



# letters

## a clear-cut policy

Because a number of individuals have requested a clear-cut policy statement from my office, I have consented to issue such a statement, which follows:

Eric Hoffer tells us that "a nation declines when its people become too serious and reasonable, and refuse to set their hearts on toys."

And Norman Brown says that "wisdom is wit; in play, not in work; in freedom, not in necessity. A vast pun, as in dreams, in the neologisms of schizophrenia, in 'Finnegan's Wake,' in the Old Testament prophets . . . the God of Delphi, who always spoke the truth, never gave a straight answer, in the upright Protestant way; he always spoke in riddles, in parables; ambiguities, temptations; that hearing they might hear and not understand. The real deceivers are the literalists, who say, I cannot tell a lie."

Or, as in Barfield, "the newness is the metaphor, or nonsense—saying one thing and meaning another."

The original sense is nonsense; and common sense a cover-up job. Nothing wrong, except the refusal to play. "Sleepers awake."

The rest is silence.

owen anderson  
cus chairman

## quiet, please

It is apparent that an irritating number of "students" at this university have not yet learned that a library is not a frat house, etc.

Although it would be unreasonable for a student to expect complete quiet while studying in Cameron Library, a certain amount of quiet is reasonable.

However, this is not the case. Even though there are smoking rooms, lunchrooms, rotundas and other areas provided away from the reading and study areas, these "students" cannot contain their loud noises, continuous, lengthy talking, loud laughter and other loud noises. Asking them to be quiet, please, results in louder laughter.

As a result I am appealing to these "students." Would you please show some consideration for the other students and if you must be loud would you please leave the study area? And if there is not room in the areas provided, I am quite sure there is ample space at the city zoo, in cages where you belong.

dale stringer  
arts 2

## don't bore us

Ralph Melnychuk suggested in a column in The Gateway the only alternative to the present Social Credit government is the NDP. As a Liberal, I must strongly disagree.

The NDP has failed to win votes in any agricultural area of Canada. They have lost the agrarian base of the CCF, but have not gained their expected labor vote. In one of Alberta's most labor-dominated constituencies, Edson, their leader was defeated by a Liberal candidate.

It was a Liberal member, Bill Dickie, who brought to the floor of the legislature the question of the recent Lethbridge university appointments. This was a direct result of action of the Campus Liberals, following up The Gateway's story on the issue.

nb

'the volume of mail that comes into a magazine or newspaper is no index of anything except that you happen to attract a lot of idiots, because most people that write letters to newspapers are fools'—h. I. mencken. today, letter writers write about policy statments, noisy student, the ndp, and the seminar on the university.

Surely Mr. Melnychuk should recognize this as the action of a serious opposition, concerned with the problems of the people of Alberta, and willing to respond to complaints from young people.

At a recent post-mortem of Mr. Turcott, the socialist Eric Neilson, it was suggested that even Gerda Munsinger could not embarrass Mr. Manning—she, not the premier, would be blamed for any hanky-panky the NDP might discover.

If the NDP are honestly concerned with the problems of Albertans, let them raise these questions in the house and cease to bore us with four-year-old, unproven gossip.

Mr. Manning's government must be defeated. It can only be defeated on its policy. When it is defeated, the party to do so will be the party that has provided responsible and effective opposition, the Liberal party of Alberta.

gerald i. ohlsen  
arts 4

## more responsibility

I am sorry to see your already not-too-distinguished columns have descended to echoing the Edmonton Journal. I refer particularly to "A Choice for Alberta," Nov. 23.

Please allow me to correct the emphasis in this article by quoting from Garth Turcott's speech to the legislature Nov. 18:

"Mr. Speaker, if these charges are substantiated, then the minister must indeed resign, and if they are not substantiated then proper action should be taken against the author of these charges—but in either case, Mr. Speaker, I submit that at present the minister takes his seat in this house under a cloud, and the matter must be resolved in this house without further delay."

Note that he did not accuse Mr. Hooke of anything. He simply pointed out that the charges, which had been made current by, among others, Senator Harper Prowse and alderman Ed Leger, were serious and should be denied or confirmed.

In so saying, Mr. Turcott was in good company; the Dorion report stated the general principle that when a minister of the crown has impropriety imputed to him, it is up to the minister himself to clear his name.

Mr. Turcott asks no more than this: that Mr. Hooke display sufficient sense of responsibility towards the people of Alberta that he clear himself of any suggestion of conflict of interest. The NDP member was not conducting a smear campaign; rather, he was reviewing the position of minister of the crown as

entailing more responsibility than Mr. Hooke seems inclined to associate with it.

rozanne thomson  
arts 1

## it's not the left

Ever true to the traditions and principles of that most respected of all media, The Gateway Friday rocked the academic community with an expose of campus activism. Thanks to an acutely sensitive hearing apparatus, the "slow, grating noise of revolution" and the true extent of the activist conspiracy have been revealed to the campus at large and the impending catastrophe either averted or accelerated.

While I am pleased The Gateway considers the Seminar on the University such a newsworthy item as to rate front page coverage I would like to clear up a few of the misleading impressions created as a result of some rather obvious editorializing in what is presented as a news feature.

Firstly, the Seminar is not the arm of any "amorphous group" nor is it a part of any other conspiracy of "new left activism." The Seminar was conceived and organized long before the evolution of either the Pro-CUS committee of the Campus Involvement Association.

As was explicitly pointed out to your reporter the Seminar developed as a result of discussions towards the end of the last academic year and there is no connection, either formally or informally, between the Seminar and the two conspiracies to overthrow our de jure student union government, namely the CIA and the Pro-CUS group.

Secondly, I object to being labelled, categorized or otherwise pigeon-holed (for the convenience of The Gateway and others who delight to indulge in such a meaningless hobby) as "part of a new left activism". True, this group is dedicated by its very nature to activism, that is to causing something to be done as opposed to passiveness, a state or quality of inaction, non-action, not acting but acted upon.

However, neither is the group opposed to "pacifism" (peace) and nor does it necessarily subscribe to it. On the other hand we would like very much to be allowed to conduct our discussions in a "pacific" atmosphere as it would seem to be more conducive to our examination and evaluations. of the academic community. Therefore, I would plead with you not to declare war upon us and thus thwart our legitimate aspirations.

Thirdly, I object to the insinuation of an impending confrontation be-

tween Provost Ryan and the "new letters" at the next session of the Seminar. Surely, it must be admitted that both a liberal and a conservative, in the political as well as the philosophical senses of the words, may well find that they have a common denominator in recognizing that there is "something wrong with the system". It may not even be too improbable that they should decide that a mutual examination of the system would be a valuable beginning.

That is not to imply that they would necessarily agree on approaches or solutions nor even that they would agree on the extent, scope, or ambit of the problems. However, this is an approach that we have been using in the Seminar and I believe that it has the potential of yielding valuable results.

barrie chivers  
law 2

## seminarian speaks

The Seminar on the University, as reported in The Gateway Friday, is one of a number of seminars initiated, but not strictly controlled, by the Student Christian Movement for the study of topics important to the university community.

This Seminar is concerned with 'the university'. It was intended to provide the occasion for an examination of the problems of modern universities, and of this university in particular, by students, teachers, and administrators, talking and working together. It was to be open to all shades of opinion, to encourage honest questioning, to get at relevant facts, and to foster understanding of differing positions and attitudes.

It is known that universities today face great problems and that many of their members are dissatisfied and disturbed. It was hoped these discontents, their causes and their possible remedies, might be more clearly identified than they had been, and that representatives of the various constituencies of the university might come to know each other's problems and views and even to reach agreement on many matters which might seem to be in issue.

We believe that in the meetings held so far, some progress has been made towards these ends. On the understanding that in their discussions responsible people would work sincerely to learn and to understand, teachers, administrators and students have met together, in good faith and in good temper. We believe they have found in their meetings an atmosphere conducive to frank and mature discussion. They have spoken to each other; what is better, they have listened to each other.

We must not claim too much for the program, which is really only begun. However, we can say that many of those taking part in the Seminar have displayed the attitudes or qualities just mentioned, and learned their value. Surely it would not be prejudging the nature of a university to suggest that a seminar which does not itself show that it appreciates these qualities is ill-fitted to consider the topic it has undertaken to study.

That is why we are so disturbed by the suggestion in your article that the seminar is the tool of a faction, impressed only by one set of opinions, hostile to other views, and anxious only to promote contention. Such assertions are false. We hope they never become true. If they should, the Seminar, as first con-

ceived and as so far conducted, will have failed and determined. Certainly it could not then continue under the sanction of its original sponsors.

It is true that some of those taking part in the Seminar are also active in the new CIA and the other organizations your article mentioned. That is unavoidable given the open character of the seminar, natural, considering the interest of these persons in their community, and certainly not undesirable, in view of our wish to have a broad range of views represented. It would be wrong only if the Seminar were to be subverted by anyone group, and twisted into the service of narrow and factional interests. This has not happened, and we hope and have reason to believe that the integrity of the Seminar will continued to be respected.

It is also true that some persons now attending the Seminar (provoked, perhaps, by the questions and proposals raised in it) might carry on, individually or in groups, to take what they regard as appropriate action to deal with problems as they see them. After all, ideas do have consequences; otherwise, why are we here? However, in so acting, such persons will represent only themselves or the nominate groups for which they may speak. They will not be agents of the SCM or the Seminar on the University.

We hope that the confusion engendered by your article will not jeopardize the future of an undertaking which promises to be of value to this university, nor discourage the participation in the Seminar of those from all elements of the University whose co-operation is needed to assure its success.

donna petrosky  
scm co-ordinator

## compulsory membership

We have learned that the students' union membership investigation committee is attempting to justify a system of compulsory membership fees for all students. At present all undergraduates are compelled to pay fees levied by the students' union and the university athletic board.

We wish to register our strong disagreement with this move. On the basis of our Christian convictions we are opposed to robbing anyone of his constitutional right to freedom of association.

We do not favor any form of compulsory membership.

Compulsion of this kind violates one of the basic rights and freedoms laid down in the Canadian Bill of Rights. We are in wholehearted agreement with this document when it asserts that " . . . the Canadian nation is founded upon principles that acknowledge the supremacy of God, the dignity and worth of the human person and the position of the family in a society of free men and free institutions."

We urge all who are members of this committee to consider the contents of this letter and to see to it that the method of collecting fees is a matter of choice. The least that should be done is to provide a clause granting freedom from membership for the conscientious objector. As a token of our good faith in this matter we would contribute each year the equivalent of our membership fees to an organization such as the Red Cross.

chris gort,  
fred cupido,  
wytze brouwer,  
george gillespie

