

# CUP is in trouble . . .

By BRIAN CAMPBELL

Eight years ago Canadian University Press established a full-time bureau to compile national coverage for member papers and handle conferences and trophy competitions which had been the organization's job up to that time.

Working out of a 150-square foot office with an impressive address—45 Rideau, Suite 506, Ottawa—the two and this year, three-man bureau has tried to cater to the tastes of campus editors at 44 papers across the country.

And their taste in copy is varied and expensive. CUP President Don Sellar says he has to satisfy "champagne tastes on a beer budget."

Beer, in this case is \$10,500, and if more money isn't on the way soon the bureau will be bankrupt before the end of February.

"Our office, with three people in it, doesn't come up to American penitentiary standards for space per inmate," Sellar says.

But it is this office, sub-let from another inmate at 45 Rideau—the Canadian Union of

Students—which has put CUP \$1,500 in the red.

When Sellar took over in the fall, CUP's assets included a typewriter, a desk, a filing cabinet, a basket of bills and unanswered letters, and books which were two years out of date. The Ubysey, The Brunswickan, and The Carleton have donated typewriters, and CUS has given them two desks. They finally bought a Gestetner machine to run off their copy.

Now the office has other problems.

"You have to turn sideways to squeeze between the desks, and you can't open the door when the Gestetner is operating," said John Kelsey, editor-in-chief of the Ubysey.

He worked in the office for five days on his trip to the CUS Congress in Halifax this fall.

And at every CUP conference there have been complaints and recriminations—and no changes.

"Where is the copy, where is the copy,

Where is the copy, the copy we lack?

Where is the boy who took the course at Ryerson?

Where in the hell are you, Sid Black?"

Sid Black is a one-time CUP President.

"We only worry about collect telegrams when the copy in collect telegrams isn't worth paying for."

"You're running a clipping service."

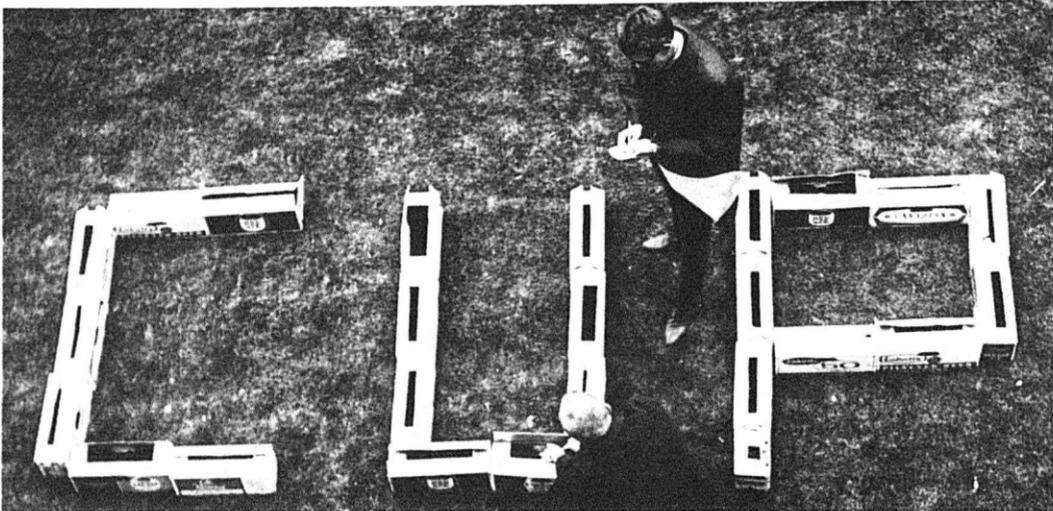
"We do not receive any co-operation from the editors. You do not tell us what is happening on your campus, so we can not get the news out as fast as we could."

"If CUP is to expand, and improve we need a drastic increase in the budget, and a drastic increase in the levy."

Going to a couple of national conferences is like listening to the "Fab Forty" on some rock station—every time you switch it on they're singing the same song, year after year after year.

And for the last five years editors have turned down each bid for a budget increase, cried over services, absolved themselves of any responsibility for the CUP mess, and gone back to their own campuses hoping next year's CUP president would perform a miracle.

And the miracle is "instant money," according to Don Sellar.



—Neil Driscoll photo

WITH THAT FIVE BUCKS WE'RE ONLY \$1,495 IN DEBT  
... says Barry Rust, adding up The Sheaf's bottle drive

## ... but help is coming

This year the atmosphere is changing.

"The optimism here is awfully promising," said Eugen Weiss, temporary editor of The Manitoban.

The Western Regional Conference of Canadian University Press in Edmonton last weekend approved a 1 cent per capita levy to go towards the \$1,500 debt and approved in principle a five-year plan, to be presented at the Montreal National Conference, which will enable CUP to provide the services members say they want.

Editors were told the plan would cost money and perhaps double, or even treble, their contributions to CUP.

Only one paper, The Martlet, at the activist University of Victoria, voted against both measures.

At tiny Mount Royal College, enrolment 1,400, Editor Guneva Boyden has said she will raise \$100 for CUP's debt shining shoes.

Mount Royal would have had to squeeze \$14 out of students' council to pay its share.

Sheaf delegates raised \$5 to-

wards CUP's debt in a hotel bottle drive at the end of the conference.

In the past, small papers have been instrumental in holding back budget increases.

Now they are almost unanimously behind it.

The reasons are different in kind, but not in underlying thought. A better CUP will make for better papers.

CUP copy is better written and more relevant, and proposed Field Secretaries—travelling employees who would go from paper to paper—seem to give smaller papers a chance to improve their quality.

There was talk of inter-regional exchanges — staffers travelling between papers to learn "tricks" and gather experience.

"This is the first time we've printed a CUP story on the line in years," says John Kelsey.

"Not only will I fight for it ( a 1 cent per capita levy), but I can pretty well guarantee we'll get it," says Lib Spry, editor-in-chief of The Sheaf at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon.

On the value of CUP, she is just as blunt.

"We can't put out a paper without it, we run 45 per cent CUP copy right now."

"CUP hasn't been relevant enough," said Dave Orr, associate editor of The Carillon in Regina. "But perhaps this is because our newspaper isn't ready yet."

"We need it for no other reason than we need somewhere to go to show our staffers professional standards."

The Ubysey is filing a report to the National Conference on a CUP-administered, money-making, advertising service.

The Manitoban says the only reason they do not run more CUP copy is their paper isn't long enough.

In a speech at the opening luncheon of the Western Regional Conference, Branny Schepanovich, students' union president, outlined his view of CUP as the major line of communication between campuses.

Now is the time for all good men to come and pay for the party—and a good number are paying.

Without a student press the new student movement is going to be awfully constipated.

The Canadian University Press is a news service operating on a basis similar to Canadian Press and catering to student newspapers on campuses across Canada.

"Its services will cease in February of next year unless we get some financial aid," says Barry Rust CUP national secretary.

In town last weekend to attend the annual CUP western regional conference, Rust and national president Don Sellar were doing some tough crusading for their national office which has more enthusiasm, more hard working staff, and more progressive plans and ideas than it has dollars.

It seems that Sellar has not yet received enrolment counts from several universities, therefore, is unable to bill the member newspapers for their per capita yearly dues.

The money dribbles in . . . now and then . . . , Sellar and his staff crank out the copy . . . , wait breathless for the next cheque . . . or the bailiff, but they don't give up in their dedication to the student journalists who write daily for their help and fail weekly to return the questionnaires Sellar sends them in an effort to poll the papers' needs.

"The editors haven't gone out of their way to be bad to us—it's the fault of the national office for not going after them for more co-operation," says Sellar.

"Past president James Laxer worked fifteen hours a day but no one knew what his problems were and, therefore, there was no money to go to conferences.

"This year we are attempting to get a member of the executive to the Atlantic regional conference which has never been attended by a national executive before.

## Story by

# Where do we . . .

"We are here at the western regional because we are spending some of that money. We don't have to close up the office because we have an extra staffer back in Ottawa writing the copy and mailing it out.

"We have a new division of labour in the office this year—there's just too much work for one man or even two men.

"Work we feel should be done has to be provided by at least three staffers and I don't know how many in the future—there just has to be an expansion of services."

And Sellar explains.

"It is very interesting to know that we still get letters addressed to Sid Black who was president four years ago. This shows that because of a demand for increased services we have been unable to keep up these contacts.

"We're very fortunate to have Barry and Ginger Bradley—they are contributing a great deal even though I have taken it upon myself to starve them this year."

Sellar and his staff work long hours to meet the demands of all member papers.

"We have to satisfy all kinds of deadlines—from the McGill Daily, with five issues a week, to papers like the Marianews, publishing six times a year," Sellar said in an interview.

But the CUP executive staff has a major concern for the smaller paper.

"Of course we are happy to have papers like the Marianews in CUP, not because they contribute large amounts to our coffers, but because they are trying to print the news and they require a lot of help," says Sellar.

"Small papers have greater problems with staff, printers, budgets, and securing advertisements.

"The Marianews put their paper out of a laundry room—but that particular paper is not provincial. It publishes national copy even though it serves a college of girls.

"If I get two letters, one from the Ubysey in Vancouver and one from the Marianews (Montreal), I would probably answer the one from the Marianews first. Kelsey at the Ubysey has people and information to turn to to solve his own problems but Janice Tynan (editor of the Marianews) is producing in a vacuum."

Barry Rust says the problems of CUP are illustrated by the small colleges.

"These colleges have poor papers with little concept—there is very little you can tell them in a letter or a telephone call or even in rhemes of letters. It isn't that we're not interested in them, it's just that we don't have the resources to help them."

And how does CUP get its news?

The member newspapers submit copies of their papers supposedly as they come off the press but then, sometimes the national office does not receive copies of some papers at all. Some editors send collect telegrams of important stories, and,