

# Yet another Student Council meeting held on letters-to-the-editor pages of Gateway

As a regular Gateway reader, I have become much annoyed by a recent phenomenon appearing in the letters section.

The phenomenon is this: student government members using the newspaper as a free forum at which to air their petty grievances and disputes.

Most notable is the on-going bickering between Janssen - Mackenzie - Zoeteman - Gillese. The Gateway headline over Zoeteman's last letter was not inaptly: "Perhaps a Meeting Should be Arranged."

In the interests of interesting reading; I would ask these people and others like them to get out of the pages and into their offices. I would ask them to please telephone each other rather than monopolizing the editorial pages, to see their words immortalized on paper.

L. Holden  
Poli. Sci.

While we share Mr. McKenzie's concerns with a "responsive" Students' Union executive, it seems slightly confused as to why responsiveness should occur, what it would mean, or what issues it should address.

Surely with the publication of the now famous, or rather infamous, "Janssen letter," wherein Mr. Janssen stated his opinions (not concerns) that the executive, if they were "responsive," would reply - which is exactly what happened.

If Mr. McKenzie wishes to frame a "mature" response surely he cannot seriously "demand" (note - not ask for) an apology for saying something he concedes is of unquestionable merit. Perhaps we are concerned with the welfare of students-at-large we should look at the substance of the Gillese and Janssen letters. Examine the questions of who deserves and see how necessary they are, in fact.

Having done so, we can get away from petty quibbling, and washing mud on those who are working for students - be they

on the executive, on council of other organizations - and work on real issues and real concerns (e.g. further tuition increases, literary or other entrance exams, housing, etc). Students (ourselves included) can only conclude that if they wish to publicize themselves and their views over petty points of order, then they are out for their own advantage and gain, rather than that of the Students' Union and students.

Kevan Warner  
John Ferris  
Dennis Mayhew  
Randy Tighe  
Anton Szlichcinsh  
Ben Verdum  
Theresa Wynnyk

It seems that in our society of modern enlightened thought there is an increasing trend to criticize where criticism is not due, to twist facts to suit ill-founded arguments and to alter conditions for the benefit of those who desire to be vindictive.

To this point in time, the Gateway, has published articles written by individual councillors chastizing the Students' Union executive, while rebuttals have been rare. Perhaps this is due to the executive's delicate position or perhaps this is due to their desire not to become involved in the comic opera in which certain individuals have taken it upon themselves to change the plot to suit personal taste.

The purposes of a student representative to council are to safeguard student desires, to assist in the legislation of policy and to maintain smooth government by working closely with the elected executive. Ideally, they are both diplomat and politician rolled into one, whose duty it is to preserve student government as a workable body.

It appears that certain councillors are using their positions for self-aggrandizement in which role the pursuit of personal popularity has replaced responsible representation. Moreover,

their desire for publicity has led to the publication of letters and articles whose content can only be described as petty.

Hence, a councillor has challenged Mr. Zoeteman ostensibly to debate the role of Council. But surely by suggesting that the loser should receive a "lemon-creme pie in the face," reveals an immature outlook and a cheap desire for publicity.

With the increasing hunger for personal benefit, the fast decaying relations with the executive have led to factions and splits within the government. Too often the tendency to form such alliances has led to a very real neglect of Student needs for individual purposes. How can the problems of increased tuition, of better student services (such as longer library hours, the ombudsman, etc.) and student rights in general be solved, if there is no unity of direction or of purpose under the leadership of popularly elected officials?

Furthermore, councillor McKenzie's comment that he notices "an increasing arrogance of the executive towards student viewpoint" should be taken with a grain of salt. It is more than likely that the increasing arrogance on the part of individual councillors has been far more detrimental to the Students' Union's health than has any action taken by the executive. Comparably, by complaining of meaningless issues they have degraded honor and compromised themselves.

At this time it is necessary also to remind these councillors that they have been forgetful of the purposes and limitations of student governments. The Students' Union executive's platform was directed wholly toward student needs, services and welfare, rather than supporting extra-campus political activities which, they felt, student government has no right to interfere.

In a word, by maintaining their position (which is by no means apathetic) they have once more restored student govern-

ment to the university where it belongs.

In sum, councillors, what is your purpose? is it to be vindictive, prejudiced, selfish and self-seeking; or is it to represent the students who elected you to the best of your abilities and to assist the popular executive in the formation of policy? Indeed, responsible criticism is often necessary, but to presume that criticism is your sole duty is negligent, unfair and unjust. "Physicians heal thyselfes."

Ron Love  
Arts IV

I would like to respond to Dale Janssen's letter appearing Nov. 9 in *The Gateway*. In his letter Mr. Janssen stated he was "publicly chastised" by SU president Len Zoeteman for a column he wrote in the Commerce newsletter.

This is not the case.

The comments Mr. Janssen alludes to were made by Mr. Zoeteman during the Oct. 25 meeting of Council. At this time, Mr. Zoeteman expressed concern that such a column reflected poorly on the credibility of Council. At no time did Mr. Zoeteman indicate who wrote the column and in which publication it appeared. In fact, it was Dale Janssen himself who admitted writing the column.

With this misconception in mind, Mr. Janssen now desires a public debate with Len Zoeteman. This is a great tactic for publicity, Mr. Janssen, but it serves no useful purpose and reflects an irresponsible attitude toward Students' Council.

I am in complete agreement with the discussion of Council matters in *The Gateway* and other publications. I suggest, however, that disagreement between members of Council can be more effectively handled in Council, where problems can be alleviated through normal discussion.

Jay Spark  
Science Rep

## Vp retracts what was just a jest

The Nov 4th edition of the Gateway carried a short article concerning a Conference of high school counsellors and university administrators that I attended at the Banff Springs Hotel recently.

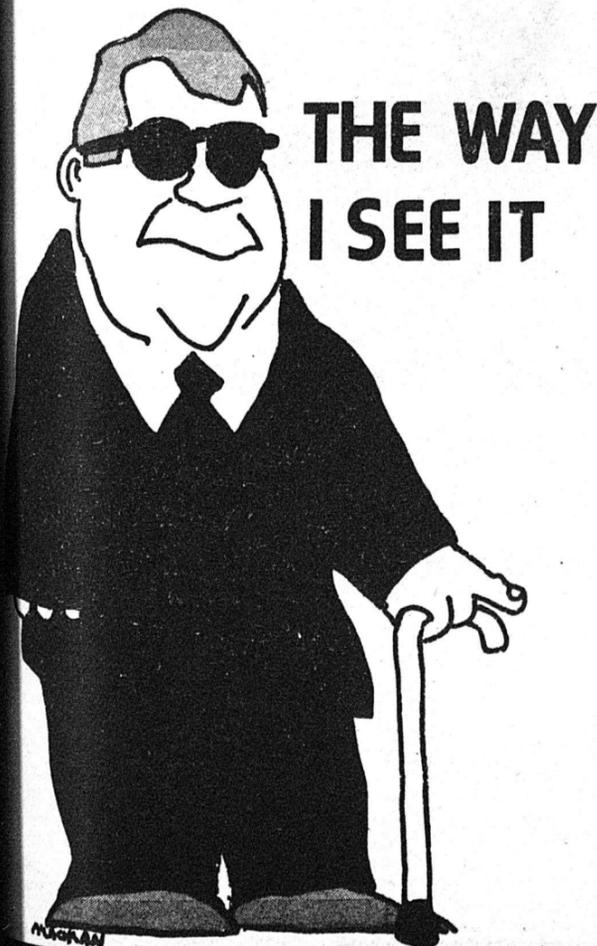
At first, I found the article to be rather humorous (I can laugh at a joke that's been played on me as well as the next person; even when the joke is made in a "news" article). However, it is apparent from several comments that I've received that at least some of your readers did not share my initial sentiments. This is probably because the article was somewhat lacking in detail, so I'd like to set the record straight.

The room at the hotel was not paid for by either the Students' Union or the University of Alberta. It was a complimentary suite given to the organizers of the conference because they had over 150 delegates. Because I was a guest of the chairman (I had been asked to present a speech to the opening session) I was invited to stay in one of the rooms of the suite.

It is unfortunate that the writer of the article chose to report an off-the-cuff comment said clearly in jest after the initial interview was over, as the sum-total of my reaction to the conference. If he had said more, then your readers would have been informed of what took place at the conference and that the meeting was both well-planned and highly informative.

Ken McFarlane  
Vice-President Academic

**Ed. Note:** The article in question, published under the headline "Council Briefs," did not imply that the SU or the U of A paid for Mr. McFarlane's room. The article said Mr. McFarlane was "a guest of the Banff Springs Hotel." However, because of the nature of the article (*Council Briefs*), Mr. McFarlane is correct in stating the article did not examine his role at the conference in detail.



## Frank Mutton

Londonderry Shopping Centre had a quarter-page ad in last Wednesday's Journal that I found very interesting. The box was empty except for the word **Remember** in the corner. Directly below this were the store's hours on Remembrance Day.

The ad seemed to be telling us to combine our remembrance of the war dead with a reminder to get the Christmas shopping done early. I guess Londonderry wants us to know that all those who died fighting for **King and Country** did so with the knowledge that an Allied victory meant bigger and better Bay Days back at home.

Even **Bill Comrie's Big Brick Warehouse** got into the act on Thursday - all pensioners who made it over there from the cenotaph ceremonies were given a chance at a recliner, rocker, just by guessing correctly the number of Londoners who died in the Blitz of 1941. Bill says the contest was such a huge success that he plans to do it again at his **Fire-Bombing of Dresden Sale** next year.

The opening ceremony at the magnificent new **Citadel Theatre** on Friday was an event I won't forget for a long time.

It wasn't the bright lights, or the celebrities in attendance, or the beautiful new building. No, I think it was the third bottle of **Porphyry Pearl** wine that did it.

After slipping away from John Neville, I managed to make my first appearance on stage (sans clothing). By the time the audience had finished applauding I had been hustled offstage and given a tutu.

Judging from preliminary reviews, I made a bigger hit than the poisoning scene!

This week's **S.O.B. (Son of a Bitch)** award goes to the **Edmonton Transit System** for their new policy of **running over hapless pedestrians** who don't quite make it across intersections.

Apparently the management at E.T.S. realized that drivers were behind schedule because they waited for pedestrians, and so they have issued instructions

to all drivers to run over people who take longer than two seconds to cross the street.

My good friend **June Shepard** is recovering nicely after trying to beat off the **69** downtown. She claims the driver had it out for her anyway, but June tends to feel that way about all men.

The **Faculty of Commerce** at the Uni is working in collaboration with the **Faculty of Engineering** to develop a **Bionic B. Comm.** One lucky Commerce student will receive a **solid-state head** in the hope that he may use it. Engineering students had assisted on the project until it was discovered that they had given the B. Comm a bionic belch and a fear of the opposite sex.

In closing, remember the immortal words of Mackenzie-King, "Mother, they're all out to get me! I'll have to kill them all, won't I? They made me feel very small!"