

the ottawa view

by don sellar



DON SELLAR
... CUP national president

fee or residence rent hike—this year—when an Argosy Weekly reporter cornered him recently in a dark bureaucratic alley.

"I can see no possibility of holding the line," he flatly told the intrepid reporter.

Writing his story with an air of resignation, the reporter commented:

"This then, is the situation. It appears safe to assume that a fee increase of at least \$50 will be made effective next year. Our complaint is that such announcements are never made until after Christmas at the earliest, and often much later than that . . ."

Which raises an interesting point about fee fights. Students always complain the Administration (capital "a") is inconveniencing them to announcing budgetary adjustments too late in the year for young polemicists and revolutionaries to do much about them . . . if anything can be done at all.

As the Argosy reporter himself put it: "The very principle behind this is neither fair nor democratic. Surely the Administration (capital "a") must know pretty well by now what the fee increase for next year will be, and they will surely know by Christmas, or it does not say too much for them as businessmen."

A reasonable amount of warning, he suggested, would consist of a hint delivered before Christmas. Such a humanitarian act on the administration's part would be "of tremendous convenience and importance to the student body," he wrote.

Where does all this rumor-mongering leave us, you might ask. Well, Colin Leonard and his peers across the country are probably writing an editorial in which they can point to the spiralling cost of education today, the flaming economy and the universal accessibility "problem" as factors which university administration had better consider before they raise the fees.

Or else.

Or else Mount Allison students will march and call people bad names and sing freedom songs and boycott the classes they usually just skip. And you know what else they'll do?

They'll call in the Canadian Union of Students (if they still belong to CUS) for help. CUS printing services will start rattling off policy declarations, pamphlets and 'how to conduct a march' information sheets for them.

Then they'll create a national sensation by marching (with smiling faces, for the cameras, you understand) and unfurling their ruddy banners.

And when it's time for them to go back to neglected books and term papers as exams loom large next spring, the fee fight syndrome will have revealed its inevitable secret: After you March forth, there can be no tomorrow.

Academic system examined

By BRIAN CAMPBELL

"We can't seem to find it in the by-laws anywhere — all we know is we are a committee of students' council."

That's Yvonne Walmsley, a 20-year-old arts student who is chairman of the academic relations committee. The only thing she knows about the role of the committee is that it is a creation of council.

"One of our jobs this year is to define the terms of reference in which we can act," she said.

"I don't think they can be very rigid," she added.

The blonde, ex-Wauneita president, may be in trouble with just what the by-laws allow her to do, but she has some well-defined ideas about what the committee's role should be.

"One of our basic concerns is the size of the campus—there is very little communication between professors and students on a social level," she says.

"We are worried about the influence of mass lectures on the college community."

Most students complain about things over coffee, and never do anything, she says.

"The underlying assumption is a student takes what he gets."

It may look like they are creating issues out of thin air, but she says they are not. Nothing has been done on this campus, and the committee is trying to lay a groundwork for further work.

"We are limited by time and the fact nothing has been done in this field here," she said.

She feels the campus is moving away from the com-



YVONNE WALMSLEY

munity of scholars concept and towards the factory university outlined by Clark Kerr and others.

When will U of A become a factory?

"Well, I'd give it 10 or 15 years," she said. "It's almost too late now, and in 10 years this campus will have 18,000 students."

The lecture system is a major problem in the university community.

"For so long we've gone along with the lecture method. Even with two years in education, I know the lecture system is not the best way to learn," she said.

"But when you get to university, they say large numbers make any other approach impossible."

In past years the academic relations committee has provided course evaluation sheets to professors on request. The sheets were specifically aimed at teaching methods.

The questionnaires would be administered and then kept, unopened, until students had been assigned final marks. The professor was then given the questionnaires. No feed-back about broad student complaints over courses ever got to the committee, in fact they received no feed-back at all since they never saw a completed questionnaire.

This year the committee wants some feed-back from the embryo evaluation, and perhaps a separate section for the committee as well as the "profs only" questionnaire, according to Miss Walmsley.

McGill has done full-scale, student-financed, course evaluations in arts and science and is starting a project in course design.

"We're laying the groundwork for that sort of thing this year," Miss Walmsley said.

ON THE COVER . . .

The trembling student on our cover is Dave Mappin, arts 2. Our photographer Al Scarth has captured the injustice of education's system of examination. The sword of Damocles threatens the well-meaning, would-be scholar, as he slaves over his books knowing full well November exams may mean the end of his treasured ideals. His future as a student depends on a fine thread and in a way the thread is the hope that somewhere in this institution of higher learning, where truth and the search for knowledge abound, he has found a professor who allows marks for imagination.



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