NEWS

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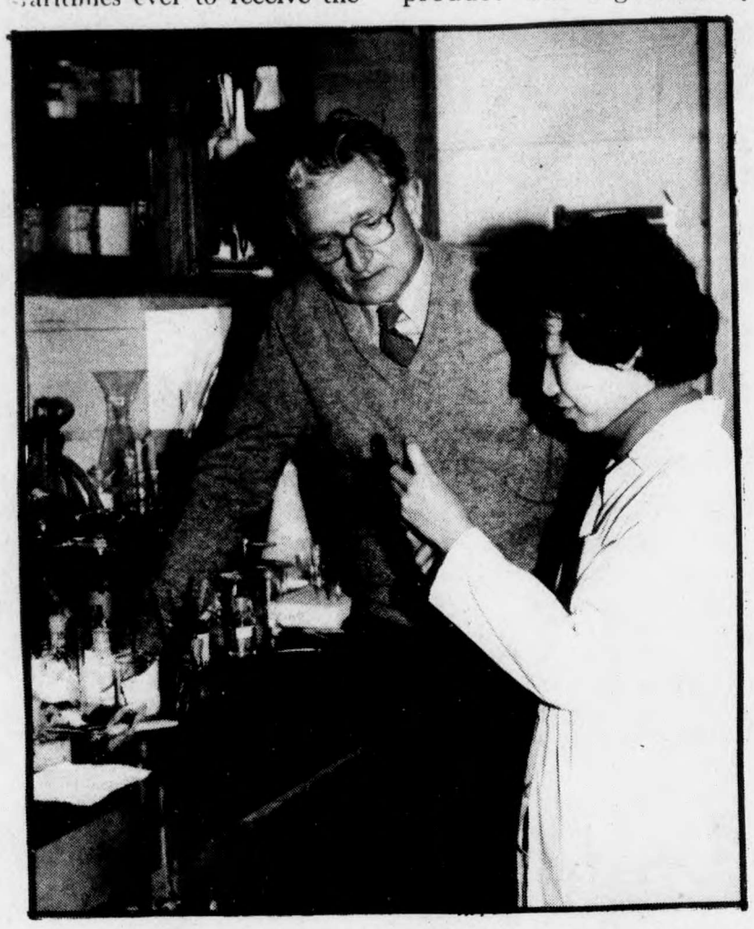
DEADLINE: Noon Wednesday

UNB professor receives $50,000 prize

First Maritime professor to receive Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Prize

By LEITH CHU
Asst. News Editor

Karel Wiesner, research professor at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, is the first scientist in the Maritimes ever to receive the $50,000 Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Prize for distinguished lifetime achievement.



Karel Wiesner recognized for his high quality teaching and accomplishments

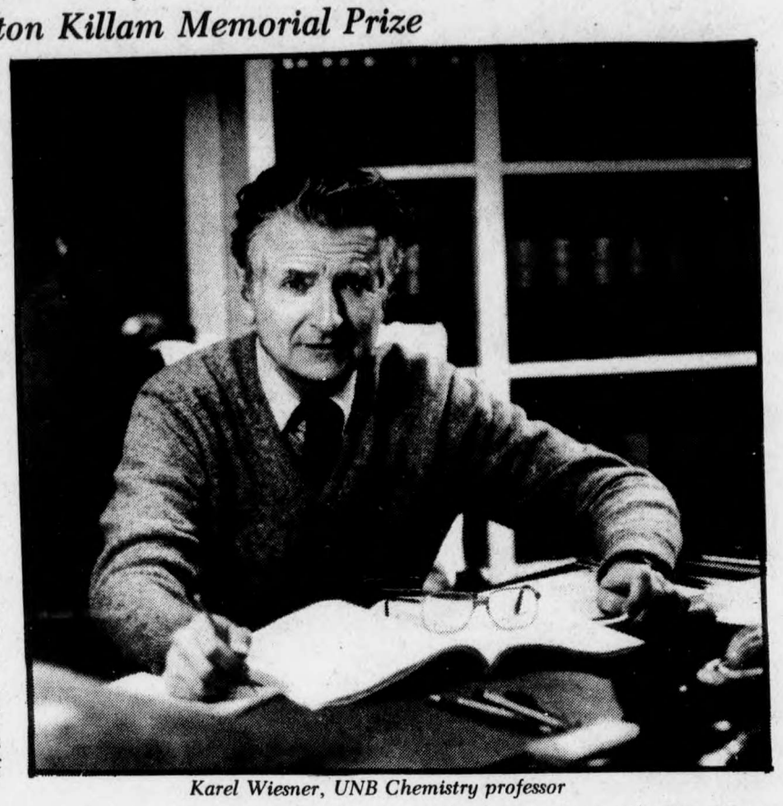
The announcement of Dr. Wiesner's award was made several weeks ago at a ceremony in Toronto. Because Dr. Wiesner was unable to attend, representatives of the Canada Council and the Killam Program travelled to Fredericton to make a special presentation on March 11. Aubrey Brown of Dalhousie, N.B., a member of the Board of the Canada Council, presented Dr. Wiesner with a scroll and a cheque for $50,000. Mr. Brown was accompanied by Gilles Lefebvre, associate director of the Canada Council; Mel MacLeod, head of the Killam Program; and Donald Mowat, public relations officer for the Canada Council.

A UNB faculty member since 1948, Dr. Wiesner's work involves the synthesis of natural products. He has been particularly successful with the cardiac drug, digitalis. One of the 10 most prescribed drugs for heart attack patients, digitalis increases the force of heart contraction and slows rapid heart beat. In its natural form (derived from plants), however, its side effects are great, and possibly fatal. Dr. Wiesner and his research group have developed a synthetic form of digitalis that retains the potency of the natural product but significantly reduces its toxicity . In fact, laboratory tests on animals, conducted by Edward Brown of the department of medicine at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, show no toxicity level whatsoever. Dr. Wiesner's assistant, Thomas Tsai, is optimistic that clinical tests on human patients can be undertaken in the near future.

In his nearly 40 years association with UNB, Dr. Wiesner has established an international reputation for his work with natural products. His single minded drive is credited with turning what was in the 1940's a poorly equipped university laboratory into a research group of considerable stature. A respected teacher of undergraduate and graduate students, Dr. Wiesner today works primarily with post-doctoral fellows.

Dr. Wiesner was born and educated in Prague, Czechoslavakia, where he was forced to work without direction when the Second World War closed the universities. He emigrated to Canada in 1948 to join the faculty at UNB. He has been at UNB ever since, with the exception of two years, 1962-64, when he served as associate director of research for Ayerst Research Laboratories in Montreal. Working in what some scientists might consider scholarly isolation, Dr. Wiesner has been known to call himself "the backwoods chemist."

His achievements here have not gone unnoticed, however. He has been accorded numerous professional honors, not least of which is the Killam Memorial Prize. Other honors include Fellowship in the Royal Societies of Canada and London, the Centennial Medal, the Order of Canada, the Chemical Insitiute of Canada Palladium Medal, the Ernest Guenther Prize of the American Chemical Society, and Fellowship in the Pontifical Academy of Science. In 1976, he delivered the Centenary Lecture of the Chemical Society of the United Kingdom and received its Medal.



Karel Wiesner, UNB Chemistry professor

University community mad at Ottawa

By Diane S. Burt

The Canadian university community is disappointed about Ottawa's 1986-87 research funding budget. The federal funding plans are supposed to increase the budgets of university research councils by $1 billion to $3.4 billion over the next five years.

Science and Technology Minister Frank Oberle said recently, "This significant increase to university funding clearly indicates the priority this government places on research and development despite the tight fiscal discipline we have imposed on ourselves." However, the Association of Univerisities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) do not believe that funding is truly being increased. The two associations say that "funding levels for the core activities of the councils will, in fact, decline in real terms" over the five year period.

One major aspect of the government's plans is designed to encourage private sector investment in university research funding. Ottawa has planned a matching grant system, in which the federal government will match any investment by the private sector up to a maximum of $369 million over the next five years. AUCC and CAUT, however, note that although they welcome further chances to work with the private sector, the sector is already contributing to university-based research, and they doubt if the proposed scheme "will result in the significant increases predicted by the government."

The 1986-87 funds will be divided among three granting councils. $324 million will go to the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, $70 million will go to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and $168 million will go to the Medical Research Council.

Unfortunately, these figures are relatively small when compared to those of other developed countries. In 1960, the percentage of Canada's GNP going to research and development was about 1.9 percent. In fact, Canada then ranked among the top ten of the developed countries who were members of the Organization for Economic Corporation and Development (OECD) with respect to research and development. But by 1985, the percentage of our GNP going to research and development had dropped to about 1 percent, and we are now near the bottom of the OECD countries.

Continued on page 6

SRC Referendum issues revised

By KEN QUIGLEY
Editor

After "careful study and discussions with various students concerned", Student Union President John Bosnitch called an emergency council meeting on March 12; a meeting that saw the revisions of issue #5 and #6 in the referenda slated for later this month.

The meeting, one that took an hour to get under way, began with Bosnitch putting forward the motion that the fiscal and electoral year be unified between the dates June 1st and May 31st. This had earlier been part of the referenda issues but was later deemed a matter that council should deal with instead. That motion was passed unanimously.

Proposition five was then left to state..."That as a result of the fact that the fiscal and electoral years of the Student Union have been standardized and fixed as June 1st to May 31st, all Student Union terms of office affected by this change should terminate on May 31st of the upcoming academic year, and that the next executive should be elected in March 1987, and take office on June 1, 1987."

If the students vote yes to this individual issue, John Bosnitch and his executive will have a term of nineteen months. The longest ever on one

Continued on page 3