

EDITORIAL

Administrations fall short

On page nine of today's Gateway we have a story on the first ever Edmonton rally for the arts. A large number of Alberta's artistic groups came together to gather support in their government lobby effort and also to educate the public on their valuable contribution to society.

It's no secret that the new PC federal government has gone down the highway with its cutbacks on various government cultural/arts programs. The Canada Council, the CBC, the National Film Board and others have seen their funds dwindle to nothing.

This is appalling.

What is even worse than the cutbacks is how our little students' council members and the university administration are doing to combat these cuts. This is yet another area in which both these campus organizations have failed to live up to their mandates.

Remember, a lot of University of Alberta students — fine arts students, creative writing students, drama students and general arts and science students — will be the ones in the dole queue when they try to get jobs in the soon-to-be-non-existent cultural sector.

And why hasn't any of the SU executive spoken out on the soon-to-be on the street students? Or, for that matter, what have either the university administration or the students' council come out and said about the new government and its policies?

What about transfer payments? What about Canada student loans? What about job creation for recent graduates and retraining for those left in the wake of the new high tech revolution?

Is it not the responsibility of the SU to lead the students? Isn't it up to them to keep up with all the details of government and keep students abreast of them and maybe (horrors) even organize lobby efforts and demonstrate so that U of A students can be properly represented?

Well, the SU executive would rather not. VP External Paul Alpern wouldn't be caught dead taking a concrete and tangible stand on any issue (after all "why shake trees just to see the leaves fall?"). The U of A is blessed with the only VP External in the country who wishes his portfolio didn't exist (call him "VP Parking and Housing").

And what about our president, Floyd? Didn't he promise when he ran for the office to organize marches and demonstrations? I haven't seen any marches or demonstrations. Have you? And when it comes to educating students on issues of national importance, I am left wondering if Floyd even knows what is going on himself, least of all communicating it to the students.

The least the students on this campus deserve is some immediate action, leadership and get-up-and-go. If the SU or the university doesn't do something — and soon — a lot of arts students will be driving taxis for a living.

Gilbert Bouchard

Important notice to all Gateway staff!

This Thursday at 4:00 p.m. (Mar. 14) there will be a staff meeting to elect the editorial positions for 1985-86. Those eligible to vote are:

Tim Heidt
Ashley Prest
Mike Evans
Bill Overend
Susan Sutton
Don Teplyske
Peter Block
Jim Herbert
Jim Moore
Shane Berg
Hans Beckers
John Charles
Bill Doskoch
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Warren Opheim
Jens Andersen
David Marples
Dan Watson
Nate LaRoi
Geoffrey Jackson
Anna Borowieki
Kevin Kaardal
George Onwumere

Pat Sytnick
Brenda Waddle
Bosco Chang
Ross Gordon
Laurel Braid
David Boyd
Larry Hoedl
Bernie Poitras
Shona Welsh
Kent Cochrane
Doug Olsen
Dave Burns
Audrey Djuwita
Greg Owens
Tom Huh
Elisabeth Eid
Lisa Trofymow
Mark Spector
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James MacDonald
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Melanie Klimchuk
Cindy Rozeboom
John Watson
Andy Spence
Laurel Braid
Mark Olyan
Gerry Magill
Brad Clark



LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

No protection from harassment

The University of Alberta Non-Academic Staff Association has noted with some dismay the article in your edition of March 7, 1985, lauding the work of the President's Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment. This is the latest in a series of reports from or concerning this committee which give the false impression that the University of Alberta is responding positively and effectively to the challenge posed by sexual harassment in the work place. It is NASA's opinion that this is not the case, at least insofar as support staff of the University are concerned. The reality is that the University has done nothing to deal with a number of essential issues concerning our members and sexual harassment. The most important of these are:

- The University has never, to my knowledge, officially taken a position against sexual harassment. In fact, the Board of Governors in negotiations with NASA has even refused to include the simple statement that, "the Board will not condone sexual harassment" in the Board/NASA agreement.
- There are no provisions within the University system, or for that matter under the Alberta Human Rights legislation, for punitive measures against a person who sexually harasses another. The result is that it is only the victim who has anything to lose. This is a failing which the University admittedly shares with virtually every other employer in the country. It would be interesting to know what disciplinary measures the President's Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment feels it can recommend, and if it has ever made such a recommendation.
- Employees have no meaningful protection against reprisals for having been involved in a complaint.

The experience of those support staff whose cases we are aware of with the President's Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment has been negative in all instances. In one case the complaint was rejected on the basis of minimal evidence. Following rejection the employee was retaliated against and it was only after a complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission and the expenditure of many thousands of dollars by NASA on legal costs to convince the Alberta Human Rights Commission to do its job that the situation was partially redressed. In another case,

the President's Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment simply declined to investigate because the person involved was employed on a trust.

In both cases, the point at issue was the improper use of power by a person in a position of authority.

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NASA withdrew its support for the President's Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment some time ago. Almost invariably the University takes the position that where grievable matters are involved, the President cannot intervene. We say fine — get the President's Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment out of the way and let us deal with these issues as grievances through a procedure in our agreement.

George Walker
Manager

Concerns Repressed

An impression has been created in the article "subtle racism and campus blacks" that John Ceaser expressed personal concern about "some professors who wrongly accuse African Students of plagiarism..." The choice of words by the Gateway correspondent clearly misrepresents what Ceaser said.

During the interview he hypothesized that because of some possible weaknesses in the background of some African students when they initially enroll in their programs, during the course of their stay (isolated cases) grading of assignments etc. may reflect a negative notion about their capabilities.

But these may or may not be genuine depending on the circumstances. Similarly, he was quoted as saying "you write something and people don't believe you..." that should have read "generally it's a pity if one writes something (assignment etc.) in his second language perhaps better than his first language colleagues and no one believes him. This may be a question of mutual trust and confidence that people improve upon their weaknesses." He went on to state that he has not personally experienced any racism — but some concerns had been raised by others through conversations. However, he believes that some students may have become oversensitized about racism that they feel it. It could be analogous to "some dreams — when you set your mind too much on something you may dream about it."

He pointed out that most of the problems could be addressed through education. For example, if Can-

The Gateway

March 12, 1985, Vol. 75, No. 43

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The Gateway is the newspaper of the University of Alberta students. Contents are the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief. All opinions are signed by the writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Gateway. News copy deadlines are 12 noon Mondays and Wednesdays. Newsroom: Rm 282 (ph. 432-5168). Advertising: Rm 256D (ph. 432-4241). Students Union Building, U of A, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2G7. Readership is 25,000. The Gateway is a member of Canadian University Press.

Do you trust your appliances? Brad Clark scurried into the Gateway office just the other day to report Jim Herbert captured inside his vacuum cleaner, Alan Weicker mauled by a rabid weed-eater, and Andrew Spence blackmailed by his TV set, which threatened to tell everyone what sorts of shows he watches. Mark Spector and Olga Jagodnik set out to investigate, but were scared off by a suspicious pack of electric razors trailing them. Lisa Trofymow, Cindy Rozeboom and Mark Olyan were nervous when they found their radio-alarm clocks missing, and terrified when they discovered them cleverly disguised as Kent Cochrane, John Watson, and Bill Doskoch. Pat Sytnick says her microwave is perfectly well behaved but Ann Grever, who is recovering from an attack by a bloodthirsty gang of cookie cutters, warns against false security.