

The Gateway

member of the canadian university press

editor-in-chief Al Scarth

managing editor Ginny Bax sports editor Bob Anderson
news editors Sid Stephen, layout editor Joe Czajkowski
Peggi Selby photo editor Dave Hebditch
Beth Nilsen page forum five Jim Carter

STAFF THIS ISSUE—Bob Hope and Bing Crosby never put out a comedy like the present students' union production, "On the Road to Referenda," nor have they had a backup staff like the clods who came into The Gateway office to participate in the educational side. Producing this comedy of error was the brilliant Jim Carter on layout and sax, chief error maker, Dan Jamieson who provided the props like snow, Elsie Ross helped with scripting, Beth Nilsen and Beth Winteringham helped with make-up and make-out, Winston Gereluk did his education thing, and Dorothy Constable got her education and thing, Joe Czajkowski or however you spell it, who didn't do a damn thing but we love him anyway, Dennis Fitzgerald who finally climbed it, Ginny Bax, who provided the sets, Bob Blair, snow shoveller brillante, Ron Ternoway, who would have participated in the comedy had he not been smart enough to be in sports, Brian Campbell who didn't roar tonight, but managed to get his lines out, Barry Nicholson, at least that's how the police spell it, who ran the rum for the drinking age question, Ted Kemp, who provided the letters page, and your pornographic python, Harvey G. Thomgirt.

The Gateway is published tri-weekly by the students' union of the University of Alberta. The editor-in-chief is responsible for all material published herein. Final copy deadline for Tuesday edition—6 p.m. Monday, Advertising—noon Thursday prior; for Thursday edition—6 p.m. Wednesday, Advertising—noon Monday prior; for Friday edition—6 p.m. Thursday, Advertising—noon Tuesday prior; Casserole—copy deadline 6 p.m. Monday, Advertising—noon Friday prior, Short Shorts deadline, 3 p.m. day prior to publication, Advertising manager Percy Wickman, 432-4241. Office phones 432-5168, 432-5178. Circulation 13,000. Circulation manager Wayne Box.

Printed by The University of Alberta Printing Services.

PAGE FOUR THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 1970

A question of policy

by Al Scarth

Several of the guidelines laid out in Robert Clark's policy statement on post-secondary education are worthy of note.

Points one and eleven read respectively: "All Albertans who are capable of benefiting from undergraduate education in one or another of Alberta's universities should be provided with the opportunity to do so," and,

"The government will continue to administer a comprehensive and flexible financial assistance program for students to ensure that those capable of benefiting from further education are able to do so."

Mr. Clark says in his preamble to the guidelines that the policy statement should "constitute a clear and concise indication of the government's intentions in the post-secondary educational field for the next two years."

Mr. Clark says the government's "comprehensive and flexible" student aid program ensures that people wanting to attend university can easily do so.

Yet, his deputy minister says in a Gateway article of January 13 that most people who attend already have the means.

In that same article, Dr. Wyman states the vast majority of students come from homes which can already afford it.

Obviously there is a discrepancy here. Dr. Byrne and Dr. Wyman say it is a matter of environment which keeps lower socio-economic groups from attending, that they are not encouraged to value education. That might well explain the inconsistency.

If Mr. Clark has considered this sensible point, he does not mention it in his statement. In effect, his policies for the next two years are not ones which will strike at the root of the problem.

They represent little change in the status quo and hence the question arises why the education minister claimed the "strong need" for an interim statement while the government's Worth Commission on Education deliberates.

It should be obvious that something could be done in that interim to encourage wider participation at the university level by the province's young—such as abolishing tuition fees. It may not, as the president and deputy minister point out, make really significant strides in changing environments unfavorable towards encouraging higher education. It is just a first step.

And it may not be all that small. A debt is something members of the better monied sectors of the society take very lightly, even a very large debt. It is part of the credit card-charge account way of life.

Other people do not think that way. They fear the very mention of debt and with their resources, that \$400 tuition fee makes a much more frightening obstacle than it would for the better off.

With that in mind, removal of the 15 per cent of university coffers Mr. Clark mentions as the portion provided by fees would probably do much more good by erasing the individual spectres of debt.

Why wait two years when the question of a tuition-free university system has already been under government scrutiny for some time and when such a system could easily be implemented on an experimental basis now?

One final footnote on the minister's twelfth policy point: "All post-secondary institutions are expected to seek new and alternative means of conducting their affairs so that the quality and efficiency of their educational efforts can continue to improve without a corresponding increase in costs."

Well, really. If that is a "clear and concise indication of the government's intentions," it should be asked how long the province has been asking for pies in the sky and cake that never gets eaten.

Yes

Drinking Age 18?

by Beth Winteringham

I was once given a lecture in high school which was supposed to inform me about alcohol. I was told a story about an 18 year-old boy who drank one bottle of beer at a party. He started walking home through the snow, and was never seen alive again. He froze to death in that cold, cold air — supposedly because the alcohol in his system impaired his reasoning capacities.

One might deduce (and some people do) that alcohol is bad for 18-year-olds, and they should be prevented from drinking.

One could just as easily deduce, however, that adults should be prevented from drinking because some of them kill both themselves and others by driving while drunk.

Why is 21 the magic age number at which the immature child becomes a responsible adult? There are adults who will never be mature enough to drink properly — even though it is legal.

There are about a dozen arguments used commonly to advocate lowering the drinking age. It seems almost too trite to list them for the millionth

time, but here are some that I agree with:

(1) The old "if you can get killed in the armed forces, go to jail, vote in a provincial election, etc., why not drink?" argument still holds.

(2) Other countries (France, for instance) have no age limits at all.

(3) The Northwest Territories just lowered their age limit to 19, and I doubt if this will seriously affect the amount of liquor consumed there. Quebec also has a limit of 19 (the other provinces are still 21).

(4) Booze can be, and is, consumed by any person with a little know-how in the art of bootlegging. The law, therefore, is ineffective.

(5) Restrictions on drinking make it "exciting" to drink, and may actually increase it. The famous prohibition era illustrates both this point and point 4.

(6) Unknowing adults who serve liquor to people under 21 may be charged under laws that are poorly, and unevenly enforced.

It is time our government took a realistic look at what is going on among young people today.

by Dan Jamieson

For the sake of argument

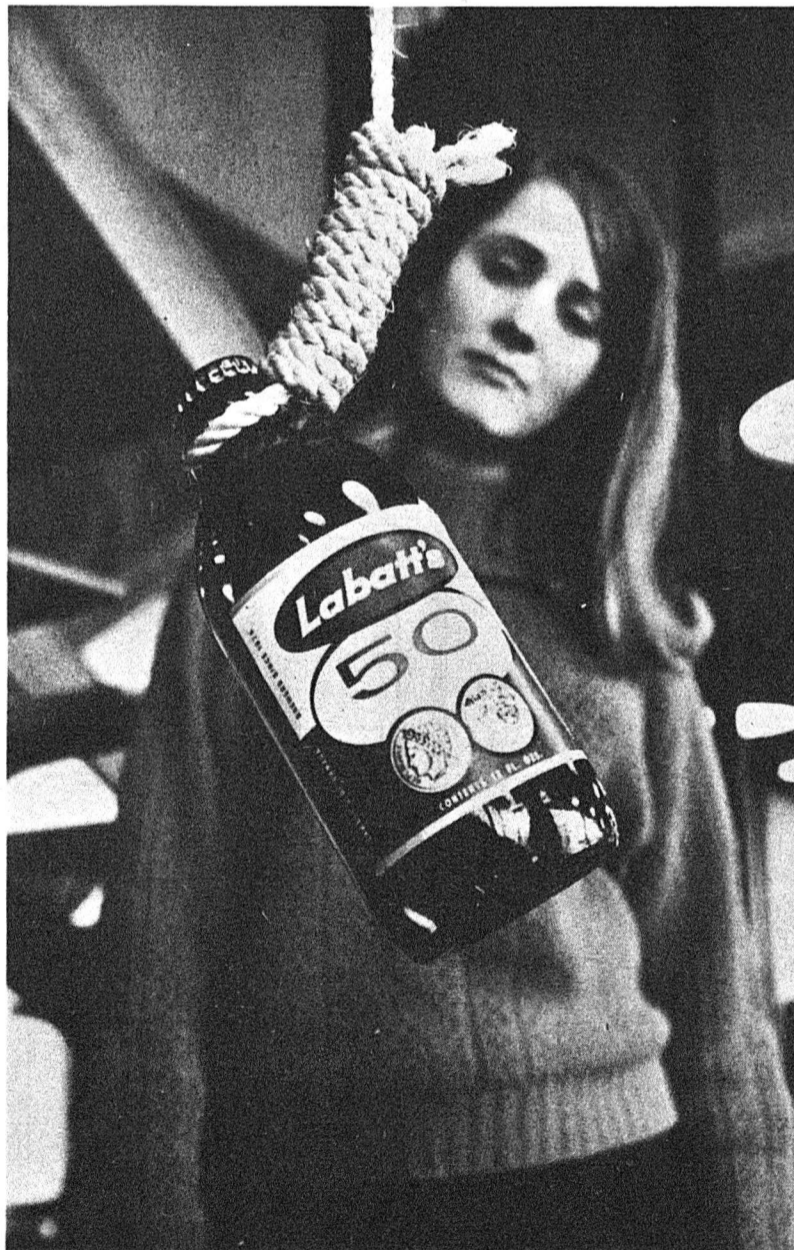
The old man staggers out of the bar, broke and broken, falling to the pavement and begins to shake with pitiful, wracking sobs. The people in the street walk by barely noting his shaking form, like the Pharisee in the parable, they go across the other side. After all, he's just an old drunk, let the Salvation Army take care of him.

It isn't a tragedy, it's just something that happens and nobody really cares.

A university student, a frail man, an athlete of the highest order, and eventually a graduate in law, he had built a successful practice, a home and family, and what was described in the polite circles in which he travelled as a "drinking problem."

That's a nice way of saying that he's a wino, but the man is successful, and of course he'd dry himself out and all will be well.

But he couldn't dry himself out, and all wasn't well. His business went downhill. His wife left, and his reasons for existing became narrower and narrower. Now he is one society's un-



It's such a shame

... he wasn't even opened

Gateway



"I think it's a good idea to lower the drinking age. If people are going to drink they're not going to wait for it to be legal anyway."

Greg Empson
arts 1



"I think if they lower the drinking age it's going to be abused."

Irmgard Heise
arts 1

Drinking