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point

editorial

the healing business

In researching the continuing story of the fight of the student health service to avoid the Board of Governors budgetary axe, I've come to wonder why this, of all agencies on campus should be threatened with such drastic cuts, while others continue to operate unmolested.

The students' council also wondered about it this summer in a brief prepared under the direction of Patrick Delaney. It questioned the "singling out of this service", and went on to argue that a good many other "services" are provided by the University to various groups on campus, (such as *New Trail*, the alumni magazine and *Folio*) which, because they are not termed "services", are spared even close trimming.

Stanley Greenhill, chairman of the University Health Service Committee, is another to pose the question. In that committee's recent meeting he commented that the service is being subjected to a "pruning greater than any other area of the university."

It is the search for some reasonable answer as to why student health has been threatened with extinction by the B of G that has fostered a persistent rumour that a private medical clinic lurks in the shadows ready to devour the clientele of a dying student health service.

Yesterday, I phoned Dick Landon, the leasing manager for Batoni-Bowlen, the developer of the new College Plaza project just south of campus, and asked if there was truth to the rumour that a health clinic was planned for the development.

He hedged. "What do you mean by a clinic?" It didn't seem that complicated to me; I replied, "you know, doctors practising with offices together in the complex."

Well, yes, there were plans for "some" medical facilities in the office tower, a pathologist, a radiologist, a physiotherapist ... but no "clinic".

How many offices were to be used by personnel? Six floors of the office tower. Would there be other medical practices there? Yes, "a full range of medical specialties". How many leases have been signed to date? "Ten to Fifteen, better than half." And when would the building be ready for occupancy? "Sometime after the first of the year."

The rumour then is not simply a rumour. Apparently enough doctors are convinced that the healing business is sufficiently lucrative in this area to sign leases in this expensive development. But, there is still no evidence of conspiracy.

It may be the case, as F.B. Cookson a physician at student health has suggested, that this is not "a case of any clinic actively campaigning to get it (student Health). What is more likely is that if the center collapses a clinic would step in".

Perhaps... But the attack seems too pointed, and the outcome too inevitable to be convincingly attributed to coincidence.

I am ordinarily not a subscriber to "demon theories" of social events. But so long as the motivations of this vendetta (and no milder word seems accurate) against what has been in the past a popular and useful service to students, cannot be more comprehensible and creditable, then we must certainly look to those university administrators and members of the Board of Governors who are pressing this action to discover which among them have something to gain from the destruction of student health.

I have no names to name, no demons to which point, but we must start demanding some explanations. Terri Jackson.

petty politics

Petty politics bore me. But petty politicians bore me more.

I am tempted to say ho hum to the latest revelation of Riskin's petty attempts to play corporate executive.

After watching his actions for the past six months, this incident comes as no surprise.

But it's not trivial and not so easily dismissed as that, because it reveals in microcosm a growing tendency to no longer take seriously the union part of students' union.

Riskin's latest attempt to justify his seemingly unilateral actions in the extravagant expenditure of our money is completely inadequate.

Terri Jackson

Letters to the editor on any topic are welcome, but they must be signed. Keep them short (about 200 words) unless you wish to make a complex argument. Letters should not exceed 800 words.

The Gateway is published bi-weekly by the students of the University of Alberta. Contents are the responsibility of the editor. Opinions are those of the person who expressed them.

Staff this issue included Gary Bigg, Allyn Cadogan, Kimball Cariou, Ron Carlo, Joyce Clarke, Betsy Ewener, Deena Hunter, Terri Jackson, Russ Kabayashi, Susan Landerjou, George Mantor, Bob McIntyre, Colleen Milne, Les Reynolds, Michel Ricciardi, Joan Robinson, David Ross, Arthur Savage, Candace Savage, Duncan Sherwin, Terry Taylor, Ron Treiber, Brian Tucker, Ernie Vilcsak, Alan Waugh, Diane Wedman, John Williams, Lisa Wilson.

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