

The Gateway

member of the canadian university press

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STAFF THIS ISSUE—This is a family newspaper—Martha Thomgirt had little ones yesterday. As a proud father I am going to name the little snakes: Ken Bailey, Ellen (I didn't really forget you) Nygaard, B. S. P. (virginity questioned) Bayer, Dave Blackmore, John van Gelder, Andy Ormanroyd, Dennis Zomerschoe, Mary Ellen Boyd, Brian McDonald, Marge Hergot, Lorna Cheriton, Dan Carroll, Joe Czajkowski, Judy "bed-bug" Griffiths, Elizabeth O'Donaghue and Joe College; and signing off is your cigar-smoking, rib-busting, but bubble-bath-clean snake, Harvey (G for virginity Gone) Thomgirt.

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PAGE FOUR

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1968

More about closed meetings

Students interested in student politics and decision-making within the university structure derive particular delight from the terms "democracy" and "open meetings".

It is one of their chief frames of reference when they attempt to build a case against the Board of Governors and General Faculty holding closed meetings. The 'closed' in this latter case means the board and GFC do not allow observers at their meetings. However, press releases are issued following the meetings so students can grasp at least a vicarious view of what the two bodies are discussing.

A recent meeting of the GFC executive has provided considerable optimism that this restriction will be removed at least in the case of general meetings of the council.

Now, the tables are turned. It is the students who are slamming the doors and keeping everyone out of the meetings. Reasons for this are not available but it is assumed that some great secret plot to open other meetings is being discussed. They may be even discussing other things.

We are referring here to the graduate students in the department of political science. Dr. Christian Bay apparently resigned Tuesday as head of the department. Two Gateway reporters went to the department for interviews.

The pair entered a grad students' meeting called to discuss the current upheavals in the department. When any university department experiences significant change, the students on the campus have a right to know the bare essentials if not the entire story. This is their right as students.

When The Gateway attempts to get the story, it is simply doing its job as one of the chief channels of communication between students, faculty and administration within the university.

So the grad students, led by one astute observer, requested the reporters to leave. There were no reasons given—just a courteous bye bye.

Some claim The Gateway is biased. Some don't trust us. Some don't trust anyone. Some would rather develop their own biases and supply us with all its details.

It is these same latter people who castigate the campus newspapers for bad reporting. Their view is that because the report doesn't agree with their observations, then it is incorrect.

The view is, of course, laden with hypocrisy. It dates back to the power struggles on campus. The SDU say they have a large power base. The students' union claim they represent the majority of students. Many students hate the administration. Etc, etc.

A strike is useless

An article on front page says the social science students at the University of Ottawa are in a bad way for some changes. The proposals as listed in the story are idealistic but then they have to start somewhere.

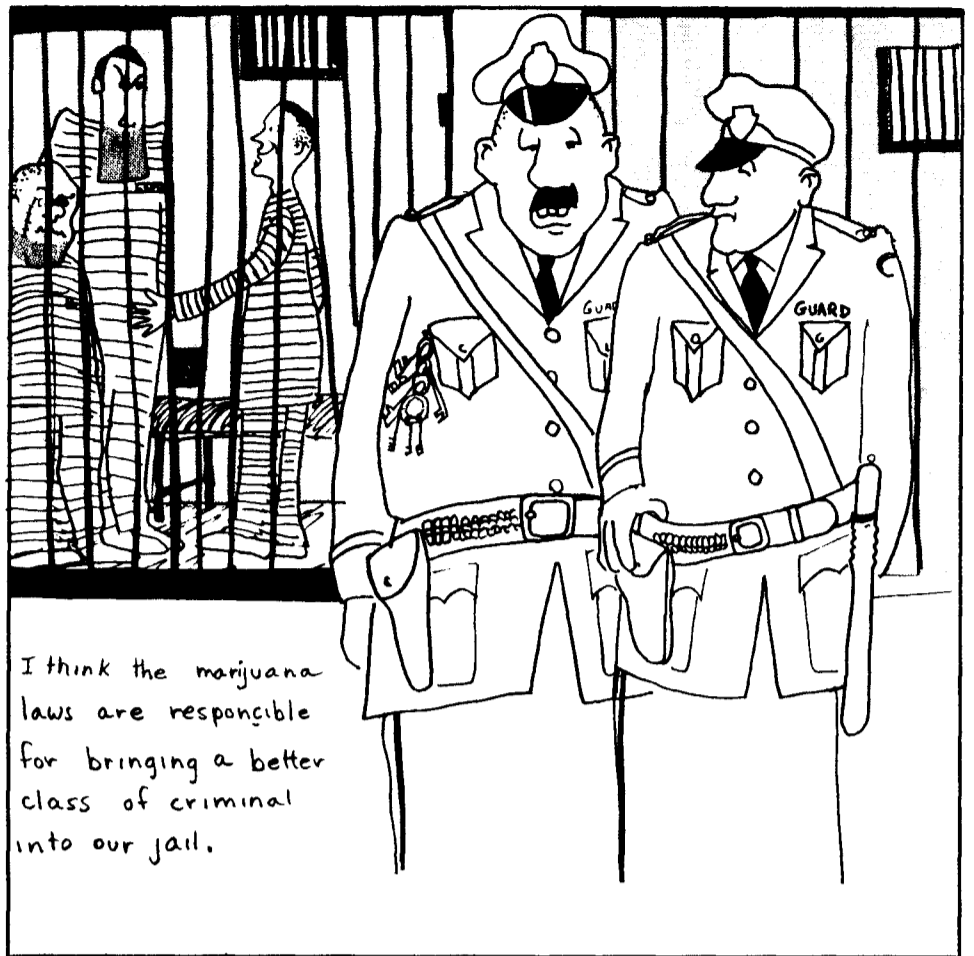
What interests us about the story is that the students will take strike action if their demands are not met. That's questionable politics.

Strikes are for the birds. Almost everyone knows it. The postal strike last summer provided a big raise

for the workers. So who pays for the raise? You do, people.

And who will pay for the strike at the university? The students themselves. They are the ones who will be deprived of educational opportunities. Students will not learn by standing around in front of buildings and displaying placards.

And why are the faculty the objects of the proposals? In most schools, it is the administration who have final say on changes such as those advocated in the story.



We are the privileged ones

By JOHN MILLER

Fellow U of A students, we stink!

In our so-called enlightened intellectual atmosphere we have become vegetables. Rather than show leadership to society, we sit back and bitch. Granted, our bitching is heard outside our little ivory tower, but it is shrugged off casually or completely ignored.

And why is it completely ignored? Because all we do is bitch. Most of the so-called middle class we so blithely condemn are also aware of the wrongs we complain about. They, too, recognize the problems and, like us, they complain and do nothing about them. Perhaps they can be excused because of threats of sanctions if they speak out.

But we at the university cannot be excused.

Most of us at this institution are free from pressure. We have the opportunity to act without fear of reprisal. We have nothing to lose by living by our principles, and nothing to gain by sitting back in silence.

I am by no means asserting that the whole student body is socially unaware. Seventy-five per cent would be a pretty accurate estimate. This percentage is a lost cause anyway, and there is no point even trying to wake them up to what's happening.

What really concerns me is the "awareness" of the other twenty-five per cent. No one can argue that people like Jon Bordo, Glenn Sinclair, Marilyn Pilkington and others are not aware. They have taken great pains to let us know what they think and why they think that way.

Yes, they are deeply concerned with the current issues.

And what problems are they concerned with? For hours they can debate on such

weighty matters as campus politics and the value of Canadian Union of Students. Meanwhile, in Biafra, some 6,000 people a day are starving to death.

A great deal of time is spent writing lengthy articles on the value or non-value of university degrees. In much less time, a shack burns to the ground in Gleichen, taking the lives of four innocent children.

We sit back and demand a part in the decision-making processes of this university, and yet we, as university students, as Canadians in a moral society, as human beings can only muster mild disapproval when Russia invades Czechoslovakia, when our "mother country" sends arms to help Nigeria annihilate a defenceless people, or when our great neighbor to the south drops bombs on the heads of innocent people.

"Why don't 'they' do something?," we ask in horror when society sits back and lets these things happen. Perhaps "they" are too afraid of losing their secure middle class way of life.

We should not be afraid. We should get off our fat butts and DO something.

And what can we do? For a start we could come out of our cloister and start acting like responsible adults. We could recognize that we are a privileged group rather than sitting back nursing our self-inflicted persecution complex. Instead of waiting to be invited to participate in projects such as UCF, we could initiate other projects of our own.

Most important, we as students, free from intimidation, can provide leadership and encourage people of like minds to stop crying and get something done.

Rather than "copping out" and criticizing society, let's join it, inspire it, and shape it into a society of action instead of words.