

The Gateway

Member of the Canadian University Press

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STAFF THIS ISSUE: Tailors in this office who brought in the news Sunday were Rose Mah Toy, Marg Penn, Jim MacLaren, Penny Hynam, Ralph Melnychuk, Marion Conybeare, Andy Rodger, Lorraine Allison, Lorraine Minich, Sheila Ballard, Pat Hughes (in living black and white), Bill Beard, Marcia Reed, Bev Gietz, Isabelle Foord, Nick Riebeck, Shirley Neuman, The Jaguar, and yours truly, Harvey Thomgirt.

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toward understanding

The inability of party politics to attract responsible and dedicated student participants from the university community was a cause for concern at the recent Progressive Conservative convention in Calgary. Lawrence Portigal, past president of the provincial Progressive Conservative Student Federation, told delegates that party political clubs neither mean nor stand for anything, and there is no communion of beliefs, ideas, or aims among members of the organizations.

This lack of participation, both on the part of the parent parties and the students, will likely be demonstrated in the upcoming model parliament on this campus.

Hopefully, the youth provide the party with an influx of new ideas and talent important in the shaping of policy and the operation of the party. This, unfortunately, is not the case at present, although

there are undoubtedly students who make valuable individual contributions.

If the model parliament and student political activity are to be revitalized, steps must be taken to attract both the activist and the academic type of student, and to examine social, and not just political problems.

To this end, Mr. Portigal made a valuable suggestion. The structure of model parliament, he said, should be altered to deal with only a single important theme each year. This way, each party could do meaningful research into several aspects of the problem. Education is one obvious example of such a question that could be dealt with in depth.

This would prevent the rehashing of uninteresting themes, and would allow all parties to make a valuable contribution to the understanding and solution of current political problems.

a new dimension

A recent study of education in Alberta reveals a new dimension of the concept of universal accessibility to post-secondary education.

Dr. Andrew Stewart's report focuses on the problem of proximity—both in geographic terms and in terms of the student's cultural and psychological separation from a university located in a distant city. The radical change from the personal and intimate milieu of the high school to the coldly impersonal university lecture theatre with its dehumanizing and alienating methods of mass education causes the student to question the quality of the education he is receiving.

The Canadian Union of Students' campaign for universal accessibility has emphasized removal of tuition fees and other financial barriers—without questioning the nature of the institutions to which we demand equal access. It is time to examine the mass lecture, the mass assignment and the mass exam.

The failure rate in first-year university is an obvious indication of the inability of the present system to provide the necessary transitional experience between high school and university. Dr. Stewart's proposals for decentralization of post-secondary education by the creation of district colleges are worthy of serious consideration by university and government officials, in view of the need to encourage a far larger proportion of the younger generation to continue their education after high school.

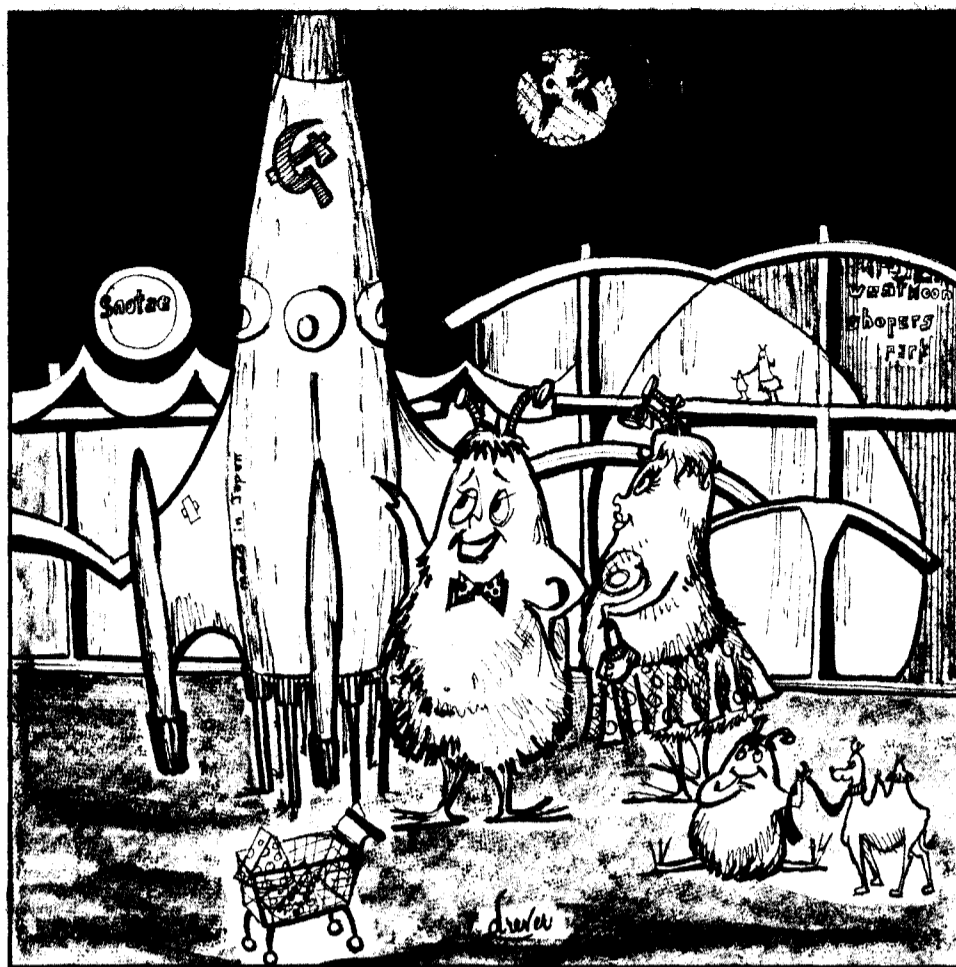
Even more regrettable than the loss of students who fail to adjust to the new learning situation, is the waste in both human and economic terms of those students for whom the educational experience in high school is so empty that they do not even consider further education. Implementation of Dr. Stewart's recommendations, with exercises of caution to prevent the emasculation of the courses offered, will be an important step to increase interest in higher education at the community level.

Dr. Stewart's proposal to make adult education and terminal courses for students uninterested in university central to the multiversity program, is a commendable effort to increase the education level of our society—which was so strongly urged by the recent report of the Economic Council of Canada.

The tendency to turn these institutions into pseudo-vocational schools with an occupational orientation should be avoided. In an era which has transience as its dominant feature, our educational policies should be to develop individuals with a sufficiently flexible and versatile educational background to prepare them for the rapid technological and social changes of today.

These institutions must offer diversified educational programs which are sufficiently open ended to prepare the individual for a world in which learning must be a continuing process.

There are already enough blind alleys in our educational system.



"at first they were concerned with spy missions, but now they're landing obscene art."

when the telephone rings

by don sellar

Welcome to this public university, where the best of men's minds are devoted to an honest search for truth. At least that's what you may have read in the brochures. Today, for a change, I thought we should take an honest glimpse of this so-called public institution.

Last week, this newspaper published a story about a tenure battle which has been raging within our university for a full month. We feel the subject is one of interest to the whole academic community, partly because it involves the status of faculty members, whose essential task it is to foster dialogue within our walls.

We did not expect this story to arouse much interest outside the university because the outside world is not directly involved by what happens to the two professors who have been denied tenure. I felt and still feel, however, that a campus newspaper should concern itself with university affairs, however unpleasant or distasteful they may be.

The story we published indeed has created a great amount of interest among our readership, who are now able to read the things which they heard previously as "backstairs gossip." The office telephone has been ringing continuously since Wednesday, and each time it rings, my faith in the university community shrinks a bit.

It seems that a campus newspaper is not supposed to concern itself with controversial and important matters such as student-faculty relations, university planning or the financing of post-secondary education in this province. After all, we are a house organ, which persons such as officials of the staff association can ignore until they wish to give us some free "advice" about what we shall print and what we shall hold back.

But the staff association official and other persons who gave their advice so freely last week have been a little late. Perhaps a few years ago, they could have made a telephone call and killed a story or an editorial or a letter to the editor.

But not now.

Not now because this is a newspaper which is trying to deal honestly and candidly in ideas and trying to tell the truth about what is going on at the university. If our callers had bothered to read our newspaper before last week, they would have noticed that campus social events are receiving less and less coverage and issues affecting the university's reputation and future are being "played up."

If our callers had bothered to come and have a chat with our senior editors and staff, or had bothered to get to know me last fall, their words would have been treated as those of friends, not censors. These persons have not been able to find any gross inaccuracies in the Williamson-Murray tenure story; and any minor errors which have so far appeared are due to conflicting opinions about tenure—an aspect of university affairs which few persons know very much about.

They have tried to keep material out of the newspaper, and have suggested that public discussion of an issue affecting everyone connected with the university is going to influence the private discussions being carried on between the faculty and the administration.

Let's not kid ourselves. This matter is one which should receive public discussion within the university community. It should not be aired as common gossip. Surely adult human beings of the type which frequent a university will not be unduly influenced by newspaper reports when it comes time to discuss solution through compromise.

This newspaper will continue to publish anything and everything it can find out about the controversial tenure case, including all the letters it receives on the issue. We are pledged to do this, just as we are pledged to take an interest in any other matter affecting the university's well-being.

And the persons who have been harassing our editors and staff for a full week had better take full cognizance of this fact before they telephone again.