

# STU faculty suffers 'intimidation' says UNB prof

By ROLAND MORRISON

Faculty at STU are being subjected to "administrative intimidation" according to Dr. Israel Unger, a chemistry professor at UNB.

Unger levelled the charge last May at an executive meeting of the Canadian Association of University teachers (CAUT). Unger also said the STU administration was preparing a list to use when the time comes for STU to cut staff.

The conflict between several members of the STU faculty and the university administration has been smoldering for quite some time. It erupted into outright confrontation at the STU Convocation exercises held last May 14, when about half of the 65-member faculty boycotted the exercises in protest of the granting of an honorary degree to Dr. L.H. Cragg, President of Mount Allison University.

Dr. Cragg, former president of the Chemistry Institute of Canada (CIC) is a recipient of the CIC Gold Medal for outstanding leadership in the professions of chemistry and chemical engineering. In the fall of 1970, he was involved in a conflict that arose over the discharging of a tenured member of the music department of Mt. A.

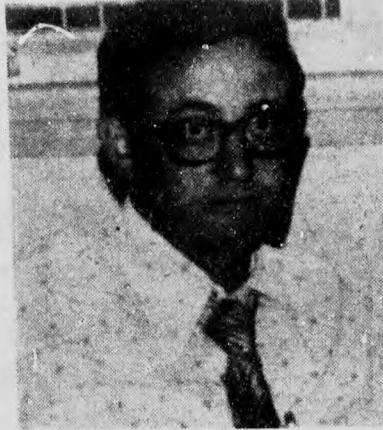
The CAUT charged that the faculty member had been dismissed without adequate proof of cause or a fair hearing. Accordingly, the CAUT imposed censure on Mt. A., a measure taken only in extreme cases.

Professor Russell Hunt, President of the Faculty Association of the University of Saint Thomas (FAUST), contends that the honouring of Dr. Cragg amounted to the condoning of a university that was under censure by CAUT.

"An honorary degree conferred to the president of a university under censure, who is largely responsible for that censure, is an insult to the faculty association," he said in an interview. Professor

Hunt, and several other faculty members expressed concern about the reasons why Dr. Cragg was chosen, especially in light of the previous difficulties that arose at McMaster University in Hamilton over the same question.

Last February 14, the McMaster Senate decided to confer an honorary degree on Dr. Cragg, a former member of its Chemistry Department. However, the McMaster Faculty Association asked the Senate to postpone granting the degree until such time as the CAUT lifts its censure of Mount Allison, otherwise, many faculty members would refrain from attending the May 26 Graduation Exercises.



Dr. Israel Unger

A compromise was reached whereby Dr. Cragg was honoured for his academic accomplishments and his contributions to McMaster, but not for his record as a university administrator.

Why then was Dr. Cragg chosen to receive an honorary degree from STU when it was known that many of the faculty would object? A number of STU professors feel that STU President Monsignor Duffy apparently made a unilateral decision without consulting the graduating class, the faculty, or even the Academic Senate.

In an interview last May, Prof. Hunt commented that the candidates for honorary degrees were "apparently selected only by the

president of the university. Faculty members are never informed as to who the candidates are until they read it in the newspaper."

One STU prof went so far as to state, "Dr. Cragg was chosen probably to antagonize the faculty for whom he has no friendly feelings."

Another prof expressed much the same opinion as Prof. Hunt: "Maybe Dr. Cragg was chosen because conferring an honour on him would be conferring an honour on an administration under censure, thus weakening the censure."

Monsignor Duffy denies that any factors, other than the obvious qualities of Dr. Cragg, influenced the decision to award him an honorary degree. Said Msgr. Duffy: "Dr. Cragg was honoured because he was Dr. Cragg, a person with pre-eminent qualities and accomplishments. There were no extraneous factors influencing the decision."

"Dr. Cragg's name had been under consideration for quite some time," the Monsignor added. "He was chosen in the same way as all the others since the university was established in Fredericton, the same way as while the university was in Chatham."

Half of the STU faculty did attend the graduation exercises. Some of them felt that the protestors had over-reacted to the situation and that the boycott was an insult not only to Dr. Cragg, but to the other honorary degree

recipients as well. One faculty member, who did not wish to be quoted, said the CAUT accusations consisted of twisted facts and distortions of the truth.

Prof. Winfield Poole, President of the STU faculty association at the time of the incident, defended the protestors. "I could hardly have been expected to attend as President of the faculty association," he said in an interview. "The executive of the Association suggested to its members that one way of protesting was to stay away from the Convocation. Normally, none of the Association members would consider not attending the graduation exercises." He added, "We did not want to ruin the Graduation for the students and their parents."

As New Brunswick's representative on the executive board of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, Dr. Unger is deeply concerned with the situation at STU. "It is offensive to give a degree to (an administrator) of a censured university...a slap in the face!" he commented. "There must have been hundreds they could have chosen. They should have been aware of the problems because of what happened at McMaster."

Dr. Unger is also concerned with a memo sent by Msgr. Duffy to all STU department chairmen prior to the announcement of Dr. Cragg's selection. The memo read: "It is very definitely an obligation of your professors to be at the graduation. I shall take into account the 1972-73 performance in

any 1973-74 contracts, promotions, or salaries. If there is a legitimate exception, I expect a request for the same."

According to Dr. Unger, this memo effectively said, if professors didn't show up at graduation, their salaries, contracts, and promotions would suffer.

Dr. Unger commented: "Anyone should agree that the evaluation of a professor's performance should be concerned with his performance in teaching, in research, in working with graduate students, in his community service in his profession, and in his contributions to the running of the university or department."

"I find this (memo) very offensive," he said. "A university professor was being judged by being in a parade. Most professors would like to see their students graduate."

At STU, Professors Hunt and Poole feel that the memo was of lesser significance than Dr. Unger attributes to it. "The memo wasn't connected," said Prof. Hunt. "No one has asserted a connection."

"Certainly the memo and the selection of Dr. Cragg are two examples of this administration's mentality."

"This memo was not a counter-action to the faculty protest," said Prof. Poole. "It was a routine memo for STU, though not a normal memo at most other universities."

According to Dr. Unger, the CAUT will be keeping a careful watch on STU for some time to come.

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