

SU nickles and dimes

by Gateway staff

When you elect Students' Union executives on the basis of nickel photocopying, all you get is dime politicians.

This year's election consists of budding politicians and members of the current SU power clique making promises just to get elected. Each campaign is offering similar chickens in the same pots as all the elections in years gone by. When promises go unfulfilled, and resurface time after time, students dismiss the SU as ineffective, and this is mistaken as apathy.

The U of A SU is a huge service organization that

funds things like CaPS, the exam registry, and other operations that students on this campus need. The university administration needs them too, and the SU is doing a favor for them, by funding these services.

What do we get in return? We get a voice. We get a chance to do something about all those bitches we may have about the university.

There are few major policy making bodies on this campus that don't have student representation. Did you know that? Probably not. The SU has not made this information widely known.

The SU needs to co-ordinate all these representatives: to get them talking to the students, so students can voice their concerns, and so the administration can listen.

SU exec could establish a directory of board representatives, and a list of what the boards do. If a directory such as this existed, students would know something about what voice they did or didn't have.

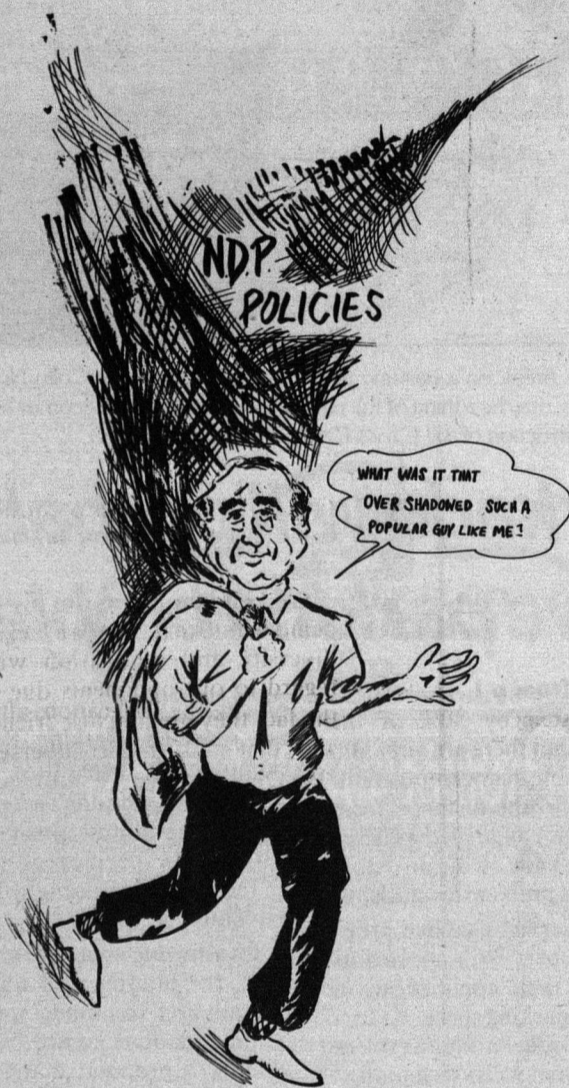
And board representatives should communicate with Students' Council and your faculty reps so that information about administration decisions could filter back to the students. *The Gateway* shouldn't be the only conduit students have for this information.

Effectively co-ordinating the students who sit on the university boards would increase the knowledge available to students about the working of the administration. It would also enable our representatives to fight things like fee increases at every administrative step (and there are quite a few), instead of waiting for the GFC, when it could be too late.

This may be too much to expect of politicians who only promise us more services in an attempt to buy our votes, or pander to our special interests without even bothering to estimate the costs of what they've promised.

For \$47.50 students should expect more than penny-ante politics.

Opinion



Martin
Levenson



Vote for volunteers

Do it for the volunteers.

As the paper tide of photocopied campaign promises floods over us, as we submerge for the third time, awash in pastel hues, it is tempting to give up hope, to brand the SU elections as just petty student politics, unworthy of serious consideration.

Please don't.

Not for the sake of the candidates. They've been working hard, but so they should. They stand to gain the most. They're the ones who deliver vague promises and confusing policies. They're the ones with the overly sincere smiles, who are so careful not to offend that they end up saying nothing of substance.

That's not really their fault, it's just how politics works. Some of the candidates are better than others, and none of them are bad, if only because they're willing to stand for election.

And let's face it, the SU itself

doesn't need your vote. It doesn't matter who gets in, the SU will survive. Dewey's, RATT, Info Service, Student Help, The Registries, even CJSR and *The Gateway* will continue.

Minor changes, mostly cosmetic, will be made, as the newly elected leaders leave their imprint on the SU for posterity (or at least until their decisions are overturned by subsequent executives).

It's not the candidates, or the institution that needs your support.

It's the volunteers. The people you see staffing campaign tables, handing out leaflets, and screaming themselves hoarse at rallies, are not doing it for fun, or for their own benefit.

There's very little profit to being a volunteer campaign worker. Students give up study time to staff campaign booths. On the first day of campaigning, I saw 30 volunteers following candidates around outside, in bitterly cold weather. This time could have been spent socializing in more relaxing surroundings. Volunteers get the gratitude of their candidates, perhaps make a few friends, but get damn little else.

It's not really fun, either. It's no fun to have people tell you to fuck off when you try to give them a leaflet. It's not fun to

patiently, time after time, hour after hour, explain to people what your candidates' policies are, or to defend those policies. It's not fun riding the emotional roller-coaster that goes up and down according to whether you perceive your candidate to be doing well or poorly.

So why do they do it?

These are not stupid, naive people, sucked in by smooth talking baby politicians. These are bright people, who do what they do because they feel they have a responsibility to.

They believe. In the face of the self-perpetuating conventional "wisdom" that students are apathetic, they prove that they're willing to get involved.

Let's hope they stay involved. Their energy, enthusiasm and dedication makes all of them the best resource the SU has. It would be a shame if this resource was discouraged, or wasted.

So even if you're sick and tired of campaigns, even if you don't really care who gets in, or see the whole process as irritating, make an effort to ensure that the sacrifices made by all these people are not wasted.

Vote!

For the volunteers.

The Gateway

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The Gateway is the University of Alberta students' newspaper. Contents are the responsibility of the Editor-in-Chief. All opinions that are signed by the writer do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Gateway*. Copy deadlines are 11 a.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. Newsroom: 282 SUB (phone 492-5168). Sports and production offices: 230 SUB (phone 492-5068). Photos printed in *The Gateway* may be for sale. Call the photodirectorate at 492-5168 or come by Room 235 SUB. Advertising: Room 256D SUB (SU Executive offices) phone 492-4241. Mailing address: Room 256D Students' Union Building, U of A Edmonton, Alberta. T6G 2J7. Readership is 30,000.

SU letter onslaught continues

Because of the large number of letters received at *The Gateway* on the subject of the SU election, we are running a special political section in today's issue on pages 4, 5 and 6. Many of these letters may have been solicited by the candidates, so we advise our readers to keep a shaker of salt on hand as they read this feature.

I opened up the Tuesday, March 7 issue of *Gateway*, fully expecting to see an avalanche of election-oriented letters, with critiques of the policies and qualifications of both slates and the independent candidates. Instead, I see several letters from "students-at-large," (who all, coincidentally, just "happened" to be in the same room at the same time), claiming that the Representative slate is guilty of "mudslinging." I would agree that comments on the sex lives or relationships of either slate are in poor taste; however, I feel that these same critics are guilty of "mudslinging" themselves.

I have also heard several Representative candidates speak in classrooms, and have heard nothing of the sort. I have heard Kevin Klapstein speak of the need for an effective student advocate in the Board of Governors, Wade Deisman speak of the need

for the vp external to be vocal to the provincial government, and I have heard Mike Evans speak on some of his slates' platforms and promises. If these people who felt so strongly as to write into *The Gateway* really believe what they are saying, why don't they write letters extolling the virtues of the candidates' promises (example: Mr. Ken Mah's letter on page six) instead of stooping to the same low level of "mudslinging" of which they accuse their adversaries. This has been a relatively clean campaign thus far; I find it distressing that some Direction '89 supporters are so scared of defeat that must slander other candidates.

Shane A. Henderson
Science III

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Based on the large number of letters contained in the March 7

edition from the Faculty of Arts (eight in total), it would appear that the D'89 slate are trying to salvage a sinking ship by getting all their supporters to flood the press with mock outrage at the sleazoid tactics of their opponents, the representative slate. Well, I have seen Mr. Evans speak on more than one occasion, and I see nothing wrong with him pointing out the fact that 5 of 6 on the D'89 slate are Arts students (something D'89 is not exactly publicizing). What I haven't seen is the alleged "sex and sleaze" line from Mr. Evans, and I have seen him speak more than most. It would appear that D'89 is digging up its own dirt, and getting its friends to accuse the opposition of throwing it. It won't work. By the way, this letter was not solicited by any candidate.

Barry Posner
Engineering I