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PAGE FOUR

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1964

After The Demonstration

Yesterday's demonstration was another example of the serious campaign students are waging against the unjust fees set for the new residences.

The large number of students taking part in the demonstration is indicative of the political pressure that can be brought to bear on the administration and the provincial government.

In addition, the reasonableness of the demonstrators and the excellent manner in which their representatives set forth their case will result in favorable publicity across the nation—particularly throughout the province.

Publicity will not be favorable, on the other hand, to the higher education policies of the provincial government and their espousal by university authorities like Mr. George Tauzer, the houser.

Yet the students still have at hand their most powerful resources — a boycott of the new residences. We hope the mere threat of a boycott will be sufficient to bring responsible officials to their senses.

The university president, Dr. Walter Johns, says—understandably—that he does not like boycotts. He does, however, realize the implications of a boycott. In this regard he says:

If only a few students tried a boycott, that would be a simple affair. A 90 per cent boycott

would be another matter, of course.

The fact of the matter is that more than 90 per cent of the students surveyed in residence have expressed a strong desire to boycott the new residences if the atrociously high fees are not lowered.

Mr. Tauzer thinks he has the solution: "We would then simply admit other students looking for accommodations."

But Mr. Tauzer is in for another surprise. ("Why, in all the years I've been at university, I've never seen a riot against university policy," he said after the first peaceful demonstration.)

The surprise lies in the fact that a boycott would extend beyond the present, immediate university community. As Mr. Tauzer has by now been informed, press releases and letters have been sent to—and printed in—various provincial newspapers. And the boycott-by-publicity plan is being expanded.

So let Mr. Tauzer be not too sure that he would "admit other students."

But we hope the Board of Governors and the provincial government will have been sincere in "reconsidering" the unjust fees and lower them.

Pending the right announcement from the authorities, we must plan carefully for Varsity Guest Weekend.

Controversial -- And Valuable

The Alberta law school has finally come through with what should prove to be a major contribution to university activity in the intellectual sphere.

The "Law School Forum" is intended to provide an opportunity for outstanding speakers to present outspoken views to a "disciplined and intelligent audience."

Matters of local and national interest will be discussed and debated, the object being to present topical and controversial subjects. The forum will feature the publisher of The Edmonton Journal as its first guest speaker at 2 p.m. Thursday in Convocation Hall.

The forum will complement established speaking programs such as the Henry Marshall Tory lectures, held only annually.

Speakers sponsored by groups such as the Philosophical Society have not proven to be timely enough. Schedules are set months in advance, and consequently the speakers deal with general topics in a general manner.

Because one of the Law School Forum's objectives is timeliness, this inadequacy should not be present in its program.

If the Law School Forum is successful—and it should be—its sponsors will have established a valuable service to the community at large.

Students Asleep Politically, But Maintain Their Virginity

By Robin Hunter

At a recent news conference the president of an American university was reported to have said that he does not favor students participating

in politics because it fosters "partisanship" which "ill befits an institution dedicated to the search for truth."

In Canada this view is taken by



"TIME FOR ACTION . . . OR ACROBATICS?"

the University of Newfoundland, which has forbidden political clubs associated with national political parties from being active on its campus. Such action reflects, I think, the general attitude of many Canadians who feel that politics is a "dirty business" which at best is characterized by biased doubletalk and attempts to confuse the public.

Unfortunately this belief is prevalent, even among university students. Traditionally the center for informed debate on political issues, the North American university seems to be sleeping, especially in Alberta.

VIRGINITY MAINTAINED

Political debate is rare, meetings generally poorly attended, and the student body generally disinterested. As one who prefers to see a relatively high level of political interest, I am rather annoyed by the seemingly widespread determination on the part of my fellow students to maintain their political virginity.

I think the attitude that politics is a "dirty business" and not the sort of thing normal people ought to get mixed up in is a bad one, as well as wrong. The Canadian democracy needs politically able and educated people, and by the looks of the present government, we're going to be even more in need of them in future. Society looks to the universities for a good proportion of these people. But society might as well look elsewhere now, for all the help it'll get from us.

If the universities are to serve society properly (and I see no reason for us to expect more privileges for universities unless we're willing to give something in return) we could do worse than to expand the sum total of politically educated and active members of society. Of course, not everyone is going to be intensely interested in politics, but I think as a minimum requirement everyone who goes to university ought to have a chance to come into contact with the political process and political action.

How can we facilitate this on this campus?

HOW TO AROUSE INTEREST?

Of course, one of the main means is provided by the political clubs of the national parties. These try each year to arouse public interest, and in some measure they are successful, but generally they only touch a relatively small group, because of small resources and partisan appeal. Model Parliament also brings political interest out into the open to a small degree, but it has an annoying tendency to be frivolous and fleeting.

The Political Science Club is working on a public affairs seminar, with imported speakers, open to all students, some time this year. This is a good idea and a good start. It is, however, only a start.

As a follow up to this proposed seminar, (and even if it is not held) I would suggest the following program which I think would help stimulate interest. A weekly series of Oxford debates in Con Hall, at noon, for people to attend and (hopefully) participate in. These could be sponsored by the Debating Society and the Political Science Club, preferably well publicized. We spend enough public money and energy on other things; I think we could afford a few dollars a week to increase political interest.

EXTENSION OF DISCUSSION

At first the political clubs could provide debaters, later new people would be drawn in by means of audience participation. The real purpose of this idea is to expand discussion beyond the present supporters of the established parties, and reach the larger group, presently non-aligned, and who because of their non-alignment don't get much opportunity to participate in exchanges of thought on public issues. As arrangements like these have worked elsewhere, especially in Europe, I see no reason why they should not here.

Such ideas as these, which are not new, but have yet to be acted on here, will only work if we can achieve a significant change of attitude. We need to overcome some of our inertia; what this campus lacks most is not interested people, but the means for the interested people to express their interest.