short, if pollution don't get us, the bomb probably will.

We cannot argue with Mr. Christian's logic that it is hopelessly irrelevant to continue playing in our upper middle class sandbox while the rest of the world staggers by.

Mr. Christian has shown the courage of his convictions by presenting an admirably honest platform directly aimed at confronting a power structure which creates law and order committees, keeps the doors of its governing bodies closed to the students, and creates its own private police force.

He also wants to bring women's liberation closer to a reality, increase community use of the university's facilities and battle for the subordination of the profit ethic to human needs in the research carried out here.

His most telling argument for

students in general is that it is not the structure of the students' union which makes it irrelevant to them, it is the fact that it is not dealing with the issues which affect students and their education as human beings.

There is no doubt that any one of the three candidates can run the union next year. We strongly favor Mr. Christian, however, because he has presented an overall and telling philosophy as his basis for becoming president. He has also demonstrated during the campaign that he is sensitive and diplomatic in his dealings with individuals.

Dennis Fitzgerald in our view is the man students should vote for if they want a top-notch administrator in the president's post. There is no question about his credentials.

Mr. Fitzgerald has garnered a wealth of experience by working his way up from the roots of the union. He is, without doubt, one of the hardest working executives the union has been able to attract. But we do not believe the prime requisite for the post is an exceptional knack for administrative matters. It is very much up to the president to set the tone of the union's philosophy. Mr. Fitzgerald has not presented an underlying philosophy to tell us what direction the union should take and why.

Mr. Fitzgerald has not committed himself to any strong stands supporting the student-as-citizen concept. His platform is basically a promise to support things the union has accomplished and to continue programs now in opera-

tion or already proposed.

He would do an excellent job maintaining union services but when it comes to new approaches to truly promote a relevant union, it is our contention that Mr. Fitzgerald would not be the man to recognize them or push for their implementation.

Don McKenzie is the presidential candidate who has made one extremely important point the others have not.

Mr. McKenzie has very rightly emphasized that students need a strong voice at the departmental level.

We are certain that Mr. McKenzie would do his utmost to foster strong undergraduate societies at that level. He has realized that gaining representation in the upper echelons of the governing structure is only a portion of the battle.

Where students must have a say is where the decisions which affect them most intimately are made. And that means representation on department curriculum committees. Mr. McKenzie clearly understands that.

While he is also the candidate who has put most emphasis on communication, undoubtedly a key factor in any government, we find his solutions to the problem unrealistic. Mr. McKenzie puts too much faith in changing the structures to improve the situation, instead of changing the goals of the union itself.

Again, Mr. McKenzie has had a great deal of experience within the union and has put a great deal of work into his re-organization committee. He too can serve the union well, but we sense his views are too isolationist to cope with the changing priorities.

As with Mr. Fitzgerald, we cannot see Mr. McKenzie really chopping at the ivory walls.

We need a new and sharper axe to make any headway.

## Vice President Academic

The academic vice-president is rapidly gaining importance as the edge of the wedge chipping at our educational system, especially at the university level. This position needs one who is in touch with the ideals of reform and with the realities of the existing structures and those by which reforms can be implemented.

In view of these considerations, we support **Trevor Peach** for academic vice-president. Mr. Peach has had valuable experience in the past year with the vagaries of university governing bodies. He has evolved definite views on what should be done and how to do it. His enrollment in the traditionally conservative and rather rigid engineering faculty has made him very aware of the existence of paternalistic structures and their operation. He indicates strong support for abolishing the tenure system and replacing it with contract-hiring administered by students and faculty. His definite views on increasing accessibility indicate a perspective on the broader issues of university education.

We feel that John Mason presents sound ideas, and we are impressed by his willingness to defend his position strongly. However, we have reservations about his experience and his understanding of the political realities of existing structures.

Dennis Zomerschoe's platform also reflects several good ideas, but we question both his experience and his lack of stands. We feel that Mr. Zomerschoe's ideas need considerable distillation before they become viable.

## Vice President External

There was some difficulty in evaluating the candidates for external vice-president, because none seemed to display outstandingly good qualities.

**Robert Bisson** is our choice as external vice-president. He has had considerable experience on the students' council at College St. Jean, and for this reason, has a dual perspective on the problems of student life: those of students in small and large institutions. Since the major external student body with which the vice-president will have to deal will be the AAS, we think it is important that Mr. Bisson has had considerable experience with this body.

George Kuschminder has the impression that his duties would be largely public relations. His approach to such duties seems to be telling "all those nice people out there what nice kiddies we are in here." We are afraid that public relations of this nature would do little to solve our conflicts with the vested interests outside the university, other than by appeasement.

Brian McLoughlin's platform makes interesting reading, but Mr. McLoughlin is running a non-campaign and is not interested in reforming from within the definitions of the position.

We are impressed with the scope and viewpoint of Brian MacDonald's platform. We recognize the value of his experience with students' council and the AAS, but feel that he is less committed and less cognizant of the entire perspective of student life than Mr. Bisson.

James McGregor stresses communications in his platform, but given that better communication were achieved, Mr. McGregor does not forward any concrete proposals for action.

## Co-ordinator

The candidates for co-ordinator each present thoughtful programs; however, on the basis of experience in the students' union, **David Manning** is the most logical choice. As an active worker in public relations and the organizer of successful teach-ins, Mr. Manning is well acquainted with the people and the job he will be dealing with next year. He seems to be well informed about the issues which annoy most students, and their frustration in getting anything done about them. Unlike some candidates he realizes the benefit of the students' union and wants to put in the effort to improve its efficiency.

Donald Fleming has also had experience in the public relations field, but not to the extent of Mr. Manning and not with those people he would be working with. His proposals for activities are not much of a change from what was offered last year.

Patricia Daunais' platform is idealistic and more realistic suggestions would be helpful, as well as broader coverage of the facets of the co-ordinator's job. The concern with women's rights is a welcome plank but she does lack the necessary experience in students' union activities. Familiarity with the issues and the people involved are important aspects of any position and our opinion is that Mr. Manning best fulfills these qualifications.

## Secretary

**Anne McRae** is The Gateway's choice for secretary. Both candidates have proven themselves hard workers and concerned participants in the students' union, but on the basis of a firm election platform, we support Miss McRae.

While she does seem to have an outmoded view of the secretary's duties, her proposals are modern and progressive. Her concern with the communication aspect of council manifests itself in more than merely saying there is a need for better communication, i.e., in concrete suggestions.

Maureen Markley has also been active in council this year and her proposal for a Student Hotline is good, but doesn't seem to have practical planning behind it. Her campaign has not shown enough detailed proposals and we really aren't sure where she stands or what she intends to do. Miss McRae's definite campaign gives her the edge.

## Our choices

These are the candidates the staff of *The Gateway* thinks will do the best job for you and your union. You may agree or disagree but we think it more important that (1) students vote tomorrow and (2) they demand the candidates carry through the platforms they have presented. We will attempt to ensure that whoever is elected tomorrow fulfills their promises.

# The Gateway

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**STAFF THIS ISSUE**—On the eve before the Great Paper Drive (this being Boy Scout Week of course) those who caucused to determine our plan of action were Ellen Nygaard (who knows all about vices), Judy Samoil (our co-ordinated secretary), Derek Bully-mer, Bob Anderson, Ron Ternoway, Joe Chi, B.C. (our candidate for king shit-raiser), The Blonde Bomber, Yak, Win-and-son, Barry (who is no longer with us because he forgot his Library Identification Card), Dan Carroll, Donna Brown (our latest cartoonist), Dale Rogers (petal-power), Beth Winteringham (who's finding out about economics the hard way), our resident Boy Scout, Beth (stage-struck, as in Ham), and yours campaigning, Harvey G. (for grab those Gateways) Thomgirt.

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