



**A REAL ACTIVIST**—Determined student strides toward the microphone as last Friday's SDU skit opens for questions and comments from the floor.

## A postscript for the frosh

The Editor,

Here's another Letter to the Frosh.

If you took copious notes on Peter Boothroyd's recent article (Sept. 13) like a good student should, maybe you're slightly more aware that in the university your human development is not emphasized. While Peter told you how to keep the system in perspective, there were a few things left out. As an old graduate student of about the same vintage as Peter, let me add a humble postscript to his article on washroom segregation.

Most students who come as frosh to this campus have just arrived from metropolitan Edmonton or the hinterland of Alberta towns and villages. For the first time in their lives, (admit it, this is your life) there are people

### They need customers

"We need customers," exclaims Derek Bone, Director of Housing and Food Services.

This is the situation in MacKenzie Hall. Despite the fact that all 649 beds are now installed, there are still many vacancies. The new residence accommodates 295 women of whom 29 have not arrived and 345 men with 22 yet to come. There are 11 floors with 22 rooms per floor. Fortunately or unfortunately, the sexes are segregated. The first six floors are occupied by men; the next five by women.

Although the students are inconvenienced by such trivial matters as the lack of drapes, a shortage of phones and insufficient coed furniture, the general opinion is of satisfaction with the hall. Some residents have even admitted that the atmosphere is conducive to strenuous studies.

Mr. Bone believes MacKenzie will be operating efficiently in the near future. He asks all MacKenzie residents to note an invaluable fact: the carpets in the rooms are unstainable.

of other colors and other costumes around them in large numbers. If your human development while on this campus is to be pursued, you local students have another choice: of becoming acquainted with the students from other cultures, or of passing through blind to their existence.

You are about to hear lectures and take seminar sessions from people, faculty and graduate students, whose accents are different and at first, difficult to understand. To those of you for whom only the near and known is to be trusted, the mere exercise of effort to understand these instructors may seem an intrusion. You will of course, not be at university at all, though you may never know it.

If Peter Boothroyd can argue that washrooms are segregated between faculty and students, then I point out that cafeteria tables are segregated between the local and the foreign. You can make the campus a ghetto for different racial and ethnic groups, each staking out their friendship turfs, or you can do some extra-curricular learning and come to understand a few people from other cultures before you go 'into the world'. There is danger that most of you will be inhospitable to the foreign student by never once inviting him to your home, your crummy room, or your party on Saturday night. Or you can find out a little bit about Trinidad, Ghana, India, the Philippines, and Hong Kong.

How many frosh realize the added loneliness the new student from another culture feels when he finds himself quite alone in a place where everybody else is playing 'getting to know you'? Before the patterns have rigidified and you talk to only one to five of the students you take each class with, try noticing the ones you pass by as 'foreign'. Have you thought of them in such a segregated way? Have you even said 'Hi' to the person who lives in the next house? Have you ever considered that the Univer-

sity of Alberta and Canada is being judged by the behavior you show toward newcomers? Your human development is tested by your willingness to extend yourself every now and then, to dare to meet the unknown.

Of course you will realize these things if you have ever been alone in a city or a country where you neither knew the language or the cultural habits. If you think the campus and Edmonton are a bit strange and frightening to you who come from 'the boondocks', think how much worse it is for someone who's trying to master our language, eating habits, manner of dress, and bus transfers.

The myth perpetrated by Albertans from farms to the legislature is that we don't need to learn other languages and other cultures because we're doing fine in our own little corner. Do you know where you'll be in five, ten years? Do you know where Canadian companies are now sending their employees—all over the world. If you dream of a trip to Europe, do you know how you're going to manage if you shut out of mind all people around you now with a foreign appearance? The first time you are in a city in your own country or another one, where you know that you're being discriminated against because you're different—then you'll realize what I mean. Will you have taken steps to learn that another language is not just for the lab and classroom, but is for practicing now, on the street, in the caf?

If Treasure Van is exterminated, perhaps WUS activism can be directed into a more meaningful program of international understanding. Here at home, in the first months of classes, patterns of segregation and of integration have to be considered. Don't wait for somebody to organize you and tell you how and when to exercise hospitality and empathy toward strangers—start your personal activism NOW.

Rondo Wood,  
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By Peter Boothroyd

## Power-holders not serious

Piffle! It seems all we have been hearing from the administrators of this university for the last month is that wild-eyed students must be stopped from forcing serious changes in the system.

First there was the notorious confidential memo from the president which was distributed to a trusted few—i.e., the students' union executive, but not for example the Graduate Students' Association.

Then there was the announcement by Dr. John Bradley, chairman of the Board of Governors, that a committee would be set up to study student views "on all matters affecting the welfare of the student". It seemed to Dr. Bradley, "that a lot of problems in the world are caused by a breakdown in communication." He didn't get off to a good start, however, because even the students' union executive had to read about the new committee in the press.

In his oblique way, Dr. Bradley was saying that if students could just be kept talking in welfare committees they would not feel so strongly about solving the real problems of the university.

(It's an old trick. It's rather as if the Golden Bears were in the same league as the public school football teams, and when the latter complained that the game was unfair according to

the present rules, the captain of the university team suggested a committee to discuss improving public school locker facilities.)

Then at the Freshman induction ceremonies, Dr. Walter Johns, Vice-president W. H. Worth, and Marilyn Pilkington told freshmen, in the words of *The Gateway* headline, "to keep cool". They made a neat team. Dr. Johns said students are too ignorant and immature to run the university, Dr. Worth dismissed activists as needing "release", and Marilyn came up with the old shibboleth about there being no need for revolution in a democracy—which, by the way, the university definitely isn't.

The peculiar thing is, that what comes through in all their memos, committees, and speeches; is that the power-holder are not interested in seriously discussing with students how the present system operates, and how it can be changed to be both efficient and democratic.

Like the conservatives of the last century, they assume democracy and efficiency are fundamentally incompatible, and that settles that. Or, to use a more contemporary example, they assume, as do the racist rulers of South Africa, that the natives should be kept happy discussing "welfare" problems, but that the key policy decisions should be left to the superior minority.

## Are they really communicating?

We have a fairly good idea too about how far they're really interested in communicating. This summer the presidents of practically every university in Canada met behind closed doors in Ottawa to discuss how eruptions on campus can be prevented. Simon Fraser was the case example for study. So far as we can tell, the conclusions were basically: give in to student demands as slowly as possible, and stop student demonstrations before they get a chance to really get going. Refusing to face the real issues, they returned to their respective campuses, each determined to show that they could be the smartest in co-opting students on to irrelevant committees and the toughest in dealing with "agitators". Even the *Toronto Globe and Mail* was dismayed that there were no students at this meeting and wrote an editorial (July 12) condemning the meeting on these grounds.

Another instance of the administration's idea of communication was the meeting in the SUB theatre last spring to tell the students why the tuition fees had to go up. To give the Board of Governors its due, it consented to the meeting, which meant that for the first time more than a handful of students would be able to see and hear the man who probably holds the most power in this university: Dr. John Bradley.

After the meeting, most of us realized why there hadn't been meetings of this kind before. They simply could not afford to let us students hear how they think about the university.

Dr. Johns reminded us all, contrary to masses of evidence in *The Vertical Mosaic*, CUS reports, CAUT studies, etc., that anybody can get to university if he really wants to. "If you

have to, get out and work for ten years, then come back," he said.

Vice-president D. G. Tyndall asked for suggestions on how to change the system after students had been saying for years that money had to be transferred from other accounts if it couldn't be obtained from the government.

The representative of the province, and the administrators, genially passed the buck back and forth. Everybody misrepresented what is actually spent on students by dividing the student population into the total budget and forgetting about research which has nothing to do with students. And to top it off, the chairman of the board, who is a medical doctor, harangued us for fifteen minutes trying to get us to believe that the country was falling apart because of medicare and that that was our real problem. Some communication.

Now whether or not Dr. Johns is right in judging us students too lacking in knowledge and maturity to participate in running the university, it cannot be correctly said that we're stupid. At least, we're not so stupid that we can't see veiled threats and powerless committees for what they are.

It is meaningless to talk about communication between groups which are highly unequal in power, especially when one group has all the power in an institution and the other none. Until the system is changed so that students have equal power with faculty in jointly running the university, and until the administration returns to its rightful place as highly valued but subservient civil service, students are going to refuse to cool it and "communications" will be a farce.