

EDITORIAL

Short-sighted budget

When Treasurer Lou Hyndman announced a five-per-cent limit on grant increases to post-secondary institutions in Thursday's budget, he was essentially stating the provincial government's view on education:

The government has a very short-term outlook on the purpose and value of education.

Underfunding and cutbacks in post-secondary education are nothing new. And a concerted resistance to such a myopic stance as Thursday's Five-per-cent Solution is needed.

The litany hasn't changed. Universities are underfunded, the student loan system is inadequate, and students will end up paying the government shortfall through higher tuition fees.

The situation is compounded when you consider that the costs involved in maintaining a "quality education" increase at a faster pace than the inflation rate. For example, pH meters, centrifuges, and all biochemicals have tripled in cost in the last five years. In effect, the five-per-cent ceiling is really a decrease in funding.

The 1983-84 provincial budget projects \$9.6 billion in expenditures. On the operating side, this is a 14-per-cent increase over last year's spending. The discrepancy between the increases for the province's overall operating expenditure (14%) and for post-secondary institutions (5%) shows the low priority that education is receiving.

Hyndman's revenue projection of \$8.8 billion is based on the world oil price of \$29 a barrel. He says with the slow economic growth, it makes budget planning very difficult. Perhaps Hyndman needs to be reminded about the \$11.5 billion in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund.

No doubt the University of Alberta has already been neglected. However, U of A President Myer Horowitz says some important information regarding the university's funding is still being worked out.

There are 21,500 students on campus this year, which is 2200 more students than in 1981-82. The five-per-cent increase is in the basic grant; distinct from that basic formula is \$10.4 million that has been set aside for colleges and universities. Horowitz hopes the province will allocate a fair amount of that figure to the U of A due to the large enrolment. Even with these outside funds, the U of A "is going to be in for a very difficult year," says Horowitz.

The Faculty of Dentistry almost lost its accreditation a few years ago because of tight funding. Two years ago, the Computer Science chairman got so frustrated with the restraints that he resigned. Overworked and underfunded.

Since the provincial government decided not to extend a program of library endowments from the Heritage Fund, libraries are feeling the lash of Loughheed.

Library hours and circulation services are not what they could be; next year will be even worse, says Horowitz.

Staff-student ratios are soaring. Professors have increased workloads and therefore they become less accessible to students.

Thursday's budget hardly shows Loughheed's plan "to make this province of Alberta the brain center of Canada."

You might recall the "voucher" scheme called Established Programs Financing (EPF). Under that agreement, the federal government transfers money to the provinces to be used, in part, to support universities. When the agreement expired last spring, the Liberals cut back those transfers to help trim the federal budget.

"Let's work together in opposing Ottawa cutbacks," said former Minister of Advanced Education, Jim Horsman. (The quote is from a prepared statement that he attempted to give at last year's March 11 march on the Alberta legislature.)

The Minister of Advanced Education is now Dick Johnston, a chartered accountant by profession. If Johnston, follows, Horsman's lead, and there's no reason to suspect otherwise, then the blame will be directed to Ottawa or the economy or OPEC.

But the problem is immediate and the effects are long-term: The location of who to blame is not across the Ocean, but across the North Saskatchewan River.

The idea of accessible education needs to be discussed. Sadly, it's come to the point where the university is doing a balancing act: Faculty of Arts Dean Terry White faces the dilemma of either imposing quotas on Arts, or of maintaining accessibility in lieu of declining standards.

Apparently, the provincial government seems to be willing to trade both off for a balanced budget.

Brent Jang

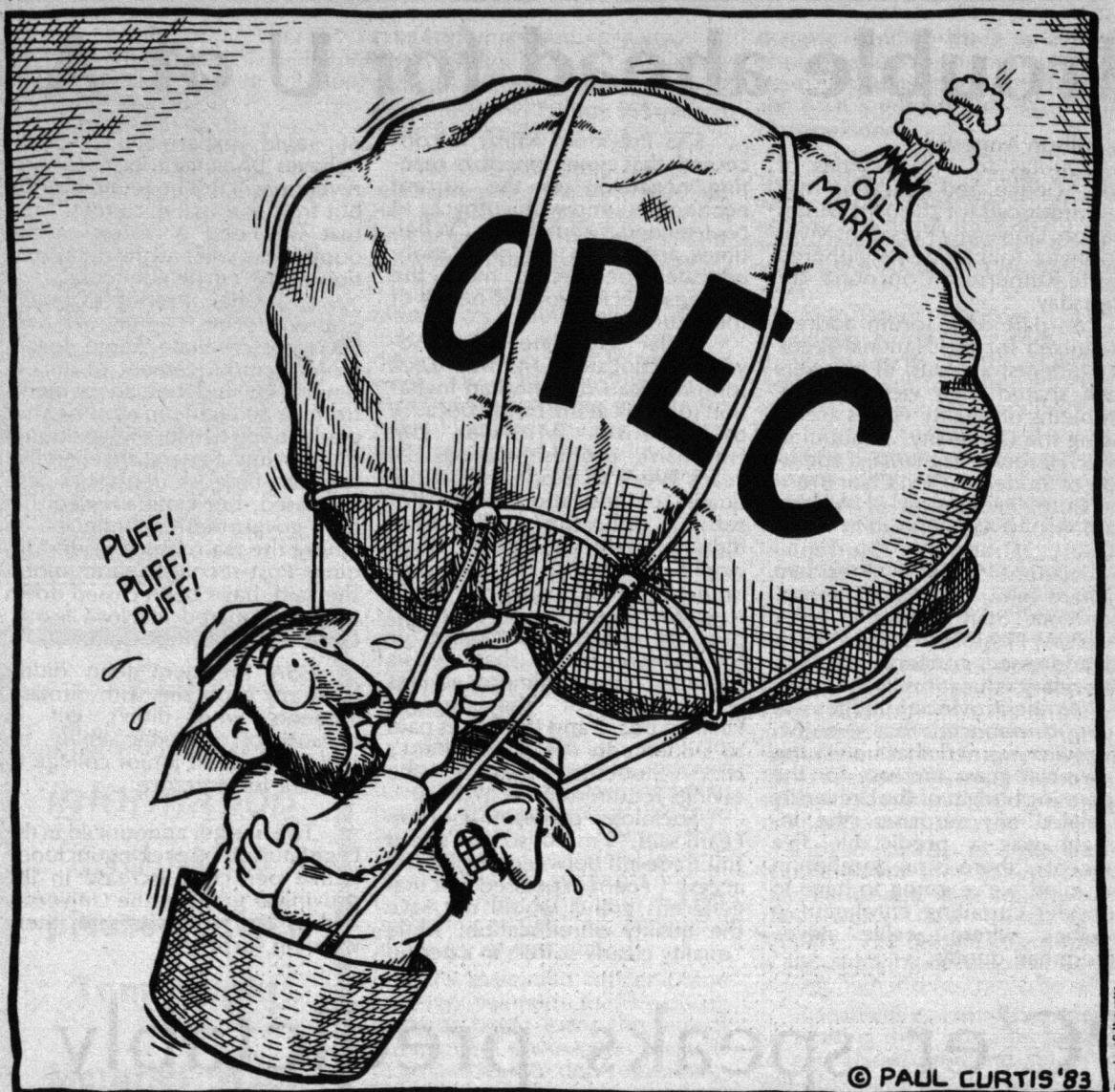
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Staff this Issue

Frantic fantasy Alert! Screamin' staffers Margo Schmitt and Heather-Ann Laird conjure visions of the late greats Nate LaRoi and Zane Harker, while Martin Beales and Bill Inglee compete in the Campus Flasher of the Week Contest. Ken Lenz stopped by for a wee while, so we'll mention him. And in the dark, dank corners of the press room, Fantasy Freaks Gilbert Boochard and John Algard settle down with a bottle of Remy Martin, and a couple of Mediterranean blondes. They begin to write: walk the red line/ between morning glories and shooting stars, now and then

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« LETTERS TO THE EDITOR »

A whacking good idea!

I'm pleased to see that enthusiasm towards the upcoming Universiade is beginning to build. In particular I'm referring to a recent letter advocating the formation of a Canadian drinking team. This is a fine gesture, but totally unrealistic. As much as we like to pride ourselves on our ability to consume vast amounts of alcohol, we really wouldn't stand a chance against some of the other competing nations.

As an alternative, we're lobbying to enter an event in the upcoming Games that we all know Canada would win. It's an event that most of us have been practising regularly for many years now, enjoying only its recreational benefits, little realizing the potential as an athletic event. Maybe a brief excerpt from the official rulebook will help you realize the competitive potential our sport has. For example, team members would participate in the following events:

1. Freestyle: an open category where the participant is left to use his imagination, judges mark for grace, style and sheer response. (Musical accompaniment is optional).
2. 100mL dash: this event is based strictly on speed and agility, technique helps but finishing first is the final goal.
3. 26L marathon: here endurance and stamina come into play, with mental strength also helping the competitor be the first finished.

We're not pulling anything here, we're serious athletes anxious to perform; we look forward to beating off the competition to win the gold medal but we need your support so get off your pods and pull for us.

Brad "Weak Knees" Statler, Jock Participant

Just plain disgusting

To the Students' Union Executive: (copy to the Gateway)

I strongly object to the *Plain Truth* magazine rack on the main floor of the Students' Union Building. I think that the presence of this "free" literature in the students' building is tantamount to support for the views it propagates.

Plain Truth is an extremist, right-wing propaganda vehicle for some of the most virulent American supporters of fascist regimes in Chile, South Africa, Guatemala, El Salvador, the Philippines, etc. Any commitment that the Students' Union has made to the publishers of this "magazine" should be broken immediately and it should be removed from our building.

Anne McGrath, Education I

Princess or plebian?

The Princess Repertory Theatre, supposed mecca for movie-goers, is a farce. I'm not slighting the films they present, but the shoddy way in which they are presented. The other night I went to see Elia Kazan's *On The Waterfront*. OK, so where's the movie? I haven't seen such a dismal print since, well...the Princess showed *Wuthering Heights*. Does anyone know how *Waterfront* ends? Apparently the Princess peoples would have us fill in the gaps left by the ravaged print — at various points scenes would jump jarringly into later scenes, with dialogue cut in mid-sentence. We all know director Kazan wasn't that experimental. This kind of rip-off would almost be tolerable if it was not for the fact

that Those In Control deem it necessary to turn on the house lights some three minutes before film's end — some of us like to forget we are sitting in a theatre, and even get into rapt emotional involvement, strange as it may seem.

And then there is the notorious Princess screen. How many people realize most of the films they see there have 1/4 of the original image lopped off vertically, courtesy the Princess' "2 x 4"? Not to mention that fact that the screen itself is some three blocks distant, vertically and horizontally.

Again, I don't want to knock the Princess' good intentions — any theatre that screens quality films should be exalted — but there is such a thing as decent presentation.

To paraphrase Marlon Brando (who knows): "Princess, you coulda' bin' a contenduh, instead of a bum, which is what you are!"

We, and Brando, deserve better.

Ben Murray, Arts II

No trust is needed for a nuclear freeze

I would like to make a belated response to David Starchuk, Ken Shipka, and Robert Pollard's letter published in the *Gateway* on March 3, 1983. I will refer to the authors as SSP.

In their letter SSP presented their opinions on some important current issues concerning the peace and disarmament debate. It is apparent from this letter that SSP unfortunately know very little about the topics that they were addressing. Since I have limited time and space I shall address only a couple of the misconceptions that SSP hold.

SSP believe that a US-USSR nuclear arms freeze is impossible to verify. They cite the *Reader's Digest* as their authoritative source. A somewhat better discussion of the verification problem can be found in an article by Les Aspin in the February 1979 issue of *Scientific American*. According to this detailed article "the much-touted problems of verification are more imagined than real. The multiple and duplicative methods of detection at the disposal of the US are sufficient to reveal any cheating on a scale adequate to threaten (the US) militarily." More information on verification can be found in Randall Forsberg's excellent article on the freeze in the November 1982 *Scientific American*.

SSP imply that Reagan's START proposals are realistic and positive arms control initiatives. Evidently SSP know nothing about the START proposals. In testimony before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the US House of Representatives on May 11, 1982 Forsberg pointed out that the START proposals would allow the US to retire some of its oldest missiles while the USSR would have to throw away half of its new relatively invulnerable land-based missiles and replace them with more vulnerable submarine-based missiles. Furthermore, the START proposals will not stop or even slow down the building of the "most dangerous destabilizing new systems: US counterforce-capable MX, Trident, Pershing II and cruise missiles, and Soviet counterforce - capable ICBMs with improved accuracy."

For those who would like to learn more about the arms race I would recommend attending the public lecture that will be given in the Tory Lecture Theatre on April 20 by Rear Admiral Eugene J. Carroll, USN (Ret). Carroll retired in 1980 from his position as Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Plans, Policy, and Operations.

As a conclusion I would like to quote a portion