

CRISIS CONFRONTS NFCUS



NFCUS CONFERENCE BEGINS—The 27th National Congress of the National Federation of Canadian University Students gets underway in the Education Building gym. Simultaneous translation of French and English is one of the novel—to Alberta—features of the Congress.

Alternatives "Two Nations," Concessions To Quebec

By Gateway Staff Writers, CUP

The National Federation of Canadian University Students is fighting for its life—with the U of A as battlefield.

The issue is nationalism, the antagonists—French and English Canada.

Quebec delegates to the 27th NFCUS conference led by the University of Montreal, have threatened to "sever all ties" with English-speaking students.

They will enter the conference room in the Education Building bent on establishing two separate student unions in Canada—one French and one English.

According to Pierre Marois, president of the students' association at the University of Montreal, if NFCUS refuses to comply with the Quebec demands, "it will sign its own death warrant."

JENKINS COMMENTS

NFCUS President David Jenkins former editor of *The Gateway* and one-time students' union president in Edmonton, branded the Quebec threat as "unreasonable."

He said Marois is making a mistake thinking that he can solve the situation with an "ill timed ultimatum. The place for dealing with this problem is the National Congress in Edmonton."

"MAJOR ISSUE" AT CONGRESS

"As Marois knows, a new structure for NFCUS will be a major issue at the congress," he said.

Marois issued his ultimatum in a statement last week to *Le Devoir*, a Montreal newspaper.

Already, the Quebec demands have met with approval from one Western campus.

UBC APPROVES

The UBC student council has agreed to a series of resolutions which recognize Quebec as a separate nation within Confederation. These resolutions will be discussed at the NFCUS congress here this week.

(See page three for text of the UBC resolutions.)

Jenkins said English-speaking delegates to the congress realize that French-speaking students are under-represented in the federation. But splitting of NFCUS would solve nothing, he said.

JENKINS DOUBTS SPLIT

"I don't think we'll see the federation split into two groups," he said. "At worst, we might lose the University of Montreal."

According to Jenkins, the French-speaking students feel NFCUS is not adequately recognizing their rights and the only remedy is for them to form their own wing.

He said leaders of the separatist movement point for justification to the recent splits into English and French wings of such formerly national groups as the Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Association of Adult Education and the Social Credit Party.

FEEL DIVISION NECESSARY

Eventually, these students feel, all Canada must divide into this same grouping and NFCUS should be next.

To the French-speaking students, a written declaration of rights is an absolute necessity.

"No longer," said Jenkins, "are the French going to place faith in personalities. They are interested only in a strong structure which guarantees their rights."

"To these students, separatism is partially a movement of disgust with English-speaking Canadians."

The National Federation of Canadian University Students has tried since its inception in 1926, said Jenkins, to recognize the rights of French-speaking students. It has tried to promote in every way possible a better understanding among Canadian students, to provide an alternative to the sectionalism arising from Canada's great geographical and ethnic barriers.

SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION

He pointed out that since 1937 NFCUS has provided simultaneous translation of French and English for delegates to the national congresses. French-speaking students help compose the national executive and several have been president of the national federation.

For some years, NFCUS has made it a practice to urge teaching of French at all levels of Canadian schools. But while English Canadians have come a far distance along the road to recognizing the rights of the French-speaking students, "we have quite a bit farther to go," said Jenkins.

Students Boycott Cafes, Price Increase Protested

MONTREAL (CUP)—Hundreds of students led by Pierre Marois, president of AGEUM (Assoc. Generale des Etudiants de L'Universite de Montreal) have boycotted two cafeterias against express order of the Rector, Monseigneur Irene Lussier.

No broken bones, bruises or scratches, not riots or police cars—only a peaceful, well-organized protestation of increased cafeteria prices took place at the University of Montreal social centre at lunchtime.

The cause of the student protest was the cafeteria's price-raise from 75c to 85c a meal, instituted by the university administration to bolster its sagging budget.

Msgr. Lussier issued an open letter to the university before the threatened boycott, declaring that the AGEUM executive would be expelled should the belligerent attitude of the students continue.

Marois has said that if the Rector does expell anyone, "The whole student body would go on strike."

Msgr. Lussier stated that the university allowed its students as much of a voice in university affairs as any other university in Canada. He continued to say that students' only reaction thus far has been one of discontent and abuse against university officials leading as far as open strikes and rebellion. He added that the reason for the 10c increase was that last year the cafeteria ran a \$43,000 deficit. Instead of lowering the quality of the food, they were raising their prices.

MATTER OF PRINCIPLE

The AGEUM executive does in fact declare that it is not fighting over a matter of 10c increase. The issue at stake is "the more serious one of principle."

Said Marois in a special statement to *The McGill Daily*, "We the students, refuse to pay more than the original 75c per meal. We have been promised steps toward free education and suddenly our fees and the cafeteria prices were raised.

"All the protests we made, all our attempts at negotiation were disregarded by the university. Our boycott of the cafeteria is a formal protestation against these reverse measures toward free education, and

against the university's attitude toward the student voice in campus affairs."

The AGEUM executive is particularly angered over the circumvention by the university administration of the faculty-administration committee especially established to deal

with such matters as cafeteria increase in prices.

The actual boycott began with students carrying placards with such quips as—"On N'est Pas au Kon Tiki. 75c c'est amplement suffisant pour nos appetits." (We are not on (See "Students Boycott," page 3)

University Harvests Record Rhubarb Crop

What is possibly the largest rhubarb crop grown on campus for many years will soon be ready for harvest.

Rhubarb plantings may be found on the west side of the "V" lecture wing, near Assiniboia Hall.

The rhubarb crop will be cut soon by residence students who have been asking for more variety in their diet. To date, campus co-eds have been sampling the tasty stalks. It is reported that this year's crop is sweeter than is normal or usual.

HIT THE RHUBARB

Students have often been known to "hit the rhubarb" on and off the campus, but this is the first time it has been available in such large quantities.

One spokesman says it would be profitable for the university to raise rhubarb crops in what are now the green areas of campus. Money could be saved because no staff would be required to cut the grass any more, and it would not be necessary to make expensive signs saying "Keep off the Grass."

Rather, the spokesman says, the administration could make several inexpensive signs saying "Keep off the Rhubarb."

CAN'T MATCH WHEAT

The spokesman adds that money could be made on huge rhubarb harvests. He admits though, that the university rhubarb crop could not match the recent bumper wheat crops farmers have been harvesting on



the prairies.

It is possible that rhubarb could be sold to the Soviet Union together with prairie wheat. The spokesman says the only unwholesome aspect that could develop is that rhubarb planters might constantly be hoping for a Soviet rhubarb crop failure.

Rhubarb, he says could be shipped to the Soviet Union frozen, canned or dehydrated. He adds that he has never seen dehydrated rhubarb.

RHUBARB LIKE CELERY

The spokesman points out that the physical nature of rhubarb stalks is quite similar to that of celery stalks. Thus, he says, people might be taught to eat rhubarb with cheese.

Some students say rhubarb may be eaten fresh—with salt or sugar to suit the individual taste. Because there have been no signs to the contrary, students have been sampling the rhubarb at random. This could result in a below-average yield, although the crop itself has been above-average.

Another factor to be considered is frost. A killer frost could destroy the entire rhubarb crop, although new stalks would appear in the same places in the spring.

The administration does not appear to be overly concerned that the rhubarb crop will fail. It has issued no press releases on the edible plant to date. At present, the rhubarb picture is good.