

The Gateway

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editorial

It's shaping up to be a contest of the bland, the bold and the ridiculous.

Students' Union elections will be held Friday and for the uninformed and barely-informed voters who will decide next year's SU executive the crowd of candidates must be a confusing array indeed.

Three presidential candidates — Ekelund, Spark and Reynolds — are promising virtually the same holding-action approach to managing SU affairs. None of them has ventured to call for much wider horizons than those binding the SU now. Cabarets, line-ups in the bookstores, a coffee-shop for the dormant SUB "bearpit," and the ubiquitous "better involvement" in everything from parking policy to faculty associations are the professed top concerns of these candidates. I list these topics without attribution to specific candidates, because most of them appear in the literature of all three.

Reynolds, Ekelund and Spark are running on the same sort of services platform that won the last election. With the present focus of SU organization on services, electing any of these candidates is going to mean more of the same. Progress will be slow and cautious. The tedium involved in moving significant legislation through Students' Council and the university administration may mean the caution will reduce the speed even further.

The bold alternative — the Young Socialists slate — is attractive when placed next the others, if only to relieve the repetition. And most of their proposals would improve the lot every student, but it's doubtful whether the activism they call for would find long-term support from students on this campus after the election. One can't deny, however, that a few shouts of dissidence thrown at General Faculties Council would be welcome. Just to make sure students can still bite back.

The credibility challenge presented by the CRAP slate should be welcomed, too. If you bribe him with toffee, Rene Le Larke will admit his efforts are solely to offend as many voters as he can with racist and reactionary suggestions to point out the need for candidates with effective counter-proposals. Any election that doesn't survive this sort of test is a farce.

The most effective combination for the legitimate rights and desires of students will likely be found this year in selecting the best candidates from each of the slates involved — not by electing one slate wholesale and living with the narrowness which inevitably follows.

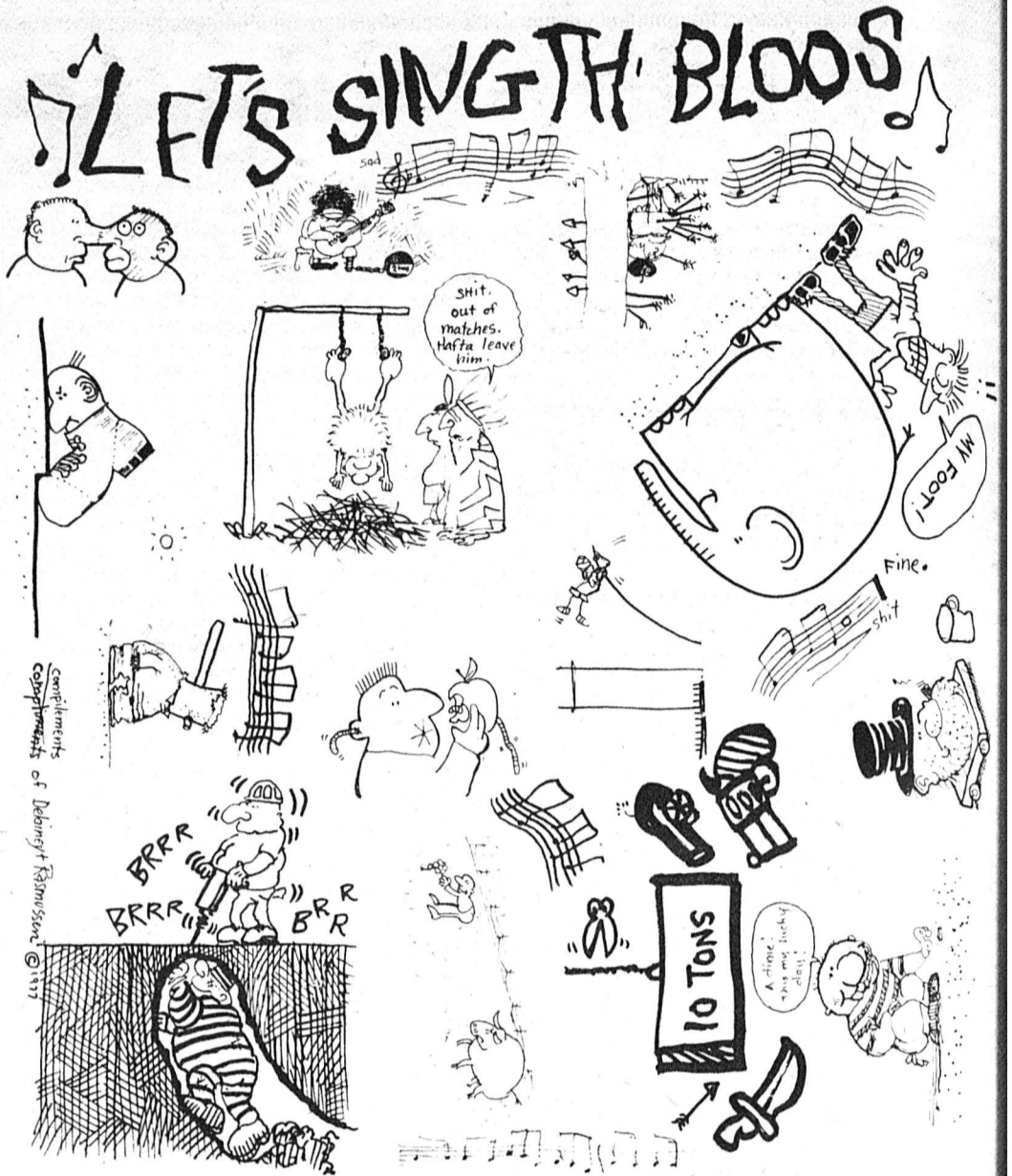
You can be sure Rene wanted it that way.

by Don Truckey

So, the engineers have embroiled us in a controversy in a province 2,000 miles and an entire culture away from us. The engineer's statues, all based on the theme of separatism, were photographed by an *Edmonton Journal* photographer and his photographs managed to be carried by Canadian Press wire across the country. The result, as the front-page story shows, has been some consternation in la belle province. And, I think, unjustifiable concern has been shown. If *Le Devoir* and other papers choose to misinterpret an attempt at humor as a racial/cultural slur, that's their problem. Making a pun about pea soup should hardly be construed as a national dilemma. The pun of "P.E." and "pea" soup is a good one in English — just as the joke of *pet* and P.E.T. is a good one in Quebecois (*pet* is Quebecois slang for a fart). Some ice sculptures, such as civil engineering's frog on a lily pad shooting at a beaver beside a maple leaf, were bigoted, in some less-than-vicious manner, and also wrong (the *French* are called frogs — because the national animal of France is believed to be the frog and/or because French people consider frog's legs a delicacy).

Still, that's hardly enough to typify your average University of Alberta student as an English-Canadian bigot, totally opposed to bilingualism and biculturalism. And although *Le Devoir* makes no overt reference to "bigotry" or "racism", it's easy enough to know from the tone of their cutline that they take the photographed sculpture as a slur. Canadian Press and the *Journal* are to be faulted as well for having placed the wrong man inside the soup-tureen; it was Trudeau the Electrical Engineers put inside the pot, and it was Rene Levesque who was stoking the fire underneath him. This, along with the pun on the side of the tureen, seems to be not only humorous but true. So what's wrong with that?

by Kevin Gillese



Listen here!

I think that it's a damned disgusting disgrace that the once-yearly election rally is going to be held in the Tory Turtle instead of the proper Theatre in Student Union Building.

SUB Theatre, which supposedly belongs to the Students' Union, is being rented out on this special occasion to another corporation, ACCESS-TV. The students have been allocated a room in the Tory Turtle by the present student Administration execs. Tory Turtle, by the way, is

used extensively for extra large classrooms, if you know what I mean. Many shifts of students pass through those hallowed halls of learning every day.

However, the student's theatre was originally built with the intentions of hosting rallies, speak-ins, med shows, etc. What happens on one of the biggest days in student politics? (joke) We are shifted into Tory Turtle and the Students' Union Execs rent out our theatre. (another joke)

What a deal! No wonder students don't bother to vote. present SU executive is just apathetic about elections. students are about SU execs. SU execs can't give a damn get off their asses then who supposed to get off their asses. Can you vote for anything if there is no room to listen something? I would rather shit my ass ...

Manfred L. Pol S.

Being socialist is not supporting Stalin's purges

I would like to dispel some of the misleading impressions raised by John Savard in his February 3 letter to the *Gateway*. In it I am accused, among other things, of refusing to recognize the repression existing in "socialist" countries. Thus it is implied that I condone the suppression of political freedom in post-capitalist countries, and that I defend the crimes of Stalin.

As a member of the Young Socialists, I support the right to freedom of speech and the fight for democratic rights in workers' states such as the USSR and China, as well as in the so-called "free world." I defend the gains won through revolution in the workers' states. But I do not defend the ruling bureaucracies that stifle freedom of expression and thought in those countries. I supported the defence campaign for Ukrainian dissident Valentyn Moroz.

Moreover, I am in sympathy with the views of the Fourth International which was founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938 in opposition to the crimes of the Stalin-led Communist Party bureaucracy.

The criminal justice system

in Canada does not exist "for the benefit and protection of all of us," as Mr. Savard suggests. Instead, it discriminates against low-income and minority groups in society. The treatment of the FSAC detainees is a case in point. Further, the international students were the last to be

released from detention. Clearly this is not an "impartial" enforcement of the law.

If Mr. Savard wishes further clarification of the stand of the Young Socialists on these other issues, he is welcome to visit our literature table in SU.

Linda Blanc

End this discrimination

I am writing to ask you to do what you can to end the blatant discrimination against good-looking females on this campus. A profusion of posters of intellectual women has been plastered all over the campus this week and I object.

Now I am a reasonably good-looking specimen (5'6", 125 lb., 37-25-36, blonde) and have been compared to Catherine Deneuve and Miss November by recent dates. My point is that I came to this university to get a husband, not to look at the competition. Husband-hunting is difficult enough without this distraction of the male species by this multitude of smiling faces with their subtle message that "he"

could be better if "he" tried. I suppose these women and these posters have a lot of boys — how else could they afford to put themselves above the competition for male attention which the rest of us must pursue and I suppose someone thought he was giving these beautiful women a break by promoting them in such a way.

It's just that the name of the game is "selling the package" and all this drawing attention to the "contents" is unfair to the rest of us who only have a "package" to sell.

Please initiate a referendum and then request the SU pass appropriate resolutions abolishing this unfair practice. Fay-Miniver Inge Teak (L)