

SECOND WIND

by Pat Just

Second Wind is an occasional column of opinion open to all Gateway staff members. Views do not necessarily reflect those of other staff.

The feature presented in the centerfold of the *Gateway* on Tuesday, March 24 suggests that the lagging educational interest among students is mostly due to missing incentives. Stuart Mackay claims that either students aren't in the right programs, or are not motivated enough to take an interest in their studies.

Great emphasis is placed by Mr. Mackay on what the average student perceives to be true. A good example of this is that he feels that because students perceive "that university accreditation is no longer respected within the business world," their reason to study tapers off. The article points the blame towards the University itself for not having a good enough counselling service. The solution, it would seem, is as simple as giving students more input on what courses are good for them.

It is not reasonable to assume that all students are disillusioned

because they took the wrong courses or because the quality of teaching is substandard. Most students, because of their financial situation, spend a lot of time contemplating whether or not to attend a post-secondary institution at all. Considering this, they know when they get there that this is where they want to be.

As with every major decision in life, it is hard to commit yourself to a single goal and not have doubts about it at some time. It is also safe to assume that some percentage of the students will not make the right decision. But this is not a major flaw in the university system. It is just the result of what for some students may be the first major responsibility of their adult lives.

It is insulting to both the student body and the university to present all the perennial problems of any teaching institution at one time or another (such as overcrowding) and relate them as the cause of student disinterest. True, they are some of the factors involved in creating student disinterest, but what about all the

other obvious sources of the disease?

Is it just a major coincidence that this report to the Senate Commission should come near the end of the semester, at the height of student disillusionment when everybody is worrying over whether their final marks will be high enough and wondering how to live this summer? It is hardly the time of year to submit a report on student motivation.

It tends to make Stuart Mackay look like just another unsatisfied, unmotivated student. But not for the reasons that he states. It may be a major surprise to him, but this is not anything new. Students have been unmotivated for years. Very few of them are in it for the joy of learning. Quite the contrary, for a university education is almost a necessary requirement for most jobs.

It is admirable that the report was submitted. It has many good points. But I personally would not hold my breath for major results. The problem itself is self-perpetuating.

Liberate Ronald Biggs

We were surprised and shocked to read of the recent kidnapping of former Sex Pistol Ronald Biggs by British henchmen. This disgusting show of international terrorism is really rotten.

The puppet government of Barbados must be stopped before it extradites Mr. Biggs. We at the Popular Front for the Liberation

of Ronald Biggs demand that the Students' Union take immediate diplomatic steps to secure his release.

First they should withdraw the ambassadors and all embassy personnel from Barbados and Britain and confer honorary SU membership upon Mr. Biggs. Then Mr. Astley and Mr. Soper should send harshly-worded

letters to the aforementioned governments.

Failure to carry out these procedures will be taken everywhere as an abandonment by the SU of its role of defender of human rights in the free world.

Stu Brucite
Engineering III
R. Milhous Koch
Engineering III

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