

No parking; discourtesy exhibited by university

The Varsity Guest Weekend Committee's director entitled his welcome "VGW Dangerous!" To his one word of caution he might have added for the benefit of out-of-town guests that car parking is not only extremely difficult to find within blocks of the U of A but, even when found, fraught with nonsensical perils.

After a hundred mile drive we arrived at 7:30 p.m. for an 8 p.m. meeting and circled through block after block searching for a parking spot. Our perigrinations brought us in front of the Students' Union Building where, Glory Be to God, someone was pulling out of a parking stall and leaving us a space.

Once parked we noticed that a hooded meter advised "no parking." However, every such meter had beside it a parked car and obviously no workmen were night employed on the construction project which seemingly occasioned the parking restriction. We questioned a few young people who were standing around and their words of assurance, plus no evidence of campus police directing traffic away from this area, added to our sense of security and appreciation of what we innocently supposed to be evidence of consideration for guests and ability of the inhabitants of the halls of learning to cut red tape.

How wrong we were

At 10:30 p.m. we came out to find every hooded meter stall with a car parked beside it—but not our car! Tow-away trucks, yellow lights flashing, lent an almost carnival-like aspect to the street. Campus police had materialized in all their grave authority and general lack of courtesy. Eventually one of them very gracious-

ly deigned to tell us where we might find our car—on the north side of the river across the CNR tracks. That's quite a walk for an elderly couple! And a not inconsiderable inconvenience for anyone planning to drive a hundred miles home that same evening.

Fury builds up

We were, I think understandably, furious. If indeed there was any necessity to ban parking in this area in the evening hours, why weren't the campus police around to keep cars moving? And why were they either turning a blind eye or absenting themselves as cars were again parked in stalls which tow-away trucks had earlier made vacant? Only the towing service would appreciate that kind of co-operation. Why had the inter-com system not been used to advise guests to remove cars from this "no-parking" area?

The rescue

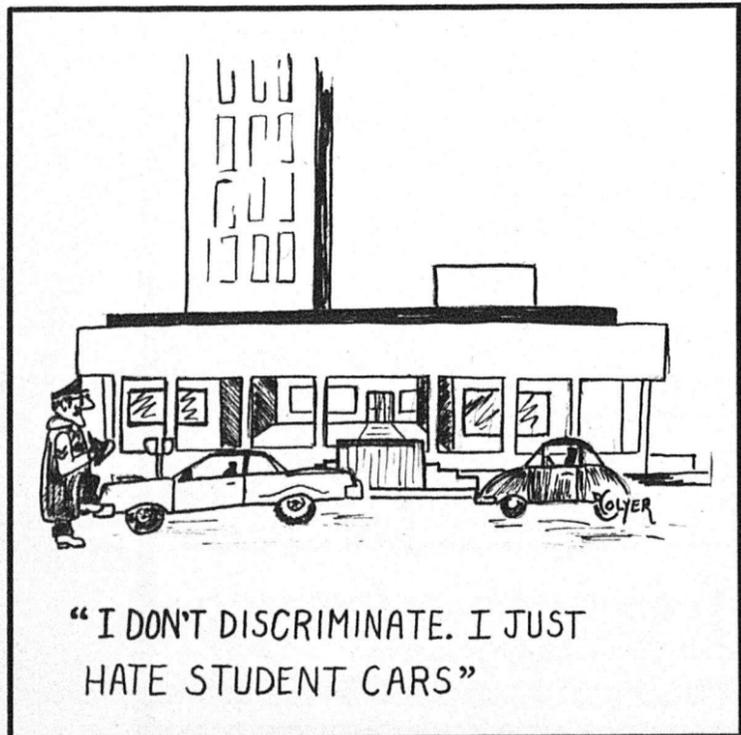
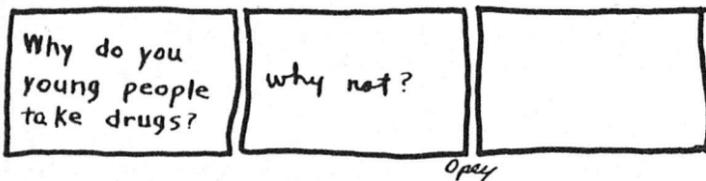
The one bright spot in the whole nasty experience was provided by student reaction—one of whom even drove us over to get our car. Without this kindness a taxi fare would have added to the six dollar tow-away charge. (Incidentally, as of now we have received no police ticket for illegal parking, and we are wondering under whose authority the tow-away order was given). Visitors to VGW don't expect red carpet treatment, but from their hosts they could anticipate courteous consideration.

I wouldn't be surprised if VGW hasn't been rechristened Varsity Goose Weekend in commemoration of "the time of the golden eggs."

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Peterson Mayerthorpe, Alta.

Dialog

by Opey



Freak-out in the Far East

By AL SCARTH

Maybe it all started when I wasn't accosted by a femme fatale in one of the capital's dimly lit bars.

When it's your first visit to the country's seat of government and you've spent the evening listening to Marxist rhetoric in an old Ottawa residence you just know must be bugged and to a public relations spiel about how concerned the Senators investigating the media are in a sixteenth floor high-class hotel suite you just know must be bugged, it's a bit much to find no one is interested in learning your secrets by plying you with their favors.

A \$2.85 hint

I mean, isn't that what capitals are all about? I even had a double gin to give her the hint I was getting pliable. That was certainly a mistake, a \$2.85 booboo, which incidentally might explain the apparent lack of spies. No one can afford either plying or getting pliable.

"I can show you the price list, sir," he said. "It's the tax, you know." No, I didn't.

It wasn't so bad not being succulently sidled up to by, "Pardon me, I seem to have lost my lighter, can you offer me a match?" (you handsome brute you, I can hardly wait for you to relieve me of the burden of this translucent veil I modestly refer to as a bra-panti-less dress so I can make mad passionate love to you). Amazing how femme fatales can say all that. "It's all in the tone," I dreamed. "It's the way you breathe 'offer', you know." No, I didn't.

My heart belongs to Maggie

What was terrible was that the only people who seemed to be able to afford drinks were a drunken evangelist and companion of whom the man would say, "Ah, but it was a great love, Maggie," at which point she would jerk her head up from the bar and mumble "leave me alone, I can't understand you," and to which he would reply, "I am a sinner Maggie but my heart is full of love, just like His was. Did you know that Pontius said 'I can find no guilt in this man, do with him what you will?'" No, I didn't.

Then again, maybe it all started after I couldn't find my brief to the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media when I appeared in their august chambers the next day. Eight pages—gone! The horror becomes clear when it is realized it wouldn't make any difference to my impromptu public speaking whether my mouth were filled with marbles or not.

Maybe some Air Canada stewardess is at least receiving some more cogent enlightenment from it than I offered the Senators and maybe, zounds, just maybe my femme fatale was there after all, slipping her manicured seductive little hand into my attache case and now she is vainly attempting to crack the code and when she gives up she will follow me and manage to lose her lighter again.

It just might have started when the committee's legal counsel started making a few eyes at the committee's university press researcher and was thus prevented from paying his up-and-coming-young-executive share of attention to the testimony.

No "Round Table", just disillusioning lightning

More likely, it was when committee chairman Keith Davey bluntly refused to answer my question asking why the committee's 92-page research paper on the university press had not been made available to student editors if the committee were truly interested in having a dialogue with us.

It only seemed natural we should be informed what would probably be the line of questioning followed by the Senators and that both "sides" should have access to all available information.

The hearing was billed as a "Round Table Discussion."

Unfortunately, the Honourable Senator didn't see it that way. "I won't answer that," he said, "I'm not a witness here," "you're the witness," "those are the ground rules." Period. Round table!

Maybe it was the flash of disillusioning lightning that struck when I asked how many of the six Senators (of a total 15 with two unavoidable absences) had recently read any student newspapers.

Senator Davey said he received two or three, one matronly senator said she had read her children's when they were at university and good old Harry Hays of Alberta was the only one of the remainder who unabashedly spoke up to say he had not. By my count, that makes about one-and-a-half Senators who had even seen the press they were investigating and the kindly matron told us proudly this was the first time she had come to the sittings. She made it for the afternoon portion anyway. Apparently, no newspapers of the student breed had been made available by the committee staff for the Senators' perusal.

Pizza Ottawa style—yecchh!

On the sheer physically unpleasant side, it might have really started when I had the run-in, or rather run to and not quite make it in with Ottawa pizza. One a.m. in the morning is a lousy time to remove your very own personal remnants from a hotel room wall.

It could have been the Canadian Press photographer who took the picture of me that made hippie cult leader Charles Manson's hypnotic

stare look like something you would find on a baby food carton.

I knew it had started when the hotel limousine for the airport missed two calls and I missed the last flight out of the spyleless capital before they shut down the port to burrow out from 14 inches of snow.

An interesting thing happened after they had opened it again. The Canadian Pacific flight which could have flown straight to Edmonton refused to land but good old AC didn't.

And then the news reports

Not that it did much good—unless you happen to be somebody who enjoys walking around the Toronto circular terminal for 12 graveyard hours without so much as a fresh spy novel to drown in.

And not a femme fatale in sight. Oh yes, there were the news reports of the hearings to read. It's great to see your name spelled wrong in The Globe and Mail under your wild picture and search out your quote to find not even your misspelled name appears other than under Charles Manson's tutor.

The Ottawa Citizen's fair report surprisingly suddenly sprouted a phrase "admitted he was a Communist" while the Canadian Press' balanced coverage simply said Mr. Thompson "classified himself as a Communist."

The Globe and Mail paid little attention to any of the witnesses except for The McGill Daily's managing editor Dave Chenoweth.

It did make for varied reading but I wanted my spy novel.

Wherever it all really started, somewhere somehow my first trip to the city where they even tip the service station operators and provincial liquor store attendants turned into a bumper.

At times I'm inclined to think it was the discovery that easterners, at least the sampling in the Ottawa airport, have no idea of western manners.

Meanwhile, back at the femme

Never have I seen an overburdened airport attendant called down, screamed at and generally spat upon by travellers who won't understand that it isn't his fault the port is in the midst of a blizzard and had to be shut down. They didn't even thank him for the \$4.50 dinner vouchers he freely handed out. No one acted like that during the giant air strike a few years ago while a group I was with shuttled around the United States to get from Oregon to Illinois.

But I really think it started with the femme fatale . . . sigh.

The Gateway

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STAFF THIS ISSUE—Well kiddies, as staffer Brian Campbell likes to put it, where was the copy tonight? Hmmmmmm? The people who bothered to show up to work with what there was were Bob Blair, Barry Nicholson, Judy(ex-ed) Samoil, Campbell, Opey, Terry Malanchuk. Thanks to those vociferous candidates, we filled the paper. Bitterly yours, and a tear in the grass for you from Harvey G., your next president.

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