

# Parr straightens out facts

I want to take this opportunity to clarify what has been printed out to me to be a factual accuracy in the U of A Yes to NUS committee leaflet. The offending section is "Some of the services from NUS/AOSC". I thought the list of services is accurate, the introductory statement "At a membership fee of \$1 per student per year you can use..." is not correct.

## We already belong

The pamphlet published by "Yes to NUS Committee" listing some of the services from NUS/AOSC is misleading as far as NUS/AOSC applies to the U of A. We are at present a member of AOSC (Assoc. of Student Councils) and do NOT at the present have to become a member of NUS (National Un-

## O!Kurley

I was a bit surprised to see a bold new slogan on Brian Kurley's campaign posters, "representing the silent majority." That slogan raised a few questions in my mind, such as:

- (1) When did the silent majority start voting?
- (2) The last person who seemed to represent the silent majority was Richard Nixon. Does anybody remember what happened to him?
- (3) Is O'Kurley sure he's not a member of the Liberal Democrats?

Jim McElgunn  
Arts II

## AOSC is for students

It was with some interest that I read the front page story Friday about the Canadian University Travel Service office closing. I'm sure that the CUTS office, opening this week will be a positive addition to student life at the U of A. Inexpensive student travel is only one of the many services provided by NUS/AOSC through Canadian University Travel Service. Those services are directed by students for students. It only makes sense that the new Canadian University Travel Office will be much more sensitive to the needs of U of A students.

It is unfortunate though, that you neglected to mention in your story that AOSC and the National Union of Students are affiliated. That affiliation means that students in Canada can provide themselves recreational services and representation in Alberta, through one affiliated national body.

I hope this serves to clear up any confusion about NUS and AOSC for your paper and the students of the U of A.

better national student cooperation  
Robert Lauer  
board of directors member  
& NUS treasurer

Note: The U of A is a member of the Association of Student Councils as a result of our joining prior to that organization's official affiliation with NUS last October.

benefit of all students, members or not. The statement would more appropriately read "At a membership fee of \$1 per student per year you can improve..."

The recent affiliation of NUS and AOSC means that the lobbying efforts of NUS can now also be used to improve the quality and variety of services provided by both affiliates of the national student body.

Finally it should be pointed out that in no way is the existence of the Canadian University

Travel Service office, even though it is a venture of AOSC, the services affiliate of NUS, dependent upon the outcome of this membership referendum.

Though the U of A is a member of the services affiliate of NUS/AOSC, expansion and improvement of the services provided by AOSC are in many ways dependent upon the U of A and other students associations building a stronger national student body by joining NUS.

I hope that this serves to clear up any misunderstanding that the error in the leaflet may have caused.

Jeff Parr  
NUS western fieldworker

## Ekelund strikes again!

I would like to set the record straight regarding the Federation of Alberta Students referendum debate at council last Tuesday.

1) There was not a referendum to leave FAS last year — it was a referendum to increase the fee argued on the basis that FAS could not be truly effective at its low funding level.

2) I have been informed that rumors were circulating prior to the meeting that the only reason I put the FAS motion forward was a nefarious plot to get all the NUS leaders (I assume they meant the BNL) too busy on a FAS referendum to get NUS passed. As usual, the socialists give me credit for more deviousness than I possess, while attacking my integrity and motives rather than those of the issue of whether there are changes and problems in FAS that require we rethink our membership. I don't subvert my principles for "the higher cause" (I voted for in the NUS referendum, remember?) of having or not having NUS and FAS and I think an apology may be due — although I guess I'll never know which member of the Brave New Left (BNL) thought up this rumor.

M.W. Ekelund  
VP Academic

## Issues all wrong!

I've been following the Students' Union elections and I've yet to find a candidate who can seriously address all the issues concerning students. No candidate has come up with proposals for countering the Grantham Report. This document has serious implications for university funding.

Also another issue that is important that the candidates have failed to address is housing for students. Housing that is available at a reasonable cost is important to students. Who is going to address these issues?

Darryl Fleming  
Arts 2

## National support for NUS

I am writing in regards to your forthcoming referendum that will give your student body the choice of becoming members of the National Union of Students.

As one of the only two member institutions of Alberta, we would like to stress the importance of a national lobby group and encourage your support for this referendum. We feel that NUS has reflected the interests of not only Alberta but Western Canada in their representation on the national level.

Western Canada is currently represented by 15 institutions

students are members. With increasing membership, NUS's work in providing information resources, fieldwork, and lobbying will be greatly enhanced. Furthermore, NUS provides essential financial and lobbying support for AOSC, the national student service organization.

I have been involved with NUS for over three years. I recognize it as a truly national organization with practical services and realistic goals. I encourage all University of Alberta students to vote YES to NUS.

Harvey Thorleifson  
President  
U.W.S.A.

## Second wind

An occasional column of opinion by Gateway staffers.

Custom is the teacher that has always drawn the most disciples, right? And it may be customary for students at the U of A to be underwhelmingly responsive to political issues. This is a common theme. Joe Clark raged about apathy in his editorials when he was Gateway editor in 1959, and if the turnout to last November's Great Debate between president Hume and chairman Schlosser is an indication of student concern, we can safely conclude that despite the colorful moments of yelling "bullshit" at an ignominious-looking Peter Loughheed, the days of apathy are still with us.

This wouldn't be so distressing if it weren't for the fact that where there is apathy there is also a temptation among the proponents of an idea to follow yet another political custom and slander their opposition. This is what may take place in the debate on the upcoming referendum on U of A membership in the National Union of Students (NUS). Should we expect more from those leading the controversy in this battle — the bland leading the bland?

The pro-NUS committee has already been accused of distorting facts by suggesting in their leaflets that services now supplied to the U of A by the organization's affiliate Association of Student Council (AOSC) are dependent on U of A membership in NUS. This may well be distortion on the part of the pro-NUS committee since services such as the recently-opened AOSC travel office in SUB will not be removed if the U of A rejects NUS, even though the pro-NUS leaflet implies the service is part of the \$1 per student referendum package. However, NUS and AOSC, recently moved to combine their respective memberships, leaving the U of A in the tenuous position of drawing services from the NUS/AOSC organization without espousing the body's political goals. The U of A will probably not be able to receive the services provided by the AOSC indefinitely if it continues to reject NUS.

The anti-NUS committee, on the other hand, appears to be hot to trot. They have dug down to the annals of Alberta political thought and scooped up what may well be the two oldest and most boring fears in Alberta stream of unconsciousness — Eastern domination and creeping socialism.

The first fear is easily dismissed since almost half of the NUS membership is from Western Canada, and the organization has a central committee composed of provincial delegates designed to spread out representation.

The second criticism, that NUS is dominated by a left wing bias, is at least a slight distortion and at worst, clear mudslinging. A bill posted by NUS opponents quotes a passage from the NUS Blue Book which reads "it may be obvious to anyone who analyzes it accurately that our unemployment is a direct and inherent product of our capitalist system" — the poster leaves it to the reader to wonder if he wants the U of A to belong to an organization which would make such a barefacedly atrocious statement. However, the bill neglects to point out that the passage is lifted, quite out of context, from an appendix in the Blue Book entitled "Leaflets and Pamphlets" which is basically a technical analysis of propaganda — what it is, how it is written, how to recognize it.

Anti-NUS organizer Stephen Kushner says he thinks the organization has a definite left-wing bias, since it has urged government to create enough jobs for everyone who wants to work. Doesn't Kushner realize full employment has been policy of numerous governments in the past, including the Liberal Trudeau government which finally abandoned the goal after repeated failure? Jobs for everyone is a policy that has even been recently advocated by the Pope.

Even if the organization has a left-wing bias it can't be so severe that the U of A should reject membership. After all, NUS has a representative on the federal government's National Youth Advisory Council and it has recently been requested to select student representatives to the Canadian Consumer Council under the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. It is even endorsed by Joe Clark, who, despite his conservatism, looks past the red-baiting and views the organization for what it is — a national voice for students.

The anti-NUS people oppose the structure of the organization which they feel, in its proportional representation, is dominated by Ontario institutions. It is up to the NUS opponents to show that the structural problems are so severe that they override the essential need for U of A representation at the national level. They should also demonstrate that the challenge of joining the organization and trying to change it from within, if necessary, would be fruitless. Any organization is only as left-wing or right-wing or regionally-oriented as its democratically-elected members make it.

A word on the posters. Don't kid yourself; posters, headlines and editorials for that matter are always biased. The Yes-NUS poster, a carefully constructed, professional piece of work, leans to the left. A graphic consideration, no doubt. The No-NUS poster uses the overworked line, "NUS is not for us", but adds the question, "Would you pay \$19,000 for three letters, NUS?" — well, in time, with the postal rates...

Allen Young