

READER COMMENT by Laverne Booth

An accurate analysis of the North Garneau situation is difficult. After being involved in the whole mess from the beginning, some things are becoming clear to me.

Firstly, the University Administration has been fairly well prepared for the student outrage that has arisen in the past every time they have tried to destroy North Garneau. The timing of their moves has been such that the residents of North Garneau have all had exams and have been unable to respond. Every proposal put forth by the Administration has contained at least one bargaining clause or concession to keep the student sheep happy. Examples include the first notices to vacate by February 28 and the proposed parking garage.

Students have been thoroughly suckered into their tactics. The North Garneau Tenants' Association and the Students' Union have both believed that they had to be reasonable and make decisions without adequate information within Gail Brown's timeline. They thought that to have input at all they had to work strictly with the university-hired Architectural firms proposal.

If you talk to the student representatives on the committees who will actually be making the decisions (the Faculties Planning Board, Priorities and Planning, and the Board of Governors) they will tell you that it's nice to talk of things like "Quality of Life" and "Preserving Historical and Architectural Beauty" but that real decisions are not made on that conceptual level. Of course they are; the details can be worked out by the experts.

The point is that North Garneau is public property, not

private property of the University Administrators, and we, concerned citizens, have a right to be involved in the decision making. Before Christmas, Campus Co-op sent a statement of their position to all involved people. We got an immediate reply from Gail Brown asking us to sit on a 'Working Committee' and thus have input. We have not heard another word from her. Nor has any other student input had any effect on her plans. She has paid lip service to student input. This tokenism should not be tolerated.

The only information that the general student population has had about plans for North Garneau was in the *Gateway* article of January 22. Granted, this was sensational reporting but at least the information got out. The editorial in that same issue is probably the best analysis of the situation yet published. The actual motion passed by Students' Council reads:

We "support the principle of new east-of-campus student housing, to be located on or within the periphery of the area concerned; i.e., along 87 Avenue, 110 Street and on the block bordered by 90 Avenue and Saskatchewan Drive, and that the housing plan include integration and preservation of present housing; and further that Students' Council express its displeasure with the plans for a parking garage in the North Garneau area."

By this decision and by the latest decision not to support a rally proposed by Campus Co-op and the Grad Students' Association, the Students' Council has demonstrated its lack of political awareness as well as its lack of belief in their duty to represent students.

They originally supported the petition which has obtained signatures from 10 percent of the student population and now they have sold out Garneau and refused to carry through their original intentions. Let's hope the new Students' Council gets their priorities straight, they are supposed to work for the students in dealing with the University administration.

What we are dealing with is University Administrators who plan to push through their plans for student housing. Gail Brown wants to repair her damaged reputation, overspent budget and her career by using provincial money to build student housing.

What we must do is to fight hard for true student input into these decisions and for the right for North Garneau to exist where it is and exactly like it is — in the condition that we all appreciate. The petition circulated by the Students' Union, the N.G.T.A. and Campus Co-op is a good statement, has 1500 signatures unofficially, now and has more coming in. We have it from the Board of Governors that this petition will be listened to.

We must also, I think, be prepared to make some demands of the University. If this housing does go into North Garneau we must ask that the remaining houses be maintained and not allowed to fall into ruin, that all future housing plans invite student input and that future academic expansion be limited to improving present space such as Lister Hall.

There are students in North Garneau willing to commit themselves to this issue and we invite you to participate in a forum and a rally to be held next week. Watch for posters!



Aspidistra

by Alison Thomson

France's Communists have adopted an electoral technique the British Tories have found useful for years; racist attacks on immigrants to arouse the sympathy of those members of the working and middle classes most affected by immigration.

Communist mayors have long claimed that the concentration of immigrants in their municipalities is the result of a deliberate policy by the government to inflict upon left areas the problems immigration causes.

Lately, however, the CP has taken a more strong-arm approach to the problem of immigration into France; on Christmas Eve 1980, a Communist mayor ordered a hostel occupied by immigrants to be bull-dozed in order to make it unfit for habitation. Curiously, the same Communist party complained that the mayor in the town where the immigrants had lived previously was racist for having evicted them.

A Communist mayor then decided to reduce the number of places allotted to immigrant children at holiday camps subsidized by the municipalities. A third town has organized a campaign against a Moroccan family living there accusing them of being drug traffickers.

Strange actions from these members of the vanguard of the revolution. Should a Tory government in this country do anything of this nature, to for example, the Boat People living in Canada, the hue and cry would be of astronomical proportions. And, undoubtedly, a great deal of this uproar would be led by "broadly-based" organizations with long acronyms dedicated to smashing racism and fascism. The irony in all this is that virtually every pretentious organization dedicated to Progress is one or another of the Communist parties trying to convince itself and other people that it is or could be a mass organization.

Something a trifle odd appears to happen when these organizations actually become large and influential. They adopt the tactics, electoral and otherwise, of the capitalist parties they are dedicated to fighting.

Of course, the government of France itself is far from guiltless in the matter of integrating the immigrants into French society. The government has, for example, provided loopholes in housing laws to allow some municipalities to avoid having to deal with immigrants at all. And typically, those which have taken advantage of the loopholes have been the right-wing areas.

This is the sort of thing, however, that one expects from the right — it is a popular electoral manoeuvre to blame economic and social problems on immigrants. It is a manoeuvre the Communist Party ought to be ashamed of using.

Cheque this nefarious plot!

Worthy Albertans, I deem it a great pleasure to bring to your attention the most recent and innovative advance in keeping our beloved Alberta "the land of golden opportunities for those who can afford them." I encountered this gem on one of my recent excursions to the big business center of Edmonton.

This advance, which purges our trading centres of bothersome riff-raff, required the co-operation of the credit card companies, many sects of the automobile industry and the major department stores. The major department stores now disallow payment by cheque by any except those holding any two of the identification trio, i.e., a driver's license, two credit cards and nothing else, regardless of circumstances. The automobile industry's role in the success of the ingenious plot was to raise the cost of driver's lessons, automobiles, and all things

necessary to the upkeep of automobiles out of the range of ambitious low life.

The credit card companies diligently fulfilled their obligation by raising the interest rates in payments made with credit cards. This has had the doubly desirable effect of both discouraging any more from joining the legions of pretenders who flaunt their undesired credit cards and, in conjunction with the automobile association, removing the

privilege of payment by cheque from inferior beings. This, with the fact that it is unsafe for man or beast to enter the major shopping centers with cash on hand, has helped us achieve our goal.

Thanks to these ingenious plotters, the peasant class is scared to pay by cash, discouraged from paying by credit card and disallowed to pay by cheque.

POWER TO THE PURGE!

Hildegard Bonsfield
Arts I

Can you fix
this ad?

If you're a budding Picasso or at least can
straighten headlines,
we could use your help
laying out the paper
So drop in soon...

LETTERS

Letters to the *Gateway* should be a maximum of 250 words on any subject. Letters must be signed and include faculty, year and phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. All letters must be typed, though we will reluctantly accept them if they are very neatly written. We reserve the right to edit for libel and length. Letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the *Gateway*.



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