

fourum five



letters

Ballooning gloom

Tuesday afternoon at 4:30 I was walking back from classes and noticed an engineering stunt that had gathered onlookers in QUAD. There, suspended above the Civil Engineering Building was an eight foot rubber balloon with yellow purex streamers. The second year engineers had constructed this as part of a promotion campaign for Engineering Week.

Later in the evening, I looked out a Residence window and noticed that the balloon had lost elevation. Suddenly, I realized that it was descending, and with the aid of binoculars, I saw two figures on the roof of the Civil Eng. hauling the balloon in. Curious, I ran over to investigate. Upon arrival on the roof, I met two of the campuses finest smirking over their catch. One of them commented "Call Cliff's while I make out a parking ticket."

Seriously, it seems that they thought it was a hazard, and were securing the balloon for evidence against some poor engineers. The only possible reason I can see was that it may have been a hazard for approaching aircraft. However, this is impossible because during the after I had more of less triangulated its height from several buildings on campus as approximately level with the 12th floor of Tory.

If the balloon was a hazard for airtraffic those pilots better watch out for the 13th floor of Tory.

I ask you, doesn't it typify the overall attitude on this campus that unusual expressions must be destroyed. I find it

depressing to witness the suppressions of inventive ideas. The atmosphere on this campus is one of gloom. Anyone who varies from the norm just disappears in administrative red tape and is never heard from again. This campus has become known for its total disregard to the human being.

Name withheld by request

A question of values

John Walker's letter, "By What Standard?", in the Tuesday, Jan. 21 *Gateway*, deserves comment.

Consider: Walker writes that "The ability of a state to feed itself is one of the flimsiest barometers of a country's backwardness that I can imagine. I suggest that a measure of the quality of life or how free each individual is to fully express his potential would be more valid."

Immediately, one is impressed by the impossibility of comparing the quality of life between two people in the same culture (neighbors, even) let alone across cultures where the value structures may radically differ. More than this though, I would question the relevance of such a quality index for comparative purposes. I may be very happy with my life as it is now, but another person may be severely troubled. The difference in our states of being may have absolutely nothing to do (and this is likely the case) with the country as a whole, the policies of the government, or whatever causal link you are looking for (I presume that's what you are looking for). Perhaps one can hypothesize a tendency for more people to be satisfied in some countries than in others, but I suspect that the measurement problems would prevent it from becoming anything more than a hypothesis.

But there is something more about his letter that really bothers me. Can Walker honestly and seriously tell me that an Ethiopian child starving in the Sahel has ever even thought about being able to "fully express his potential", or would even care if he had thought of it? The only thing he notices are the flies dancing a death-jig on his body. The only thing he cares about is the next meal, if there is one.

Has this child ever thought about quality of life, about

whether particulate concentration in the atmosphere was 1 ppm or 10, or whether he has free access to television in order to express his views? Hell, if he concerned himself with such trivia (trivial in the context of his life), he wouldn't live out the week. His concern is with the immediate, physical sustenance of life. "Alienation? - Who Cares? I'm hungry." "Art? - Can it feed me?" The only attitude these children would have to Walker's 'quality of life' standard is perplexity, they would think he was crazy, they simply wouldn't be able to comprehend what he was talking about.

What Walker doesn't realize is that a necessary prerequisite of the luxury of attending to one's 'spirit' (not meant here in the religious sense, but more in the sense of lifestyle, fulfillment, 'happiness') is the satisfaction of physical needs. It's incongruous, in fact bizarre, to speak of the quality of life when life itself is anything but assured.

Brent Bissell

SUB

At the door, the sign says
"Smoke Du Maurier."
We go upstairs for food,
but the cafeteria is closed
for a revival meeting:
"Repent," we are advised.
In the elevator,
"Jim is a dink."
Still hungry, we leave
and go home with
new knowledge of
cigarettes,
salvation
and Jim.

Beth Dalrymple
Ed. 4

Perspectives

The article on Valentyn Moroz which you reprinted from *The Canadian Tribune* is indeed worthy of presentation as an illustration of the Soviet school of political journalism.

Might I suggest a diversionary tactic? Those of Moroz's works which have reached the West are quite readily available in English translation, in the following books: *Ferment in the Ukraine* and *Boomerang*. If you take the trouble to read them, you may find some discrepancy between what Moroz himself says and what it is said that he said.

John Sokolowski

The battle rages

With reference to your lead story of January 21/75, CSA of A proposes changes for U of A staff, Kjenner states "That the Power Plant workers have never had any real contact with NASA." Not so, the President and General Executive Secretary spoke personally with the members in the Power Plant in, or shortly before, April 1974. Some time later, they were each sent a letter from the President of NASA inviting them to join the Association. At the meeting, the power plant employees were made aware that their salaries, while comparable to those paid to Provincial workers in the same jobs, were below the salaries paid to workers in, say, Edmonton Power and that NASA would be prepared to assist them in obtaining an increment to bring them in line with Edmonton Power. This offer was refused and NASA was told that they had chosen CSA of A and had been advised not to change their horses in mid-stream (whatever that may mean).

The Power House workers have never been told that in order to keep their jobs they would have to join NASA. As every non-academic on campus knows, membership of NASA is voluntary, a vastly different situation to that of Provincial Workers where membership in CSA of A is compulsory. How can the Power House workers justify this statement when they are, obviously and vocally, still employed by the University of Alberta and are still not members of NASA?

Mr. Kjenner states that "During all this, the workers in the power plant have gone a year and a half without a raise." Firstly, they have only been employed by the University for some ten months and NASA cannot be held responsible for what the CSA of A failed to do for their members prior to that date and, secondly, they have received exactly what non-academic staff at the University received, namely, \$300 lump sum and \$60.00 per month across the board increase. Averaging this out, one would come up with a figure somewhere in the region of \$85.00 per month, this is without having to extend the contract for 3 months as the CSA of A had to do for \$25.00.

Yours truly,
P.J. Wilson

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Berry wesGateway

✦ She refused to come down to the office to have her picture taken. Ida Balder simply refused to have anything to do with our photographers after she was picked Engineering Queen 1975. She said she didn't care to receive any publicity on this campus (or any other) because now that she was famous, nothing short of a \$20,000 picture contract with Hugh Hefner would entice her to remove her trenchcoat. Ms. Balder was crowned by an impartial panel of blind-folded judges after presenting a titillating, erotic, and exciting display of surveyors tools. The judges unanimously felt Ida was abreast and on top of every happening of Importance in the Engineering faculty. And talking

about the engineers, last night they (about 300 strong) were ejected from the King Eddie Tavern at 10 p.m. refused entrance to the Cecil Hotel Tavern, and finally ended up at the Executive House bar. Once there, they took over when the band quit playing with their own songs and music. I guess they were so bad the band (High) came back and did an after-midnight set for them. Not bad for one night's work.

✦ If you've been waiting for things to happen in Edmonton's rock scene, hold your breath. Here's a sample of what's coming in the next few months: Wishbone Ash and Doctor Hook are here on Feb. 4, to be followed by the hardest working

lady in rock 'n roll, Tina Turner (with Ike and the Ikettes of course).

Also coming between now and July are Chicago, Alice Cooper, Van Morrison, Rod Stewart and the Small Faces, Paul Anka, Captain Beyond, and Joe Walsh.

The reason behind a lot of these acts coming to Edmonton is a general dissatisfaction with the way concerts have been handled in the past, both from the audience and the promoter point-of-view. And so the inevitable happened. New people are promoting never before in Edmonton acts and the benefits, both spectator and financial, are attracting these big name people. And there's something I like about that.

