

"Then let them eat cake" . . .

The University of Alberta

Senate Dinner

In honor of

Max Wyman

upon the occasion of his installation as
President and Vice-Chancellor
of The University of Alberta



October 6, 1969
Lister Hall Banquet Room

Menu

Shrimpmeat cocktail

Filet mignon, mushroom caps *Drouhin Beaujolais*
Minted baby carrots *Villages, Burgundy*

Lemon buttered fiddleheads

Baked stuffed potato

Grand Marnier soufflé, hot sauce

Cheese and fruit tray

Coffee

Cointreau
Drambuie
Hennessy Bras Armé,
Cognac

—and they did

We thought that the above menu might be of interest to those students not able to attend the University Senate dinner given in honor of Dr. Max Wyman on the eve of his installation (Oct. 6).

It might especially concern those students disturbed by the rising cost of education, the accessibility of higher education, about the legitimacy of present priorities and the allocation of funds at this university.

Of the 400 odd people attending—at least four of whom were students—one of the more articulate diners, Paul Tietzen, Sociology Ph.D. Candidate, proffered this tangy comment: "Considering what should be the dedication of this university to equal educational opportunity, the expenditure of public funds for meaningless rituals such as this is an institutionalized obscenity. Rather than a tribute to the new president, I see it as a degradation of a rather remarkable man heading a rather philistine institution."

We suggest that the university could make small work of Mr. Tietzen's criticism by advancing the rationale for this expenditure, and, incidentally, informing us as to the actual amount of the expenditure. Such information will allay our fears about the inverted priorities of the university.

The Reception

The Chancellor . . . requests . . . pleasure . . . dinner . . . Max . . . installation. "The Chancellor has invited you too honey". "Better get my dress cleaned". "Don't forget the parking permit". "Hi Max, how do you feel?"

"What would you care to drink sir?" Over-courteous waspish girls, happy to be of service to those superior to them (at least for the present) implore me to eat oysters, etc., etc.

I see Premier Strom and feel sorry for him in his awkwardness, knowing that others feel proud not to be like him.

I feel like a man adrift and seek harbor among familiar facial landmarks. The enemy now controls the room—I drink to that—nameless, faceless, they chew the olives picked by barefoot children in Greece or Lodi—a toast to the distillery workers I hear "may their children follow in their footsteps".

I yearn to focus my eyes on something real, something I could fight for, as a ton of fraud weighs forever on my shoulders. Keep your cool . . . you've children in school . . . it's the golden rule.

I think of sneaking away with number one to some quiet bar where there would be boxing with that agile, complex mind. I guess that he wants to flee too—before some ass brays a joke that should have died 2,000 years ago—before his illusion shatters like windows in Watts.

"All guests . . ." shouts a square head with an electro-magnetic mind, "up the back steps". Ascension from purgatory at last, I rejoice.

The Dinner

Ha! I laugh, Peter Boothroyd is wrong. The Senate is good for something—free meals.

"Remember me", I inquire of a white haired wheel presently concerned with the immorality of letting land lie bare in city centers, "I'm the guy who wrote you about . . .".

"I get a lot of letters", belched the honorable, worshipful one.

The sociological unimagination clouds my mind. How many rows? How many per row? $22 \times 18 = ?$ Don't forget the super-wheels at the head table. If one hamburger costs 40c then . . . ("Someday we'll have natural gas for heat". "See the well right over there?" had said my Metis friends.) I look up and 400 people have oil stains on their hands.

Lined against a wall, uniforms to tell them who they were not, stood, bewitched, the assembly of dedicated fools, sworn to uphold whatever myths insured that they would not receive what they served. Beta minus, no more, they'd score. Hardly alive at \$1.25.

The ceremonial clown rises, glass on high. "A toast . . . to the most". I toast the boast, and the vanity of the host. A Beta Minus offers a filet and I stay, thinking of that day in San Jose when the union leader said, "Stay and have a filet, you needn't pay—it's all taken care of". And so am I—and so are they—but who is to pay. ("If you can bring some old shoes for the kids and some clothes", I heard them say as I drove away toward the warm city.) And there are oil stains on my hands.

The band played on, a multi-faceted pawn. Cigars, too, passed — as a final touch — while I munched on grapes in a one-man attempt to eat the drowntrodden grape pickers of California into one last frenzy of activity before the Univ. of California—"a community of scholars"—automates them out of existence.

I did not see who cleaned up, no more than I saw who waxed the floors, set the tables or watched the doors. But in the mist of my mind, as I left them behind, I thought I saw them grab—what looked like the tab. Beta minus, minus, minus, mindless.

Convocation

In they march wearing colorful robes and quaint brain warmers, signifying power, prestige

and pride—sort of academic Hell's Angels who place their horsepower ratings on their back. And I wonder, "Over which chair will the moon rise?"

Your warship, your honor, your obesity, your pomposity . . . distinguished guests . . . extinguished ladies and gentlemen of the galley", moaned the voicewriter on the walls. I looked at the galley and its trusty crew seated in it uptightiouness, wondering if the noble janitors who pick up the butts ground down by the shoes of those who choose—ever sit in these pews.

The shaman rolled his bones through my visions of sermons over 50 calibre shells—"God chose you to kill the yellow bastards" — and I thought "never go to one of these things without a paper bag". I left for the john, passing bleached boys in bleached jackets reading . . . force, strain, gain = speed and greed. Join Dow Now, Sacred Cow.

"Don't go back in yet sire, they're still in the mire", barked the uniformed puppet. Obviously, he knows the importance of this spectacle . . . I wish I did . . . I wish he didn't. "Do you Max . . . swear . . . as he should . . . as any could . . . who would".

Little David strikes in frenzy at a Goliath who hides in the caves of men's minds, swinging blindly. Backs stiffen . . . "Look out! He looks like the kind that might". The verbal rocks find no caves, no slaves to save . . . "oh let him rave" . . . youth always sees truth. Sit down David! No thornless crown David!

The Wyman Waltz starts. Music by the Heisenberg Uncertainty Duo (One step forward, one step backward. Repeat until you get the feeling you're going somewhere.). "There are two kinds of truth: **MY** kind and **YOUR** kind. I look to see if there are any other '**YOUR**'s' around. "**OUR** kind is relative and suits **OUR** relatives". "**YOUR** kind is sought but never found **HERE**".

"All knowledge is a lie", he adds truthfully, "but my kind is true **NOW**". "Let there be no mistake about this, **YOUR** truth will come true tomorrow, of that we can be sure." "Of this you can be certain, just as I'll die for **MY** truth, I'll cry for your right to chase after **YOUR** lies.—Law and Order is the order, and the restaurant is below the border.

MEMBERS OF THE AUDIENCE ARE REQUESTED TO REMAIN IN THEIR SEATS UNTIL THE PLATFORM PARTY HAS CEASED.