

What Prof. Reddin told Dalhousie about UNB

EDITOR'S NOTE:

The following are excerpts from a symposium on the role and functions of the university administration held at Dalhousie University on January 28. In an article in the Dalhousie Gazette, Professor W.R. Reddin was quoted extensively on the views he expressed at the symposium. Reddin spent 16 years on staff at UNB, but resigned his position in August of last year. He described his present relation to the university as that of a "consultant."

Monday evening, January 28, a symposium was held in the McInnes room to discuss the role and functions of the university administration. Of the four administrative representatives only the views of one, Professor W.R. Reddin, Organizational and Administrative Consultant at the University of New Brunswick seemed to hold any insight. The other to the most part gave cliché definitions of administrative functions.

Professor W.R. Reddin feels student participation on any level should be kept to a minimum. The function of the university, he said, is to transmit and expand

knowledge and therefore participation should only be allowed when decisions are improved or when commitment increases. He stated that "token" student positions on the Board of Governors make the students think they have achieved power when in fact, they are rarely listened to.

The main problem in university administration claimed Prof. Reddin, is the lack of power and static atmosphere among the departments. He accused Professors of being "too stereotyped, lacking intellectual flexibility" and the "moral courage of their views". He also pointed out that communications among the departments in the university should be opened up, as well as increased relations with the community. "The University of New Brunswick" he said "doesn't know the community exists".

Several questions and remarks from the floor posed a challenge to the commentators. When asked as to how administrators are chosen, Prof. Reddin replied by relating several instances which showed considerable politics, chance, and outright stupidity in the hiring of administrators. He recounted that a President of UNB was chosen simply because "Lord Beaver-

brook took a shine to him".

Reddin has had other comments on the operation of a university. In 1969 a story was published in The Brunswickan in which he advised students on how to gain more influence in the operation of this university.

If I were a student at UNB and I wanted to advance the idea of student influence I would go about it this way.

FIRST I would concentrate on obtaining influence at the departmental level. This level is where the problems and opportunities are to be found.

SECOND I would arrange a meeting between all the faculty in the department and about the same number of clearly representative good students including all the executive of any relevant student association or club. At this meeting I would press for a single point; formal and full membership of students on the departmental committee. The total number of students on the committee must exceed one, and a number equal to about 30-40 per cent of the revised membership should be sought. The student membership must be arranged so that students spend at

least twenty-four months on the committee. In less time than this it will be difficult to exercise any real influence. The students elected must report back to the student association if it exists. If full membership was obtained I would then consult with other students who are now working under such a system to discover ways to make it effective.

A compromise proposal often made by faculty is "Let's set up a joint committee of faculty and students to discuss whatever you want". This is often seen as better than nothing but it becomes in effect a device for blowing off steam safely and actually serves to keep students well away from real influence. An extreme version of this proposal is that students meet alone with the head of the department or faculty. While this is very ego building for the students involved they should never accept it. It always results in the head becoming a more powerful go-between than before and often forces him into the position of being hypocritical and of giving in on small things to students to keep the pot below boiling level. The students on their part come eventually to see the committee as simply a delay device. I am not suggesting, and nor do I believe, that this technique is proposed deliberately to hinder real participation; more often the opposite is true. The fact remains however that it often does not lead to the changes students may really want and deserve. I specifically do not recommend that students settle for sub-committee membership or

some other minor status. If offered it they should turn it down.

THIRD, If full membership were not obtained, and was unlikely to be negotiated over two months, I would arrange a meeting of all students associated with the department and all the faculty of the department. I would ask the faculty to explain their position and for representative students to explain theirs. I would not attempt for any voting or show of strength at this meeting, simply rational discourse.

FOURTH, I would again arrange a meeting as suggested in the second step and continue the second-third step cycle until membership had been obtained.

Students can undoubtedly contribute to the departmental committee but at the moment have no constitutional right to membership on these committees and so must be smart about the way they go about getting it. It will not always be easy as most faculty members, while reasonable, are like all men in resisting change in the short run.

Even if students sat on all departmental committees some would still have to sit on the senate. The senate is legally constituted and the departmental committees are not. In addition, such upward linkage of influence will make its exercise more effective.

If students in a department do not obtain influence it is because they don't want it or are not smart enough to go about the right way to get it. If either condition prevails alone I don't see why they should get it. If both conditions prevail they deserve it.

Sharp orders humanitarian grants for African movement

OTTAWA (CUP) - After a flurry of activity by Portuguese, South African and British diplomats, Mitchell Sharp has ordered that humanitarian assistance grants to African liberation movements be delayed until the policy is debated in Parliament.

The grants, announced at the beginning of February, were to be administered through non-governmental agencies like the World Council of Churches, Oxfam, World University Service, Canadian University Service Overseas and other voluntary groups.

Projects under consideration

include support for refugees from the Portuguese territories of Angola and Mozambique, Rhodesia and South-West Africa. Other proposals involve support for commercial development and medical programs within Portuguese claimed areas the guerrilla movements and urged the government to reconsider.

Many Canadian newspaper editors published editorials and letters to the editor opposing the humanitarian assistance program and pressure groups have joined with foreign diplomats to lobby

against the program on Parliament Hill.

The decision to make grants to the African movements signalled a change in Canadian foreign policy first outlined at the Commonwealth meetings in Ottawa last August and reaffirmed by Sharp at the United Nations in September.

Sharp said then that Canada recognized the "legitimacy" of the African struggle to "win full human rights and self-determination" and was studying ways to broaden its humanitarian support of African peoples' movements.

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