

The Gateway

member of the canadian university press

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STAFF THIS ISSUE—After a day of finding out where everyone went for Christmas holidays, who got traffic tickets, and who was involved in accidents, we're back. On hand to bitch about exam marks tonight were Bob Anderson, Dennis Zomerschoe, Judy Samoil, Dan Carroll (who never stays home), Brian MacDonald, Dan Jamieson, Steve Makris, Elaine Verbicky, Randy (alias Leon)

Jankowski, Terry Petit, Joe Czajkowski, Peter Johnston and last of all but surely not least Harvey G. Thomgirt who stayed in his cage for the last 18 days and remained perpetually stoned. By the way, three cheers for the university's new sculpture which looks like something left over from Candy.

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 1969

Editorial

Will the new year bring hope—or hell?

In this first issue of the new year, it is traditional to look back over the past 12 months and to gauge what might happen in the next 12.

We will not bore and pall you with one more listing of the momentous and stimulating events of 1968.

Nor shall we attempt to predict the course of 1969. All the clairvoyants to who cancelled their future meetings due to unforeseen circumstances handled that assignment and the result was that each day was the same as the one before—only worse.

What we propose for today is to tell what we believe **ought** to happen in 1969—what we wish for our fellow students. Let us for a change engage in wishful thinking, noting that after 1968 anything may be possible.

First, let us hope for change. Change within the university structure so that it becomes meaningful to all students and to all faculty. We hope for change so all students may have an opportunity to voice their opinion on all issues and an opportunity to witness decision-making in all levels of the university structure.

We hope these changes can be implemented in a peaceful manner and with sufficient compromise and cooperation from all sides.

Let us hope that the university reassesses whatever external political views it currently holds so that all students fleeing political systems unsuitable to themselves can get a deal as fine as did the Czechoslovakian students who came to this university. We are certain that Czechoslovakia is not the only country on this planet ruled by a force some students claim is oppressive.

Let us hope student union presidents of the future make greater efforts to communicate with the students on campus. No president in the past four years has held any significant number of open meetings with students. The unspoken motto of "get elected and to hell with the

students hereafter" has been practiced but not preached.

Let us hope the Canadian Union of Students can paste their organization back together before they lose all the parts. In effect, the union has become a haven of so-called "radical thinking universities" while the moderate element has chosen to prove its discontent with the union by withdrawing. Few student leaders would quarrel against the concept of a national student union. The hangup concerns the politics (if any) of the union. And in this matter, the uncompromising politics of radical versus moderate is all too evident.

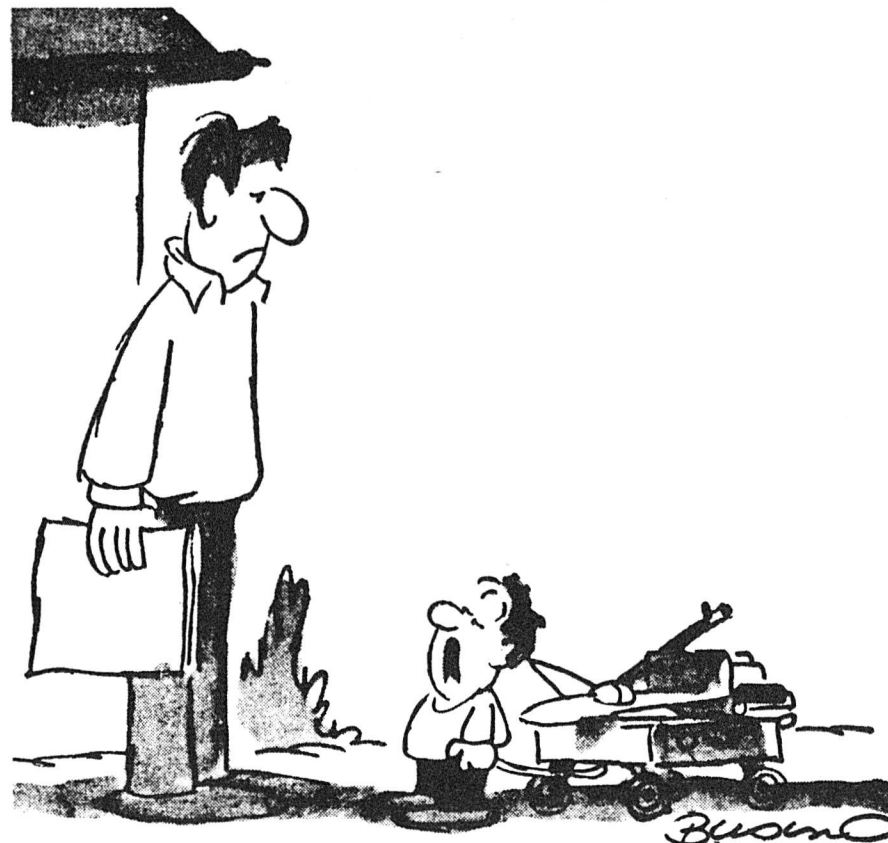
Let us hope that students will take a more active role in university politics especially at election time. With the increasing influence student leaders have in the upper levels of the university structure, it is imperative that the leaders be given a solid mandate by the students. A solid mandate is achieved only when a large majority of students use the ballot.

Let us hope the incidents in the sociology department are not indicative of the manner in which faculty and students cooperate. Ugliness has been the keynote of activity in that situation and it was not necessary. We hope a settlement can be reached by peaceful means.

We hope The University of Alberta chooses a liberal-minded successor to current president Walter Johns. A young, active person is required but he must also be a tough administrator.

We hope that sometime in the near future, the semester will be adopted and the expensive university buildings used extensively.

Let us hope that the one place where Alberta enjoys a decent national image—in sports—can produce just as effectively in 1969. The hockey Golden Bears have an excellent chance to represent the west once again (if they at least split with Calgary this weekend) and they could go on to a second straight national title.



"But if I share my toys with all the kids isn't that communist?"

from The Chevron

Should students elect a university president?

By Peter Boothroyd

Why not elect the new president of the University of Alberta?

Let all the faculty, students, administrators, secretaries, maintenance staff and anybody else whose occupation is at the university, determine with one vote each who the chief officer of this university should be.

Naturally this would force candidates for the office to stand on political platforms, to make public commitments before taking office. Some candidates would refuse to be elected in this way by the students—let alone by the caretakers—but this in itself would be a good test of the desirability of the candidate.

The chief problem universities have today in choosing a president is that those most acceptable to the whole university refuse the job. They can see the conflicts and contradictions inherent in the autocratic administrative structures. Potentially good candidates have refused the job at Simon Fraser for this reason.

Consequently, the presidents of universities tend to be opposed to fundamental democratic reforms. Or at best, they cannot see the need for them. When the pressure builds up for changing the system as at Simon Fraser or San Francisco State you have a Strand or a Hayakawa calling in the police.

When I suggested the idea of democratically electing the new president to Marilyn Pilkington, she expressed interest but countered that the taxpayers of Alberta in effect appoint the president, through their elected representatives who work through the cabinet (Lt. Governor in Council), on the advice of the similarly appointed Board of Governors.

The point is good, but there are two things wrong with her argument as I see it.

First, the whole principle of local government is based on the assumption that the larger in scale the government, the more it should be concerned with co-ordination among the units within its hegemony and the less it should determine local policy. Hence we have a BNA Act setting out areas of provincial responsibility, and provincial municipal acts establishing the kinds of legislation appropriately passed by town and city councils. In a less constitutional vein,

we see regional development programs such as ARDA, community development agencies and urban renewal projects recognizing the need for the maximum amount of local control in their respective programs. Unlike many university administrators, professional in these programs usually recognize grass-roots democracy as a practical ideal and not as just the aberrations of irresponsible students.

To return to the university: the point is that for both reasons of value and practicality, democratic local government should be extended to the university such that the people in this potential community should at least elect their own "mayor". That the university is an institution and not a locality makes little difference. Factories can be democratically managed as the Yugoslavs have shown; it is reported that local democracy is being extended to mental hospitals on this continent. Surely the same reforms can be made in a university.

The second point on which I disagree with Miss Pilkington is the assumption in her argument that because the government pays most of the shot in building and running the university, the university is therefore kind of charity. On the contrary, the university earns its way in this society by contributing in numerous ways to the wealth of the province.

It might be suggested that if students could elect the president of the university, they might only be interested in who had the best kickline. Perhaps, but I don't think so. The importance of the kickline in Students' Union elections is a good indicator of the irrelevance of that body. My bet is that as students get more and more power in the university, they will rely less on hoopla in their elections and more on serious political debate. The president of the university has a great deal of power and his decisions or non-decisions must affect every student in significant ways. Given the chance to participate in choosing the president, every student would be impressed with the importance of his decision, just as he has been impressed with the relative unimportance of Students' Union elections.

Nineteen-year-olds in this province are trusted to vote for premier and mayor. Surely 18-year-old high school graduates are qualified to vote for the president of a university.