



mugwump journal

By MIKE MACKINNON

Trudeau has made the news recently with his peace initiatives. There are those who argue that the Prime Minister does not have the right to visit various leaders without one hundred per cent support from the Canadian people. What they fail to realize is Trudeau is a world statesman and what his is doing is as a world statesman, not as the Prime Minister of Canada. He does not need the support of the Canadian people.

Though Trudeau is far from being my favorite politician (or prime minister) I am forced to applaud his recent actions. Finally, a world leader had decided to take a serious approach to disarmament, something I see very little of at the talks in Geneva, with one side constantly walking out and the other deploying missiles while talking about disarmament.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

I watched "The Day After" last Sunday and frankly I was a little disappointed. As is usual with American "tragedy" movies, this one spent far too much time on the conflicts of everyday life. I suppose this was done to build in us an empathy for the characters but I would rather have had more of the show devoted to "the days after"

Much conflict has followed the showing of this movie, from the White House accusing it of turning people away from U.S. defense policy to Rev. Jerry Falwell saying it defies the rapture as shown in the Bible. There are, of course, those who say it is communist propaganda or that it is pro-disarmament. At no time was a stand taken the movie, it was simply an effort to educate people to the effects of a nuclear war, something that has been sadly lacking. Unfortunately, it painted an optimistic picture of life after a nuclear attack.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Closer to home, it has been sometime since the Student Union has been without the services of a secretary. As it stands now, we have the part-time bookkeeper working full-time to cover the work of the departed secretary, something she can hardly do. If the office was run inefficiently before it must now be run with GROSS inefficiency.

I have seen no ad in the Gleaner for the position and once it is placed in the paper it will have to be run for about a week. Hiring could take up to another week, so it appears we may be without a secretary for a while yet.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Once in awhile (Friday nights) I like to head up to the Social Club, have a few drinks and forget about school and the paper. While I am generally successful at the former, I cannot say the same for the latter. Invariably, someone comes to see me, more than a few beer under his belt, and dumps on the paper. Now don't get me wrong. I have no complaints against criticism, in fact, I welcome it, as long as it is constructive. I realize it is easy to criticize something and that great satisfaction is derived from such criticism, more so if the person is required to do nothing about it.

Well, I am going to attempt to reduce that satisfaction somewhat by daring you critics to come out and do something about the paper. As it stands now, there is a handful of people putting the paper out, most of our staff coming from contributors. We need people to write news stories, take photos and help out with the layout. So instead of waiting until Friday night to complain at the Social Club, get involved after all, it is your paper.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

editorial

November 25, 1983

Recently, a sub-committee of the Joint Committee of the Board of Governors and Senate on residences proposed a number of changes in the academic year. These proposals are being made to improve the structure of the academic year while keeping the number of teaching days in each term equal.

One area of particular concern was the exam schedules for December and April. It was suggested that the schedule be printed at the beginning of the year along with the time table for the courses. There are two reasons behind this move. One, the length of the exam period could be shortened because it would be up to the students to adjust their time tables in order to avoid conflicts during exams. Secondly, students would know when their exams were finished when they were finished registering. This would allow them to make travel arrangements early in the year and take advantage of travel specials because of knowing their departure date.

While it would be nice to know ahead of time just when you would be able to leave in December it seems inconceivable that the above idea would work. For starters, there would still be the same number of exams and they would require the same time to write them. Also, one would think it necessary to know how many students were in a course in order to decide where the exam was to be written. A course of five students would not require one of the gymnasiums. Finally, the above system limits the student to the number of course changes he could conceivably run into an exam conflict when dropping one course to take another.

A second proposal was to extend the Christmas holiday to at least four weeks. As with the exam schedule, there are two reasons for this idea. The first is the Christmas holidays are too short. The second is that students would be able to save money because of the money saved by the university on the heating costs and snow clearing costs.

While it cannot be denied that it would be enjoyable to have a longer Christmas break it should be realized the break is long enough now. As it is, we have at the minimum two weeks for a Christmas holiday, a break that is long enough. To take a longer break would make it all that much more difficult to get back into the habits we develop for studying. It always takes some time to re-adjust to being back in school. Were we not students, the chances of our having a break of even two weeks is slim. Most people only get a few days around Christmas.

To extend Christmas break it was decided to start classes earlier in the first term in order so they end earlier in the first term. Classes would be starting the Thursday after Labour Day. This means registration would have to be earlier. Of course, with the proposed changes there would be classes during Orientation Week but because most orientation events are during the evening and classes for the first two days are generally just designed to provide information about the course, there should not be too much conflict.

With the push on classes though it could make it that much more hectic at the bookstore as people rush to get their texts for the start of classes.

One proposal that should help immensely is the plan to increase the amount of pre-registration. This should help to speed up the registration process and make it a little easier for the individual student as he/she will be able to get special attention. Also, there should be less worry about not being able to get into a certain section because you're in the last few groups to register. If you are required to change your schedule because a course or section is unavailable the change should be less painful.

Abolishing the Spring break does not appear to be that good of an idea. Students generally take advantage of the break to catch up on work and to relax a bit before the second set of midterms. The break is something we all look forward to. This would reduce the Christmas break from the proposed four weeks to three weeks. The extra week gained from earlier registration and an earlier starting date would be used to provide a break in the middle of the first term, a Fall break of sorts. Students would prefer a number of short breaks to one long one.

Another proposed change is the abolition of the Remembrance Day holiday, giving the students an hour off instead for a memorial service. It is doubtful that many students would attend memorial services, choosing instead to travel home. For many students the two long weekends provide the opportunity to go home when they ordinarily would not be able to.