

# Forum: tokenism and tyros

Comment by Mike Walker  
Nina Miller  
Peter Michalyshyn

Yesterday's election forum confirmed earlier impressions of the two slates running for executive office this year. The Kirk slate is slick, relatively experienced and politically expedient; the Soper slate is less sure of itself, more consistent and principled politically, and slightly less experienced.

When one compares the politics of the two presidential candidates, this difference is made relatively clear. Bob Kirk has distinguished himself during an interview immediately prior to the campaign by making overtures to both the campus Conservatives and the New Democrats, while Phil Soper makes clear that he once was a supporter of the Conservative party but is no longer active. He continues to be moderate and is certainly the more consistent of the two. Kirk, during his pre-campaign period of attempting to obtain support from whomever possible, haunted the *Gateway* office in an unusually charming and insinuating way. It didn't work.

The Kirk slate is a perfect formula slate, which is curious when one realizes that everyone but Ken Lawson-Williams was a second or third choice, a token engineer, a token Commerce student for vp finance and a token res. student, for example. Soper's slate, on the other hand, is much less consciously well-rounded. Soper appears to have approached his chosen team and run with them, almost ignoring the traditional constituencies. One unfortunate result of this is a commerce dominated slate.

The choice of Lawson-Williams for Board of Governors rep by the Kirk slate is puzzling and disturbing. (Students apparently agree. He was loudly hissed at the forum). He disagrees with his slate about several issues. He supports "reasonable tuition fee increases," which Kirk apparently does not. What is more disturbing, however, is his untruthfulness about a definite political liability: his involvement with *Godiva*. He told at least three people in the *Gateway* office that he had seen the article before it went to print and chose not to oppose it. At yesterday's forum he said he had no more involvement with it than any engineer.

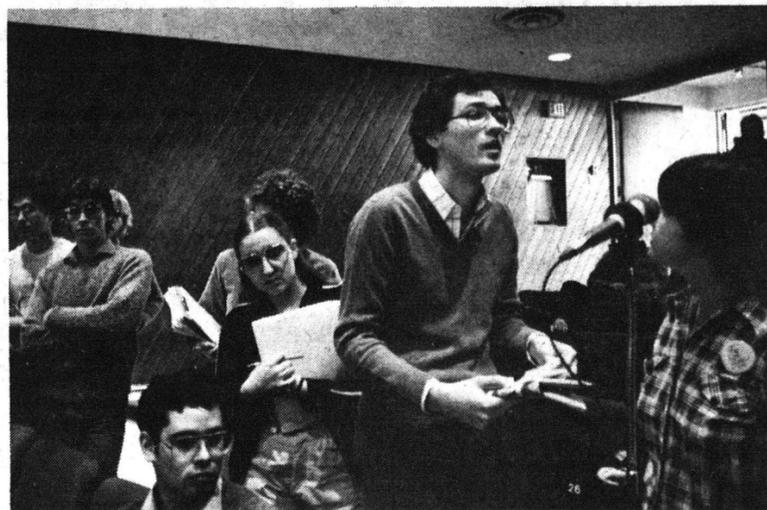
The Kirk slate, and specifically Kirk himself, are more experienced than are the Soper people. Kirk is thoroughly familiar with the university bureaucracy and the ways in which students can affect that bureaucracy; Soper is not. Soper does, however, have experience with the North Garneau Tenants' Association. This is bound to be valuable in the months ahead. Soper and Kirk were both informed, articulate and influential councillors. It is, however, regrettable that Kirk resigned in September; it makes it much more difficult to tell where he stands on some issues.

"No way" is the Kirk slate into partisan politics, Kirk told *Gateway*. Soper, on the other hand, admits he is a "political person," and others on his slate certainly are. This is preferable to sticking a wet finger in the air to see which way the wind is blowing, which seems to be the Kirk approach.



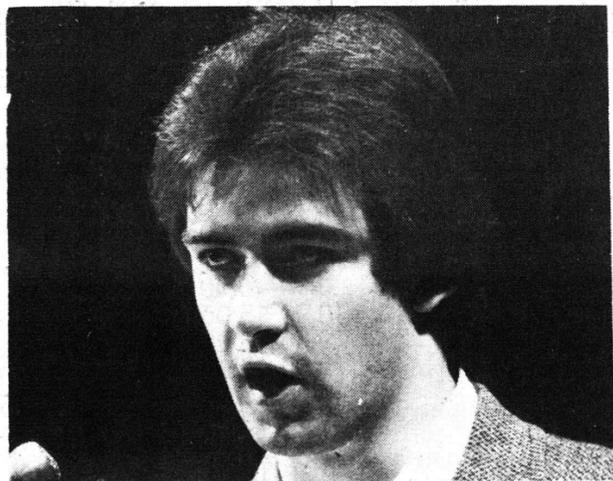
The one o'clock exodus at the forum.

photo Bill Ingles

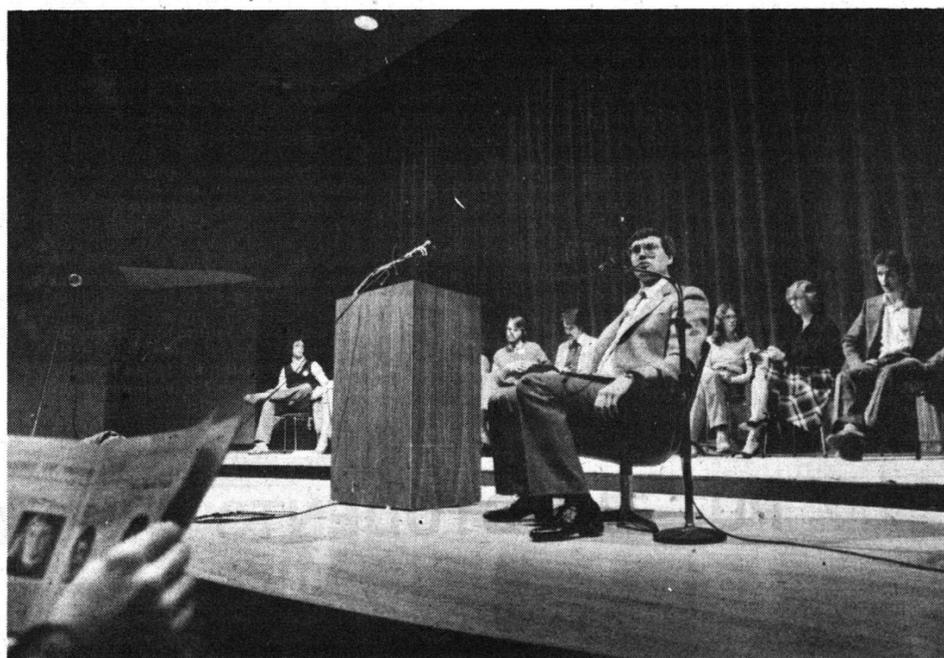


Plants? We have no plants.

photo Dave Chan



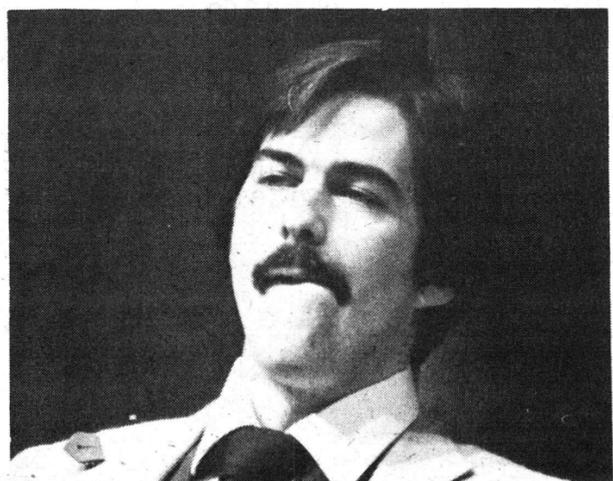
Could you ask an easier question?



Can we elect the guy in front?

photo Dave Chan

photo Bill Ingles



What can I say to win this thing?