

# Vanek responds on tenure

I would like to respond to the letter of Dr. H.T. Lewis in the *Gateway* of 26 Oct. 1976. I find the majority of his argument well taken indeed. I reply largely because I wish to dispel the impression of "anger and hurt" that his remarks might cause me. What I want is a resolution of issues that affect all academics, particularly those at the University of Alberta. Of course, I also want to win my own case, but I have not persisted in challenging my tenure denial solely on personal grounds.

The Catch-22 situation to which Dr. Lewis refers in his conclusion did not begin with the University's response to the Visitor's decision. I have been in such a position all along. The tenure proceedings are not supposed to be adversary proceedings, yet in my case they were clearly so. I was not able to challenge that imbalance within the University's normal procedures.

The tenure hearings themselves came at the end of two years of probationary appointment in which my professional activities were met with systematic interference on the part of the departmental chairman who recommended against my tenure. What has perhaps not emerged from all the voluminous documentation of this case is that I tried every normal University channel and was uniformly greeted with a position of support for the departmental chairman.

It is in this context that the actions which Dr. Lewis sees as alienating the University community were brought into effect. I was in the virtually unique position that my difficulties began within a month of my taking up a teaching position at this University. Thus, I never had an opportunity to establish smooth working relations with any of my colleagues. I did not have any allies to whom I could turn either for advice as to the procedures of

this University (which are, of course, largely unwritten) or who would speak up on my behalf.

The thing which disturbed me most about my early efforts to defend my position was that the colleagues with whom I discussed the matter were sympathetic to such matters as my being removed from all teaching duties, but felt that normal University channels would provide redress. Their faith is touching, but my experience led to a different conclusion.

Further, virtually all of the colleagues with whom I spoke failed to see that my problems, however legitimate, had anything to do with them or with the general position of academics at this University. I still fail to understand this position. What happened to me was, and is, symptomatic of the way the University of Alberta deals with individuals.

The underlying assumption seems to be that anyone who gets

into trouble must be wrong. Yet our society is predicated on the assumption that the rights of individuals are important, and that larger justice is not served by destroying individuals.

My hunger strike was a last-resort kind of strategy to call attention to the way the University operates. I hoped, of course, that at least some people would be appalled by my situation. It has never been reported why I stopped my hunger strike. A surprising number of concerned individuals stopped to talk to me in front of my Campus Towers' office. But I was also approached by individuals whose idea of a protest was to attack the University with machine guns. I did not want violence but rational, open discussion of important issues for academic. So I quit.

My candidacy for the University presidency was again a deliberate action. From my own experience, I felt that I had a great deal to say about changes necessary in the operation of the University of Alberta. Of course, I did not expect to be appointed to that office. I would note, however, that minority political candidates can have considerable impact on the actions of the majority party without ever having a chance of being elected.

In fact, many of the points in my "platform" have been taken up by the University since that time. I feel that my action thus had some positive effect. Whether it helped my case is, of course, another issue and I agree that it did not. But I continue to maintain that my case is only part of the issue to me.

I agree with Dr. Lewis that I have not appeared "likeable" to most of my colleagues. It is difficult to be a nice guy under circumstances such as those I faced. Obviously what I should have done was to quietly disappear.

But cases such as mine would not occur and reoccur if more people were willing to fight on principle. Every large institution commits injustices. The measure of an ethical institution

is that it can reexamine its own actions and admit mistakes.

My "sin" in the eyes of many appears to be alleged that I would not accept the University's implicit judgment of my alleged incompetence. I had a number of resources available to me that are not normally available to people who are denied tenure.

First, I was the editor of an international journal in area of specialization. Thus, I could maintain my professional activities at some level without without a professional affiliation. I have since established another international journal. My research is well known in Canadian circles at least because of the current interest in multiculturalism.

Second, I had the financial resources to fight for my principles. I am not the person that the University of Alberta unilaterally declares me to be. I believe in academia as an important institution of a free society and I believe that I have a possibly unique contribution to make to it and to my discipline. These principles are worth fighting for.

I do not want to be liked — I want to be left alone to do my academic work. I have a contribution to make to some of the really exciting and productive things that are happening at this University, in this Province and academic in general.

I do not think the matter is ended, although I agree with Dr. Lewis that the present procedures are unlikely to produce a fair hearing. I still believe that public opinion, especially that of the University community, has some weight. If the academic staff of this University are indeed powerless, then it is time all of us knew that and sought to do something about it.

I urge anyone who is concerned about this case to write to the Board of Governors and send me a copy (Box 5677, Station "L", Edmonton) to ensure that protests are not buried in administrative files.

Dr. Anthony Vanek

## CON it be serious?

re: CON, *Gateway*, Oct. 26

We recognize that society needs critics. We presume that Ambrose Fierce presumes himself to be one of those critics. Why then is Mr. Fierce's article about Frank Cebuliak not a critique, but mere slander?

It is easy to make a man look foolish, as we all know. To positively criticize the issues propounded, however, is quite another thing altogether. We will grant that the quotations extracted may, indeed, be true. (Those of Mr. Cebuliak used by Mr. Fierce in his article.)

Those words do not slander Mr. Cebuliak, for they are a product of the man, himself. The attitude that Mr. Fierce intones, on the other hand, is not necessarily reflective of Frank Cebuliak, nor of his message. Mr. Fierce has done no more than give vent to a personal prejudice. As such, instead of being treated as an article by the *Gateway*, Mr.

Fierce's work should be given no more status than this letter.

Let Mr. Fierce, the *Gateway*, attack issues. We are for that. Let it be done fairly, though. Do not repudiate yourselves and belittle the university by merely glossing over the modes of other men. One's dignity is lost, not gained by taking away the dignity of another.

## There really is escape

In reference to an item in the *Gateway* on Thursday Oct. 28, a misrepresentation has been made, and I feel should be corrected. Mr. David Oke quotes VP Services Jan Grude as saying that all buildings on campus will be hooked up with CKSR. This is not the case. Selected areas of a few buildings on campus are in the process of being connected, but certainly not all buildings.

There will be an escape from

Sincerely,

Earl Blacklock  
J.K. Hoffman  
Keith Miller  
John Litwin  
Steve Kindred  
Corrine Champion  
M. Moffat  
Lorraine Bronon

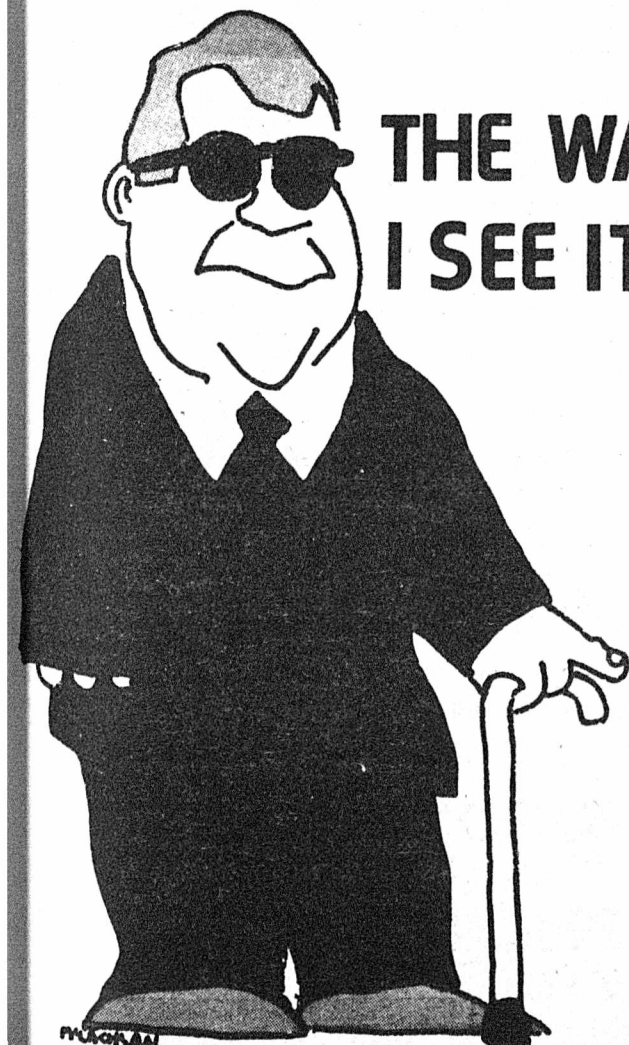
**Ed. Note:** In fact, CON is run by the *Gateway* not as an article but as a column.

CKSR, just as there is an escape from the *Gateway*. However, as I am sure you will agree, both agencies are providing a service to students and should be made full use of.

Brent Kostyniuk  
CKSR Director

**Ed. Note:** How embarrassing. We do apologize to our colleagues in students media.

## Frank Mutton



Part of today's column is devoted to a short interview I held a few months ago with Earl Carter, the President-elect's brother. He and I bumped into each other at the opening of a new Chevron station in Americus, Georgia while I was on a deluxe Grey Goose Funlover's Tour to Miami and the Okefenokee Swamp. Mr. Carter consented to be interviewed only after I let him drink my Resdan.

**FM:** Mr. Carter, do you think your brother will win in November?

**EC:** A think he's gonna wahp that nigger-lover Ford's ass!

**FM:** Is Jimmy happy with his progress in the campaign?

**EC:** Proudern' a pig in shit.

**FM:** Will you continue to operate your gas station if Jimmy wins? And if so, will you keep the station in Plains or move it North?

**EC:** Gas station in Plains? What in hell you talking about? Ahm head of the Depahtment of Linguistics at Georgia State U! Jimmy just aksed me tuh pose as Jumb ol' Earl the gas jockey so's he'd look real smart next to me! Matter uh fact, ah took his Nuclear Physics exams back at Westpoint in 53 so's he'd make it onto one uh them there submarines. Why, Jimmy's got no more sense'n a nigger-hippy!

**FM:** Why did you do it?

**EC:** Hell — don't you know? Ah gets tuh be Minister uh Defence in thuh new Cabinet! Ahm ginna qit me some Commies!

**FM:** I thank you, Mr. Carter.

**Bittorf-Holland-Christianson Architects** has a proposal before the **City Planning Department** that would see the construction of a new **High Level Bridge** across the North Saskatchewan.

The plan calls for a five-level inverted pyramid to carry rail and road traffic across the valley near the site of the current bridge. The Planning Department is somewhat cool toward the plan, since it would involve the demolition of the **Legislative Building**. The city feels that **Premier Lougheed** would be more than a little ticked off at having to give up his office (and especially the **Water Pic Shower Massage** in the **M.L.A.'s Sauna**).

The city is also studying the idea of purchasing **HUB Mall** from the **University** and stringing it across the river. Mayor Cavanaugh had this to say about that proposal: "Huh? What? Pardon me?"

**Ray Jauch**, coach of the Eskimos, says he can't understand the Eskie's loss to Calgary last weekend — he distinctly remembers telling his boys to create mass confusion in the Stampeder ranks by playing **good football**. They apparently got the message mixed up and stood around waiting for the Stampeder to hand them the ball ... Also in sports — **The Edmonton Oilers** held a special **Hello**,

**We're Not Dead Yet** night at the Coliseum last night, with free admittance to people wearing an Oilers button. **Doris Bernbaum** the cleaning lady won all the door prizes when she was the only person to show up. Doris says she doesn't know what she'll do with first prize, **Ben Haskin for a night**, because she's not into **leather and whips** ... **Ambrose Fierce** and **Lydia Torrance of Gateway** fame will spar in SUB Theatre on campus next week. Two falls out of three, unless 84-year-old Lydia suffers a coronary, in which case Mr. Fierce will be allowed to commit indecencies to (and on) her person.

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH advanced education minister Bert Hohol says he's tired of people callin him names and says he's only "following orders" from **Peter Lougheed**. He says Peter has told him to hasten the erosion of the **university's foundations** and help put the uni's campus into the **North Saskatchewan** as quickly as possible. Bert added that he's also considering changing his habits — he's been called a necrophiliac sodomist with a penchant for bestiality because of his education policies. But Bert insists he's only flogging a dead horse.

In closing, remember that life is just a bowl of cherries (or it is only the pits? — I can never remember which).