

cross-canada briefs

UBC prof warns of "reverse discrimination"

BY SARAH O'DONNELL

VANCOUVER (CUP) — The University of British Columbia's search for a new president has turned into a debate about the merits of affirmative actions thanks to an outspoken political science professor.

Philip Resnick put the university back into the national media spotlight when he wrote a Globe and Mail commentary criticising the university for running ads he said fostered "reverse discrimination."

The ads include a paragraph stating: "The university is concerned about the under-representation in administration of women, aboriginal people, visible minorities and persons with disabilities. The university welcomes all qualified applicants, especially members of these designated employment equity groups."

Since 1992, UBC's equity policy has required the university to include clauses in all recruitment ads "especially" welcoming women, aboriginal people, visible minorities and persons with disabilities to apply.

Although Resnick said he would like to see the wording changed from "especially" to "including," he said it was the first sentence in the presidential ad he found particularly offensive.

"The first sentence is additional," he said.

"I think Professor Resnick is confusing the recruiting process with the decision-making process," said Sharon Kahn, UBC vice-president of equity.

"The recruitment process at UBC is to get as wide a pool of applicants as possible."

Since the university started tracking hiring data in 1991, 65 per cent of tenure track positions have been filled by men and 35 per cent by women. This is on par, Kahn said, with the number of women receiving post-doctorate degrees from Canadian universities.

College bans student paper for fear of offending government panel

BY STEFAN B. WALTHER

THUNDER BAY, ON. (CUP) — Administrators at Confederation College removed the latest issue of the school's student paper from campus for fear it would offend visiting dignitaries.

Administrators were angered by the September 25 issue of *The Talon*, which they say included explicit sexual material. The move came on the same day a government panel on post-secondary education was visiting the campus.

College President Roy Murray says he is not impressed by the lax editorial policy of the student-run newspaper and will not condone such material on campus.

"We take full responsibility for this action," Murray said. "This is not an issue of censorship — it's a matter of discretion."

The subject of this controversy, *The Talon's* third issue, contains an article on hermaphrodites. Beside the article is a scanned photo of an hermaphrodite with the caption "Chicks With Dicks." The issue also includes an animated poem on masturbation, and a column by Happy Harry Hard-On who tests and rates different brands of condoms with all the accompanying details.

"The *Talon* is a mirror," says editor-in-chief Blake Crothers in the paper's defence. "It's an amusement mirror of society."

Crothers could not understand how the college administration removed all *Talon* issues on all general campus stands when the students pay in part for the product through their student activity fee.

With the controversy *The Talon* has benefitted from an increase in pickup and readership — copies of the notorious issue are scarce, affirmation of the popular adage, "sex sells."

"We have no plans to cancel or censor (*The Talon*)," Murray said. "We may have to force some discretion."

SUB gas leak revealing

BY KAVERI GUPTA
AND ADEL ISKANDAR

The Student Union Building was closed for about four hours on Monday afternoon after an acetylene gas leak led to the discovery of dangerous levels of Carbon Monoxide.

The Halifax Fire Department was called at 1:20 p.m. when Physical Plant and Planning worker Martin Beaver noticed that the regulator on an acetylene cylinder was broken. Knowing that the gas was leaking, he immediately activated the fire alarm.

The Student Union Building (SUB) was evacuated.

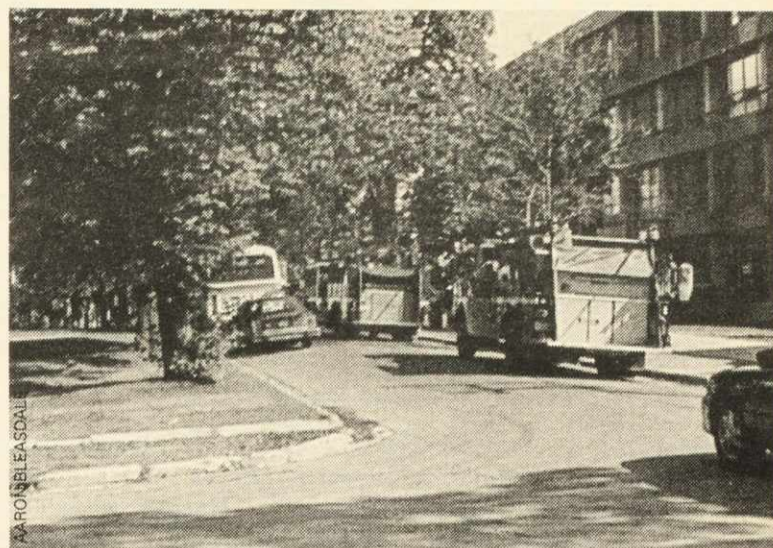
The fire department responded to the call within four minutes. A tactical five-unit, which deals with dangerous goods, was called to the scene. The unit's meters detected low acetylene readings, but revealed exceedingly high carbon monoxide (CO) levels in the basement of the SUB.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, but very dangerous gas. Officials from the fire department said that the gas could have been building up for a couple of days, and was only detected because the department was called to check on the acetylene.

Captain Ray Cannings of the fire department said levels in an isolated area near a kitchen storage room were 107 parts per million (ppm).

"A person becomes disoriented and cannot function intellectually if working for even eight hours in CO levels of 30 ppm," Cannings said.

The fire department was very concerned about these levels, but could not locate the source. Pos-



sible causes include the Physical Plant — which is attached to the SUB by a tunnel — and the buildup of fumes from cars parked near the ventilation system at the back of the SUB.

The fire department aired out the building for an hour using ventilation fans.

"We then waited half an hour to make sure that levels stayed at zero, and they did," said Tom Silver, a public relations representative for the fire department.

Students were allowed into the top four floors of the SUB at 4 p.m., but the basement was closed until Tuesday. The Grawood and the Corner Pocket, located in the basement, were closed until Tuesday morning as a precaution.

Several people were inconvenienced due to the closing of the building. Andrea Breaux of the Prairie Region Canadian University Press had a plane to catch Monday afternoon. She had all her luggage in an upstairs office of the SUB. Luckily, the crew in the building were able to locate

it and bring it out for her.

CKDU Radio experienced dead air for the duration of the closure.

"There's no real way of ameliorating the situation. You can't have a DJ in there at a risk to their own life," said Steve MacIsaac, CKDU program director.

The Volunteer Fair taking place in the Green Room also had to be cancelled.

Dalhousie Student Union vice-president Katherine Hannah, who is responsible for SUB, said that the fire alarm in the Union Market was not working properly. She added that it wasn't a problem since DSU representatives were in the cafeteria and asked people leave.

"Overall, the situation was handled very well," Hannah said.

Dr. Bill Loach, safety director at the Physical Plant, will be responsible for monitoring the levels of CO in the SUB over the next week and a half to ensure that they do not once again rise to a dangerous level.

Finally: Second ballot ends Howe Hall elections

BY CHRIS CROWELL

Derrick West came out on top Tuesday, winning the strongly contested position of sports representative on the second ballot in the Howe Hall Residence Council byelections.

When the dust settled on the original elections — held September 22 — two races had been won uncontested, another was won by a slim margin and a third was anchored by controversy and debate.

Former Howe Hall vice-president Jeff Legrow and former sports representative Andrew Ferns slipped into the positions of president and vice-president respectively in uncontested votes.

Not all former council members were that fortunate. Former secretary Natalie Ward lost a close ballot to Chris MacLeod in the race for treasurer. Ward trailed MacLeod's tally of 168 by just 34 votes.

Contention in this election centred around the race for sports representative. West, Jamie O'Neil and Francis Compton all vied for the position.

Although the results of the vote were not released, Vice-Presi-

dent Andrew Ferns described the tally as, "One of the closest elections he had ever seen."

The first vote was thrown out when debate arose over exactly

what should be considered a spoiled ballot.

"There were spoiled ballots that could have changed the outcome [of the election]. There was too much potential for bias," President Jeff Legrow said.

Upon referral to the Dalhousie Student Union, it was decided that a second ballot would be held for the sports representative position on October 1. The new voting day was advertised, but there was no new campaign period.

West won the second ballot with 138 votes, followed by O'Neil at 115 and Compton at 86.

With the election process finally behind them, Howe Hall's new council is anxious to get on with the year. Ferns said that the new council's onus will be on improving Howe Hall's image both on campus and in the community. He said that he hopes increased charitable work will go a long way toward achieving this goal.

Howe Hall's new executive will also be looking at improving the residence in terms of capital campaigns, as well as through the creation of a residence mascot.

Eliza Ritchie results

Howe Hall was not the only Dalhousie residence holding byelections last month.

Eliza Ritchie Hall elected a new executive on the 23rd of September.

Brent Van Buskirk slid into the position of president unopposed, while Todd Hickey defeated Kendra LeBlanc for the vice-president's chair.

Megan Power received the nod to become treasurer. The secretary/food rep post is still empty.

Clyde Hoddimo, Roger Sellers and Gustin Kelly are the new Eliza Ritchie section representatives.