

CFS sounds "budget alert" for Day of Action

BY DAVE CAMERON

Campuses nationwide will try to raise post-secondary education (PSE) issues from the bottom of the priority list on Wednesday, Feb. 7 by mobilizing against cuts to PSE funding and other social programs.

The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), a political lobby group representing about 400,000 students in 65 universities and colleges across the country, has organized the Pan-Canadian Day of Action in hopes that students from coast to coast will sound a "budget alert." The Day of Action is also intended to inform the general public that there are alternatives to fighting the deficit other than cutting PSE funding and other social programs.

"The deficit and debt were not caused by social spending," said CFS's National Deputy Chairperson, Michael Mancinelli. "They were caused by high interest rates and the unwillingness of governments to collect taxes from the wealthy and profitable corporations."

"It's disgusting that governments are now demanding that the poor and the unemployed shoulder the burden of the debt."

The CFS is outraged that corporations like Canadian Pacific raked in \$422 million in profits in 1993, yet paid no corporate income tax.

"According to the Auditor General's annual reports, billions of dollars go uncollected by the federal government due to entirely legal tax deferrals and recalcitrant filing," said Mancinelli. "This is not some kind of 'accounting phenomenon' — this is political injustice. It's about time the federal government started listening to its own accountant and started collecting revenues from those who can afford to pay."

CFS is encouraging students to sound a "budget alert" and to call on Finance Minister Paul Martin to collect billions of dollars in outstanding corporate and individual taxes which could offset the massive cuts to PSE and other social programs.

CFS said students recognize that deficit reduction is necessary, but they reject the governments' obsession with cutting spending.

Vanessa VanderValk, a student union representative with the University of King's College, said PSE is simply too important to be sacrificed in the name of the governments' deficit reduction efforts. "People are obsessed with deficits," she said, admitting that even King's Council has become preoccupied with finding ways to reduce spending to meet its budget requirements.

A rally is planned in the quad area of King's campus to sound their own "budget alert." Black ribbons, representing the death of social programs, will be tied around a tree.

Karen MacGillivray, Mount Saint Vincent University's Student Union (MSVUSU) VP External, said students need to unite against PSE cuts. MSVUSU is launching a postcard campaign in which students will be asked to send postcards to Martin before the impending federal budget in February. The message on the front

Halifax won't host centralised rally

of the postcards will read, "Please don't cut my future."

The Student Union of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (SUNSCAD) is planning on having a huge banner set up on its campus. Students will be given the opportunity to write "poetic comments" on the banner about the federal government's abandonment of PSE funding. The banner will be sent to new Human Resource Development Minister Doug Young to welcome him to his new cabinet post.

Fracture between CFS, student unions

While the Pan-Canadian Day of Action will put students uniting against government cuts to PSE in the spotlight, it will also highlight the continuing fracture within CFS and the student movement itself.

CFS's "budget alert" at Acadia University is being drowned out and overshadowed by a referendum (to be held today) on

whether the Acadia Student Union (ASU) should pull out of the national student organization.

ASU President, Julia Carroll, said that students will likely vote to opt out. She noted that CFS has made little effort to represent themselves to students in the weeks leading up to the referendum.

She also said the ASU does not approve of CFS's lobbying tactics.

"We are not in favour of chaining ourselves to anything and walking out of classes," she declared.

Instead, she said Acadia students are planning a food drive in which students will not only collect food for those in need, but inform the public on post-secondary education issues.

If Acadia students pull out of CFS, the national student organization will have lost two major campuses in the Atlantic region in the same week.

Last Friday, almost 75 per cent of those students at the Univer-

sity of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) who voted in a referendum chose to part ways with the federation.

UPEI Student Union President Amber Allin said CFS simply became too large to be effective in representing UPEI's students.

But pulling out of CFS doesn't mean UPEI students will be silent in PEI this week. Allin said a planned march to the provincial legislature to protest the Canadian Health and Social Transfer (CHST) and the prospect of tuition fee increases has caused a stir of excitement. One reason for all the enthusiasm, she said, is that the march will mark the first student demonstration in PEI in a few years.

According to Jessica Thomas, SUNSCAD's Secretary and interim VP External, one of the reasons why a large student demonstration would not be held in Halifax is because the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) voted to pull out of CFS in October of 1994.

"We're missing a lot of numbers," she said.

Acadia's Carroll agreed.

"The national student movement has up and down periods; we're in a down period right now," said Carroll.

Although she leaves the office as president of the ASU in March, she hopes to continue to work on the founding of an Atlantic Canadian student organization — the Coalition of Atlantic Canadian Students (COAST).

She admitted that COAST is at a "standstill" right now, but noted there are plans to inform incoming student representatives from student councils across the region on how a regional student organization could better respond to the needs of Atlantic Canadian students.

COAST will also be on the agenda for a conference to be held in Newfoundland this summer.

"It has the greatest potential," Allin declared about COAST.

She said a regionally-based student lobby group makes sense because campuses in Atlantic Canada not only share similar concerns, but also think alike.

Senate discusses degree reforms

BY DANIEL CLARK

While last week's Senate meeting might be best remembered for the last gasp of Frosh Week, another debate has arisen.

The meeting, which took place on Monday, Jan. 22, was uneventful until a proposal was presented to reform the Advanced Major and Honours certificates.

Currently, students who have completed a BA or BSc and decide to upgrade their degree are awarded a certificate which recognizes that additional studies have been performed and that a new degree has been completed.

The Registrar's Office suggested that the certificate be eliminated, that students be acknowledged in the Advanced Major and Honours degree program to which they want to upgrade, and that a new degree be issued.

This last point caused a stir. Dean Kimmons spoke in favour of acknowledging students who wanted to upgrade in this capacity.

"This is an attempt to encourage students to take a 20 credit program from which the student will benefit," said Kimmons.

"Students are seen as customers, and they should be allowed to attend or not attend the ceremony as they may wish," said an unidentified senator.

This prompted an amendment to the proposal giving students the option of attending the ceremony; this was approved unanimously with only Senator McIntyre dissenting.

A lively debate followed the passing of the amendment. Members at the senate meeting seemed to be particularly perturbed about the outward appearance of the new certificate. The proposed certificate reads that the previously awarded degree has been converted to an Honours or Advanced Major degree.

This was an attempt to make the upgraded students "feel good" and that the onus should not be taken away from students who have followed the more advanced programs from the start, commented another unidentified senator.

Senator McGilvary elaborated on the comment. She asked members of the Senate if they wanted to rescind the original BA and award an entirely new degree. Another senator agreed, saying,

"I think it's ludicrous that a student should come out with a BA and an Honours Bachelor of Arts (HBA). I think this is quite bizarre."

Senator Hobson suggested that the senate research the procedures followed by other schools.

The motion was then tabled.

Senate bits"

"In other senate business, it was agreed unanimously to award Marcia Urdang an

honourary Dentistry doctorate. The Faculty of Health Profession's request to expand their degree program was also approved.

Finally, President Traves will be holding discussions with the Minister of Public Works, the Honourable David Dingwall, concerning a federal grant to assist in the cost of technology transfers. Dingwall is the Cape Breton MP who was shuffled last Friday to the Ministry of Health. How this will affect funding assistance is unknown.

T-shirts destroyed

...cont'd from page 1: "RESIDENCE"

around, and I was under the impression that they weren't going to be made, and I think the Residence Coordinator was [under that impression] as well," said Killam.

Killam said Cam Fraser, President for Cameron House, had mentioned something about the t-shirts in passing. Killam said he didn't think the talk was serious. "The problem was, what's happened was that Cam took out the one word 'bleed' and made the shirts anyway when he said he wasn't going to," said Killam.

Fraser does not deny that he was involved in the creation of the t-shirts. "It was unfortunate these things came about, and with a bit more foresight, hindsight, oversight, it should never have happened," he said.

When asked about the implications of this "oversight," Fraser commented, "now we can look at this in retrospect and see that it was not a good idea."

Killam said that it was members of the administration who were responsible for acting to resolve the problem by destroying

the shirts.

Bob Jones, Howe Hall's Residence Coordinator, explained that to the best of his knowledge, as of January 30, the shirts and what the shirts said were only rumours.

The t-shirts were brought to him on Wednesday morning and were later destroyed.

"As of now, all the shirts we know of being in existence have been destroyed...they are history," said Jones.

He would not comment on where the shirts were destroyed.

Jones said he approached the Cameron House president when he heard concerns about the shirts.

"Once we knew that the rumours were out there, that these might be coming out, we felt the best thing to do was speak to the house president of Cameron House," said Jones. "We just asked him if these shirts existed, he said yes and was willing to deliver the shirts to us," he said.

He would not comment on how he felt about the way the Howe Hall Residence Council

dealt with the matter.

Killam said that he initially took the concept for the shirts as a joke. Discussion surrounding the t-shirts was not a formal part of the council meeting last Sunday, but instead formed part of the chatter that normally occurs after the meetings are adjourned.

Killam said there was no encouragement from members of the Howe Hall Council for the creation of the t-shirt. He also said the Executive had pledged their support to the Administration in their dealings with the Cameron House council.

The matter as a whole represents an attitude which Killam said he hopes is on its way out of the residence subculture.

"The residence councils have been doing a lot of work to improve the reputation of the residences...this could put us back five years," he said.

Killam stated that the writing on the t-shirt represented the attitudes of very few people in Howe Hall.

The residence council for Howe Hall will release a public statement concerning the creation of the Cameron House t-shirt.