

"Where is the first Alberta Nobel laureate?"

Advanced Ed. budget debate laughable

by John Watson

The advanced education budget was debated March 23 in the legislature.

The honourable P.C. member from Calgary McCall, Stan Nelson, stands up to congratulate the minister and also to express his concern over inequitable funding of Alberta's universities, the U of C in particular.

The honourable member quotes the figure of \$88 million. "I'm sure that inequities, if they are there, will be discovered by the consultant," says the honourable member.

Meanwhile a government member sends a page across the house to the New Democrat ranks with a note. While the honourable member's monotone continues, William Roberts, ND Edmonton Centre, chuckles over the note and gives the thumbs-up to the note sender.

"I won't... make a big political dissertation that might be appealing to the people that may be here from post-secondary educational facilities," says Nelson.

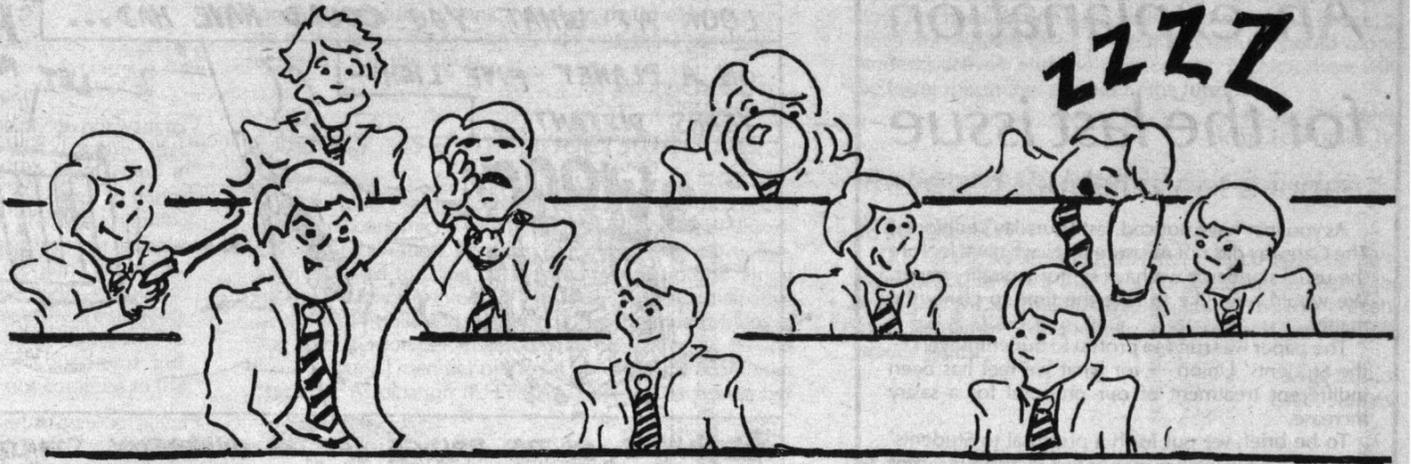
The honourable Dave Russell, minister of advanced education, has a cup of coffee delivered by a page.

"Socialism is the next step to communism," says Nelson amid cheers from his Conservative companions. "They'll grow out of it (socialism)," shout the Tories.

The honourable member continues to express his concerns and the equally honourable member sitting behind Mr. Nelson stares at the lights on the ceiling.

"Some people that have not been out in that cruel world and sat and sponged off taxpayers all their lives... may not understand," says Nelson.

The honourable member seated behind Nelson has involved the two honourable members seated to his right and the three now discuss the pattern of lights on the ceiling.



WOULD THE CHAIR KINDLY ASK THE "HONORABLE" BACKBENCHERS TO REFRAIN FROM WATERGUNS AND IN GENERAL, TO GROW UP?

Stanfield

The Calgary member finishes and the chair calls upon William Roberts, New Democrat, to speak next.

"I've got to tell you Mr. Chairman, if I had to endure any more of the diatribe from this (derogatory noun) over here, it would just make me throw up and vomit over the legislature floor," says Roberts.

The house bursts into a vociferous uproar.

The honourable member retracts

his words, spoken in anger, and goes on to make a few points of his own.

"You can always tell a Harvard man, but you just can't tell him much," says Roberts to a now attentive legislature.

Soon though, the members lose interest. A white-haired government member puts his feet up and casually ignores the speech. Another front-row member joins him

and they strike up a conversation. "Where is the first Alberta Nobel laureate?" asks Roberts.

The two government members become three and continue to ignore the conversation.

Another page scurries across the house and drops off another coffee.

Roberts wonders about the government's "commitment to debating the re-allocation of education funding."

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