

Fuzzy thinking, no facts

In behalf of the Executive of the Edmonton Voters' Association, I would like to respond to your "Second Wind" column of opinion that appeared in the Tuesday, March 17, 1981 issue of *Gateway*. In that article your staff member Brent Jeffery writes, "... we have 'the Edmonton Group for Conservatism and Backwardness' (otherwise known as the Edmonton Voters' Association) trying to force yet another plebiscite on the issue." The "issue" in question is the now \$82 million Convention Centre.

The article was a surprise to us because we have never heard of any EVA policy to "force" a plebiscite, even if plebiscites can be "forced" on the public. In addition Jeffery seems to imply that we are opposed to continuing with construction of the Centre by his writing, "The most threatening aspect of this issue are the groups that are trying to bury it." He later mentions EVA as one of the groups that are trying to "bury it." Here "it" seems to refer to the Convention Centre.

Brent Jeffery spouts this garbage when EVA policy on the issue had not been formulated. Not only do his allegations serve as an example of the fuzzy thinking and complete lack of regard for the facts that many Centre boosters show, but he also demonstrates that he does not show the sense of responsibility that is so necessary for those involved in the media. Indeed, Jeffery seems to be deciding EVA policy for us, even before we have acted. The article, then, is quite possibly libelous, and both Jeffery and the *Gateway* are equally responsible for having it appear in print.

During an emergency executive meeting held on Wednesday, the day AFTER the article in question appeared in print, we did plan a course of action. The outcome of that meeting has not yet been made public, so we cannot give any indication in this letter how far out Jeffery's allegations are. We like to think of the *Gateway* as a responsible newspaper, so we invite you to appear at our press conference at

0930 Monday morning in Alderman Ewasziuk's office at City Hall. Then, you will be able to get the correct information in regard to Edmonton Voters' Association position on the cost explosion for the Convention Centre.

In conclusion, we feel that Brent Jeffery owes us a public apology for writing the offensive article, and *Gateway* owes us an apology for printing it.

Walter G. Aiello
Edmonton Voters' Association

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 should be typed, although 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*.

Smoking battle inflames passions

The joys of smoking can't be counted by the confirmed pursuer of this pastime for the joys are endless. Conversely, the sorrows of smoking could never be tallied by the staunch opposer of this habit. And for the person in-between who wishes to but can't quit, the joys and sorrows make for a bittersweet encounter. The love-hate triangle that exists among these groups presents an endless array of situations.

For the smoker, the benefits of this habit are many; it soothes the nerves (so smokers claim), it makes for a relaxing break, and it goes well with a cup of coffee. For the abstainer, smoking is a constant irritation to the nose, the eyes and perhaps even the taste. And finally, for the potential quitter, smoking offers both the fear of cancer and the delight of its taste. Yes, smoking is an evil for some, the rejuvenator of others.

With the latest call for bylaws banning cigarette smoking, especially in Edmonton, the battle of those pro against those con may surmount the on-going battle of the sexes. It would seem that the exponent of fresh air and healthy lungs will clash with the smoke-filled puffer, while the struggling smoker who desires to quit will scrimmage the scuffle.

What will happen when a defiant smoker lights up a smooth, white smoking stick in the presence of a staunch reformist? Will the swords be drawn and a duel ensue? Or will the two who meet on such a battle ground drop their allegiance and come to an understanding mutual to both?

The days of the smoker are becoming numbered. He will probably fight to the end, gasping and choking on his way out. He probably isn't concerned that each inhalation means a certain and earlier death. He doesn't care that he gasps for breath everytime he ascends a staircase. It doesn't bother him that even his eyes burn

in a smoke-filled room. No. What is important is that glorious feeling that is achieved everytime his craving is satisfied.

The non-smoker would be wise to keep his words of wisdom to himself because they will only fall on deaf ears. He, though, will not tolerate the stench of cigarette smoke on his clothing or his body. He will not embrace the poisonous smoke that penetrates his lungs. He will not deter from the fight.

And for those lacking the

willpower, they will cower in the night as they dream of the horrors this simple innovation causes. Nightmares will shake the weak from their sleep. Yet when morning dawns, they will desperately reach for, light up and smoke.

What will become of all this? The smoker will go on smoking, the fighter will go on fighting, and, with any luck, the others will quit.

Janice Michaud
Thunder Bay, Ontario

Role of new technologies debated

Are you interested in genetic engineering, the development of new weapon technologies, or the effects on society of new communication technologies? Are you concerned about Canada's support of research and development? In general, are you concerned about the role of science in our society?

If your answer is yes, you may wish to attend the first Canadian Student Pugwash conference on "Science in Society: Its Freedom and Regulation" at Carleton University in Ottawa from June 12 through 14.

Sparked by a manifesto issued by Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein, the first Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs was held in Pugwash, Nova Scotia in 1957. Canadian Student Pugwash continues this tradition by promoting the free discussion of science and ethics issues in the University community.

The first National Conference of Canadian Student Pugwash will bring together 50 students and 25 eminent senior participants from academic, research, legal, administrative, and business circles. The five workshops and two major public debates will focus on different

aspects of the freedom and regulation of science. The published proceedings will include a selection of student and senior papers.

The following are the workshop topics: Society's Support of Scientific Activity; International Security and the Regulation of Defence Technology; Biological Research and the Manipulation of Life Forms; the Freedom and Regulation of Social Research; and, The Freedom and Regulation of Communication and Information Storage Technologies.

Come ratify
next year's
editor's at the
**STAFF
MEETING**

Thursday, 4 p.m.

Room 282 SUB

CIA wrong: NATO still maintaining parity

Nicolas Dimic has written two letters supporting U.S. arms spending; I will limit myself to two letters in response.

I maintain that no Soviet military superiority has developed either in the last decade or before: NATO still outspends and at least maintains parity with the Warsaw Pact. Unfortunately, those who question CIA figures are dismissed as "communist propagandists." Horrors!

My views on this are those of such U.S. defence specialists as Stephen Van Guera, Barry Posen and Edward Lutzak (and even that KGB agent Stan McDowell of the *Toronto Globe and Mail*). Such sober estimates far outnumber the alarmist perspectives in independent research journals such as *Survival* and *International Security*. (Mr. Dimic's one quote to the contrary is, I admit, unknown to me but definitely a minority position.)

Mr. Dimic apparently accepts that NATO spends more, but I also agree that the balance of forces must be considered. Several recent articles in *Survival* have demonstrated both a parity of forces and also that U.S. defence reports are "designed to erode confidence in U.S. power," using raw troop and tank data without assessing their effectiveness (Lutzak). For example, NATO has fewer tanks but superior operational equipment, few troops but more giant troop-carriers, few ships but many more naval bases (Geoff. Kemp) — and the USSR shares a border with a nuclear power which claims large chunks of its territory (i.e. China).

Mr. Dimic confuses the

European missile issue: the SS20s are replacements but NATO has talked of adding long-range nuclear missiles to its existing strength. This decision was made before the appearance of the SS20 and follows an old, much criticized NATO policy of "matching" nuclear missiles in Europe to perceived conventional strength (see Alton Frye). Brezhnev's subsequent offer to reduce troop strength by 20,000 was ignored; by then the bugaboo of the SS20 had appeared, but so had heavy, W. European opposition to the NATO move.

Incidentally, the story of the leaked NATO documents outlining the defensive nature of Soviet foreign policy and NATO's intention to maintain superiority was carried in several newspapers, including *The Times*.

Finally, most of Mr. Dimic's "facts" concerning Soviet aggression are speculation. Afghanistan would take another letter but Western European governments in general did not consider this a threat to world peace, since it has always been in the Soviet sphere of influence. A British Parliamentary Committee report released last autumn (and widely reported in the media) concluded that the Soviet intervention was not expansionist but was to support an internal revolutionary administration which was becoming unstable.

Soviet military spending has always been in response to that of the U.S. and I only hope that Reagan negotiates balanced arms reductions rather than destroying the rough parity which now exists.

Steve Goff
Grad Studies

While in Ottawa, all costs for the student participants will be covered by Canadian Student Pugwash. We may also be able to provide some travel assistance.

If you are interested, brochures and applications for this conference should be available at any natural science, social science, or philosophy

department at your university. If you cannot find this information, please write to me at #806 - 474 Wilbrod Street, Ottawa, K1N 6M9, and I will forward an application. Completed applications must be received in Ottawa by April 7.

Fraser Homer-Dixon
Conference Coordinator

Rabble invades library

As final examinations approach, so do the annual migrations which herald the coming of spring. The thundering hooves and braying voices of the herd carry for miles across the thawing tundra.

I write, of course, of Bob and Carol CABsitter's annual trek to the campus libraries. Along with Ted and Alice, the Java Jive Junkies, these animals make the libraries virtually unlivable. They don't understand that lunches eaten in the library are not automatically transformed into

active brain cells (although I had to clean up some grey matter in Cameron once after someone's private banquet - I think it was an egg sandwich). Discussing hockey over open notes won't teach them Chemistry 205. Neither will a finely honed sense of Artsy gossip get them through English 210.

If these children haven't learned to study by now (finals start in a month), they probably never will. Please Bob, Carol, Ted and Alice, stay in CAB.

Philip Loewen
Science IV

Humor packs big bite

Frankly, I'm sick of it all! Women's rights, gays' rights, children's rights, seals' rights! But has anyone, anytime spoken out on behalf of the lowly tooth? It, too, is helpless, vulnerable, exploited as a sex symbol and without a voice of its own.

Did you know that teeth only die when the person they reside in is alive? After the person dies, the teeth can survive millions of years. Whether slowly eaten away by bacteria or bludgeoned by hockey pucks, it all amounts to the same thing doesn't it? Murder!

You talk about capital punishment, but has anyone tried

to lawfully ban Hubba-Bubba? And Kraft — the maker of the near fatal Caramel and Softee Toffee is practically a national saint!

As the president of the International Funeral for Every Extraction Committee, I was pleased to hear about Dental HealthWeek being sponsored by the first year Dent students and Hygienists. I commend them for their efforts to bring teeth to our attention.

I. Likamiteeth
P.S. Donations are welcome to the "Trident instead of Twinkies on Campus" Campaign, Box 4717, Edmonton.

