

Task force attacks University News

by Don Retson

The second open hearing of the Task Force on the Quality of Student Life, held at Howe Hall March 8, was almost a success despite poor attendance.

The committee, established by Student Union President Brian Smith, "to find out what makes students tick", consists of Chairman D. Ray Pierce and core workers Wayne Hooper and James Sykes.

Unlike the first commission hearing in Shirreff Hall, which could be best described as directed discussion on the problem of student apathy on campus, the Howe Hall hearing provided students with a rare opportunity to present their viewpoints and to ask questions on the administration of this university.

The task force received written briefs from Derek Mann on behalf of Information Services, I. W. Somerville, Dean of Howe Hall men and John Holancin, past President of the Howe Hall Residence Council.

Mann's brief pointed out that the purpose of Information Services is to provide "public relations and news service to the university and community".

One of its main respon-

sibilities is overseeing the operation of the bi-weekly administration newspaper "University News". This paper, which is operated by a full-time editor and professional staff, has a circulation of 12,000 and a budget of \$28,000. Even so, Mann feels that the paper "is only scratching the surface" and would like to see it expanded.

One student charged that the University News is nothing more than "a mouthpiece of the administration" and rather than expanding, the paper should be scrapped.

"It's garbage", he stated.

Mann then proceeded to defend the paper as one which "is open to all segments of the university community." However, when the GAZETTE asked if interested students could work on the paper as hired staff, the answer was a polite "no", now and in the future.

While Mann is optimistic that the News is widely read among students, he complained that the paper has never received letters to the editor. One student suggested that this was due either to the fact that no one read the paper or because they did not find the material con-

troversial.

As James Sykes pointed out, "If there is an increase in student tuition, where are you likely to hear about it first?"

Ken MacDougall, newly elected Arts rep, challenged the News to publish a letter written by himself that suggested, among other things, scrapping the paper.

A submission by Dean Somerville expressed the need for a residence manager who could oversee all aspects of university housing. Somerville admitted that Howe Hall is "a stereotyped residence", with rooms allocated on a seniority basis rather than with regard to the needs and interests of students.

John Holancin spoke on the quality of residence life and observed that the cost of a single room at Dal has increased from \$730 to \$1060 since he first came here.

He deplored the activities of orientation as "mass confusion" and suggested the establishment of a service agency that would give greater counselling to first year students.

Holancin's talk reflected a growing scepticism among



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Task Force members left to right: Derek Mann (facing), Information Officer, core members Wayne Hooper, D. Ray Pierce and James Sykes. In the background out-going (and maybe returning) Communications Secretary Jim Kayne.

students towards the administration's poor planning and misplaced priorities.

"This university gives a raw deal to its undergrads", he stated.

In a closing statement, Holancin said that it is time this university reassessed its ideas of growth and expansion, which

are carried out at the expense of the students.

The final report of the task force, including some forty briefs, will be submitted to President Smith on April 3. A public presentation will then be held in the SUB April 4, to discuss the recommendations brought forth in the report.

Recommendations in Soc dispute

Real issues ignored

by Glenn Wanamaker

The recommendations submitted in the dispute between Sociology students and Professor Nick Poushinsky are "pure garbage" according to the Sociology Course Union.

The Union has stated that the real issues, involving student intimidation and Poushinsky's inexcusable absence to fish lobster, have been ignored.

Ombudsman Ian Chambers and Dean of Arts and Science Guy MacLean have recommended that Poushinsky improve the general operation of his classes with definite office hours and a clear definition of class requirements. This report has been circulated to all parties concerned and the professor is purportedly ready to accept them.

The Grievance Committee of the Course Union has sent a memorandum dated March 10 to MacLean, Chambers, Secretary of Senate John McNulty, Department Chairman Don Clairmont, and the Chairman of the Committee on Studies. It reads: "We reaffirm our commitment to seek written reasons, which you stated you would give us, for Prof. Poushinsky's:

(1) teaching incompetence

(2) teaching negligence

(3) intimidation of students

We still await your response."

Ombudsman Chambers told the GAZETTE that "there are some issues of a more serious nature involved but they haven't been made known to me."

Another committee researching the issue, the Pro Tem Undergraduate Advisory Committee is expected to reach its conclusions shortly. Then it will be up to the faculty executive committee to make the final decision.

Students are not supporting the Pro Tem committee and the two who have been appointed refuse to sit on it. The reason for this is that the two faculty members on the committee, Professors Brodie and Stephens, also sit on the all-faculty executive committee.

There are also suspicions that Dean MacLean's recommendations will be accepted — no matter what the myriad of other committees decide.

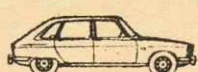
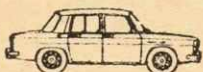
Soc students feel that they are being whitewashed either way, and the basic problem of a professor's inability to teach is being overlooked.

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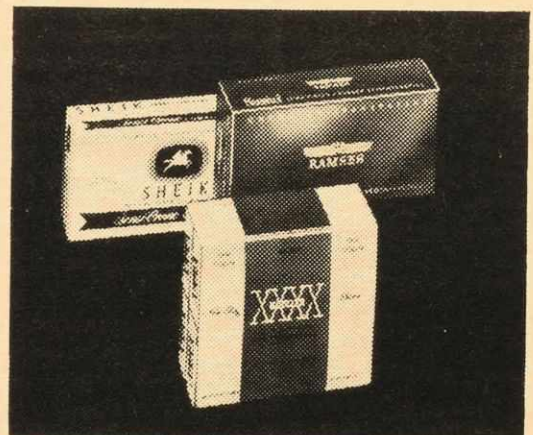
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