

PINS AND RINGS: SCRAP THEM

A month ago we suggested revision of the students' union awards system to get away from the emphasis on self-glorification.

We were too naive. We thought something could be salvaged, but we were wrong. Revision won't cure the system at U of A—pins, rings, questionnaires and committee should be scrapped.

Within small organizations where personal contact is intimate we can see some value in awards as tokens of appreciation. But our campus has grown too big—these awards have lost their meaning.

There are too many negative factors working against the system.

- There is the tremendous amount of time

spent both in committee and in council—it could be better spent.

- There are the hard feelings, the inevitable disagreements, the inevitable complaints of injustice.
- There seems to be no possibility of finding a selection system to replace self-recommendation.
- There has come to be an unhealthy emphasis on prestige—on work for the award and not for the work's sake.

Where are positive factors which would balance these faults? We find none.

Our three dozen pins and rings do more harm than good.

Let them go.

KEYS AND \$\$: USE THEM

What about Golden Key? If we scrap rings and pins do we scrap keys too?

Not necessarily, but we should certainly change the emphasis.

There is real value in—and real need for—a service organization (or possibly several) to organize those campus events which put the university in the role of host, to welcome foreign students, etc.

With the emphasis heavily on service and the "prestige" motives played down, Golden Keys can be justified.

But if they are polished up to serve as mirrors for our vanity, we recommend that they join gold rings and gold pins on the garbage heap.

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There is another sort of award in which we see a great deal of value: the sort which involves monetary reward, taking the form, more or less, of scholarships. For the most part these are "one of a kind" awards, donated from outside council, dependent on academic achievement.

Of these awards we are entirely in favor.

YOUR EXECUTIVES: FREE THEM

Your students' union executive is restricted by bylaw from active participation in SU election campaigns.

The restriction is unfortunate. It was, however, upheld by vote of council at the February 17 meeting.

It was the dominant feeling of council that if an executive takes sides, such is his power and prestige that the election will be unfairly prejudiced. But such a view underestimates the dynamics, the wide range of forces, involved in the political drama. Our councillors seemed to forget that:

- If an executive has a poor record his support may be more liability than asset;
- Two executives, taking opposite sides, may neutralize each other;
- It may be argued that the executive members of council are in a position to take the keenest interest in the future of the students' union and to make the best sort of judgement as to capabilities of candidates. It may be argued that executive participation is desirable rather than undesirable;

■ Even if there is no bylaw, the executives may prefer to remain neutral, and in many cases probably they will.

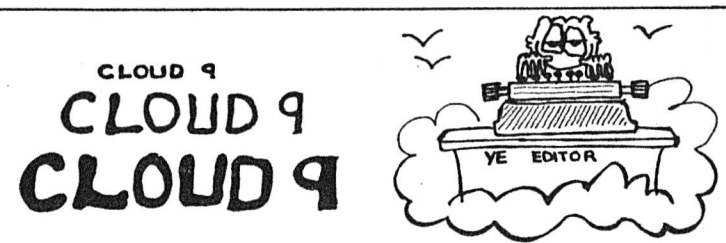
In short, this particular restriction is but one example of a massive proliferation of bylaws which hedge your councillors in on all sides—a taste of the formalities which have, en masse, become complicated, contradictory, confusing, and unnecessary.

There is a final argument which overrides even the foregoing. It is an argument for individual decision and responsibility. It accepts the proposition that any one executive member MAY heavily influence any given campaign.

Such a proposition does not weigh up as heavily as the prospect of freedom of initiative.

Where else if not in university can the experimental, the imaginative, and above all the intelligent decision-making process take place effectively, unbound by arbitrary limitation?

Give us councillors who will work toward freedom, not timid and petty bureaucracy. We realize that a certain minimum organizational framework is necessary—but let's not make paper and ink our fetters and blindfolds.



At a recent council meeting the editor had his wrist lightly and quite lovingly slapped for being too UNcritical of council—for failing to keep council on its toes.

As the saying goes: "THIS SHALL CEASE."

The point is well taken, and the editor has promised to do his best—lovingly though not lightly—to play the role of loyal opposition.

Running through his editorials touching council in this and coming editions you will find a unifying theme: a protest against bureaucratic restriction; a concomitant plea for freedom of initiative.

And behind the wrist-slapping is a sincere, solid nod of appreciation from Cloud 9 for the fantastic amount of heart which most of your representatives put into their work—in your behalf.

* * *

In the editorial column we discuss awards and restrictions. One example might serve to illustrate both of these issues. I refer to the recently created Dinwoodie Award, which involves an engraved plaque and \$100. (Obviously this one qualifies for my approval.)

This award was created by council in consultation with the Dinwoodie family, intended for the student who best combines extra-curricular service with good scholarship.

Qualifications for the award drawn up in committee originally specified "adequate academic standing."

Council decided to impose a 70 per cent minimum.

The awards committee returned to the more flexible "adequate."

The matter came back to council and 70 per cent was again specified.

There was some protest.

The final compromise wording specifies "adequate (approximately 70 per cent) standing."

Finally council decided to withhold the award this year for lack of candidates.

I am not necessarily convinced that there is a complete lack of candidates.

And I am far from convinced that 70 per cent is too much to ask for most awards on most occasions.

But those are legitimate questions

for council to rule on.

My point here is that there is no necessity for us to box ourselves voluntarily into so many corners, to make farce and comedy out of our craving for rules and rules and rules. We are under no necessity to bind ourselves with arbitrary restrictions.

Council could have saved itself so much trouble by simply resting content with the original wording. For there is no reason why each council at the end of an academic year cannot be trusted to make a wise decision on the recipient of the Dinwoodie award, without any percentage specified.

There is no reason to believe that "adequate" need be defined for purposes of this award. We are not that obtuse. Actually we all have a pretty good idea of what is meant.

le baron

P.S. To Students' Council:

You are aware, as I am, how real and how valuable was Mr. Dinwoodie's service to the students of this university. And you know how he appreciated those students who likewise put a lot of time and a lot of heart into their service activities.

It is hard for me to imagine that Mr. Dinwoodie would not want his award presented this year. There are two or three rather obvious candidates.

I am aware that their averages are not in the honors bracket. And you are aware that as a general proposition I am most enthusiastic about high academic achievement. But I believe that this time we are off on the wrong track.

Perhaps we should once more reconsider—and present the Dinwoodie award.

* * *

One last gasp: Get this awards business finished. Please hurry! By next week I may be wanting to abolish Students' Council.



In these deepfelt days of trouble, the most important years for the university, and for ourselves, a time of expansion, and of contraction, days of tumult and fever and tempestuous pyramid building, for the days of the pharaoh are felt to be short, we must go on, press to the fore, and let nothing vanquish us, indeed, let nothing whatsoever get in our way or bother us, for the student union organization itself bespeaks of the policies of William H. Whyte, and we should not let the organization student bother us, malign us or otherwise denigrate us, because something has to be done and I feel I am the one to do it.

The situation is said by some to be not so serious as candidates for the election would make it, and yet with bitter trepidation I have no recourse but to bring to the attention of the student body, at large and individually, the inescapable facts that,

- there are more students at this university than there were ten years ago;
- that the dollar is not what it used to be;
- as a Gateway writer has pointed out, summer will probably follow spring;

and if these are not enough points to impress upon you the fact that I am undoubtedly serious in my contention that I am a fit person to run for students council then my black-shirts will see you after the meeting.

In closing I would like to thank those who were forced to sign my nomination papers, my campaign manager who doesn't really want the Gold Key Blazer I've promised him, the sixteen legs who make up my kickline, and my father who had a lawsuit against the firm I got to sponsor my campaign posters. I could have made it without their assistance but we had to have a winter works campaign as well.

And if elected I promise to do my duty to the Queen and mother. Other than that I will be lazy. I am honest, sincere, diligent, forthright, serious, generous, kind, simple folks, and plitudinous. Could you have a better leader? The answer is unavoidable.

THE GATEWAY

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