

"It's the deadest The West gave birth to



**THE ONE GREAT STUDENT OUTING AT U OF A, MARCH, 1968
3,500 MARCHED TO LEGISLATURE TO PROTEST FEE HIKE**

Background

This article first appeared in *Issue*, newspaper of the Canadian Union of Students, in March, 1968. Its writer is Brian Campbell, current editorial page columnist of *The Gateway*. The prime personalities are Branny Schepanovich, students' union president in 1966-67 and now a practising lawyer in Edmonton; Al Anderson, students' union president in 1967-68 and now employed in Toronto and Marilyn Pilkington, current students' union president. All three were on Schepanovich's executive at the time of the withdrawal from CUS in 1966 at the Dalhousie Conference.

By BRIAN CAMPBELL

Edmonton is in a cold country.

The red brick, 14-storey monsters around the edge of the octopus campus keep their red brick, three-storey grandfathers in shadow most of the winter. The wind sweeps across the massive parking lots and makes the half-mile walk to the nearest building a living hell. This is the University of Alberta.

This is also the home of

Canadian student fascism. It is housed in the \$6 million Students' Union Building. Student leaders from other campuses have called the establishment at Alberta "sick." This is their most favorable description; the others are libelous.

Megalomaniac: A Moderate Response

The trend towards right-wing politics at Alberta did not grow overnight. Once Alberta was among the strongest supporters of the programs of the Canadian Union of Students. It built the Students' Union Building as a monument to student-owned, student-run, student-planned architecture. Then they elected Branny Schepanovich. His election was the culmination of a speckled but noisy career in student politics. And Schepanovich was not about to stop.

In his short year, he reaped great personal notoriety and relegated Alberta to a blank spot in Canadian student life. Most of the replies to a *Gateway* questionnaire to delegates at the Dalhousie CUS Congress were so personally bitter the survey could not be print-

ed within the bounds of the law. The most moderate response called Schepanovich a "megalomaniac" and left it at that.

To understand the origins of Alberta student "fascism" it is necessary to understand the atmosphere it thrives in. Although it seems paradoxical, Mr. Schepanovich and the movement he founded is almost irrelevant at Alberta, because nobody cares. The University is not only withdrawn in terms of the Canadian scene, but also in terms of individual students. The only thing students are involved in is finding a parking place each morning.

Preoccupied with planning

Dr. Grant Davy, a political science professor who has been at Alberta since 1951 with the exception of a sabbatical leave of one year, attributes this attitude to alienation on the part of the students. Alienation is at the heart of Alberta and it is the administration's fault, he says.

He sees this as a drastic failure on the part of the administration and the faculty. "They let the damn thing grow, and occupied themselves

with technical problems after the growth had occurred . . . We were preoccupied with planning. We have three vice-presidents—in charge of finance, academic planning and physical development — and not damn one in charge of human development or student affairs." He says the faculty and the administration are so concerned with the day-to-day running of the place that they are losing the real meaning of the university.

All sides of the political fence apparently agree with Dr. Davy. Ex-SUPA activist, sociology TA and ex-pres. of the graduate students' association, Peter Boothroyd; Dean of Men, Major R. C. W. Hooper; and Students' Union past president, Al Anderson, as politically divided as they are, with Hooper and Anderson on the Conservative side of the fence, all see problems of communication at this mushrooming university.

•Anderson: "Generally as the size of the university increases, students become more out of touch with what happens . . . at U of A. I would consider that our residences work against activism."

•Hooper: "In a small university, it may be easier to stir up and create commotion. The activists may find it easier to get the elected."

•Boothroyd: "The University of Alberta is one of the deadest campuses in Canada."

No one cared

Alberta does have a few thinkers—both left and right—but the great majority of students just don't give a



MARILYN PILKINGTON