

## Education Minister warns Exams not enough

by Bruce Pollock

Dave King, Alberta's Minister of Education, was on campus yesterday to discuss student evaluations and comprehensive examinations at a forum organized by the Education Students Association.

Speaking to an increasingly hostile crowd, Mr. King noted that it was not sufficient to rely on comprehensive exams as the only means of student evaluation.

Mr. King proposed a four-tiered system of evaluations to include comprehensive exams, school and system evaluation, and program and teacher evaluations.

The Minister stated with regards to student evaluation, "Comprehensive exams have limited effectiveness. They are a necessary part of student evaluation but are not in themselves sufficient. Any system of student evaluation should include comprehensive exams, teacher evaluations, normative achievement exams (in grades 3, 6 and 9) and diagnostic assessments in the earlier years."

In response to a question on the possible implementation of teacher comprehensives, Mr. King admitted that some form of examination may be a possibility.

Mr. King noted that such exams exist in other professions such as law and that teacher evaluation is an important part of education evaluation. Mr. King denied that these would be an annual occurrence but hinted at an indefinite term of 4 to 5 years. Exams were also possible prior to teachers receiving their permanent certification.

Concerning the possible effects of comprehensive exams on admission to post-secondary institutions, Mr. King replied that "the Department of Education does not set admission standards. The Universities decide for themselves whether or not they wish to accept the High School Diplomas that we issue."

In any case, the effect of comprehensive exams on whether or not students receive their High School Diplomas may be minimal. Mr. King pointed out that of approximately 30,000 grade 12 students in Alberta last year 6,000 (or 20%) did not receive their diplomas. This figure cannot be attributed to Comprehensive exams as they did not exist at that time. Mr. King then outlines a number of possible alternatives to comprehensive examinations and the reasons for which they were rejected.

Included in these were Departmental exams, which were rejected on the recommendation of the Alberta Teacher's Association. It was felt that it was too easy for teachers to orient their teaching towards the exam and for students to cram. University entrance exams were rejected, says Mr. King, because "we don't want the Universities dictating our curriculum."

While Mr. King acknowledged that there are a number of valid criticisms of comprehensive exams, he said that, in his own personal view, "any such criticism can be more seriously made with respect to the alternatives."

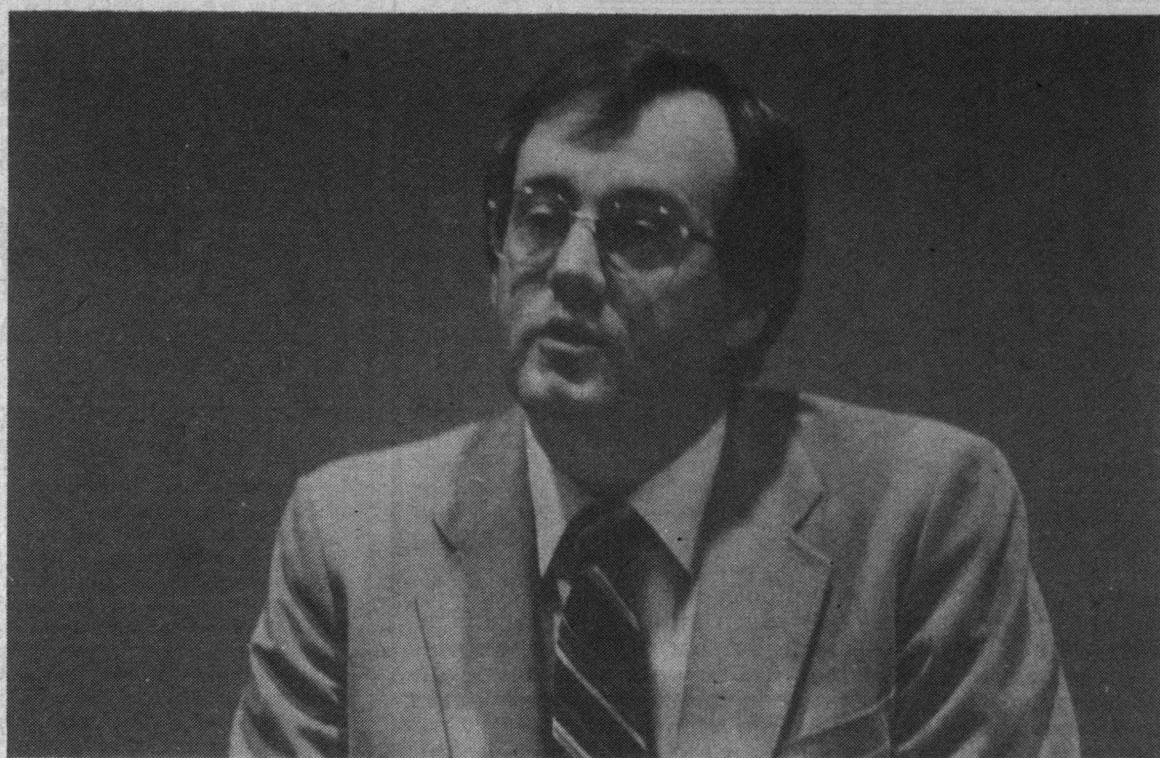


photo Martin Beales

Education Minister Dave King argues for comprehensive exams. He says, though, the exams aren't enough.

## Team wipes Slate clean

by Richard Watts

The Greenhill Team decided to drop all charges against the Therrien Slate this weekend and will no longer be going to DIE (Disciplinary, Interpretation and Enforcement) Board.

Says SU President-elect Robert Greenhill, "The mudslinging had to stop somewhere and it's time next year's executive got together to get ready to take office May first."

Members of the Greenhill Team had placed charges with DIE Board in response to the charges brought against the team by members of Therrien Slate.

The charges brought by the Therrien Slate consisted of accusations that the Greenhill Team had exceeded their campaign budget as allowed by the SU constitution and distributing false information in a pamphlet. One pamphlet distributed by the Greenhill Team contained some false information about FAS (Federation of Alberta Students).

The Greenhill Team's "counter charges" against the Therrien Slate included charges for exceeding their budget by getting posters printed at a printer outside the list of 5 printers mentioned in the SU election rules. The rules governing the SU elections specify a list of 5 printers that candidates may go to to have posters and pamphlets printed.

DIE Board found no grounds to substantiate the charges against the Greenhill Team and no disciplinary procedures were taken against any of its members.

Although the members of the Greenhill Team did consider going through with their charges they decided to drop them at a meeting on the weekend.

"We felt we had a good case and some of us wanted to go through with it but after we had a chance to cool off we decided it

would be better for all concerned to drop the charges."

Greenhill did say however that the Greenhill Team would be making their file and supporting evidence for their charges against the Therrien Slate available to DIE Board "for the purpose of information."

"I want to recommend that DIE Board and the By-Laws and Constitution Committee restructure the guidelines and rules for the SU elections," said Greenhill.

Greenhill said that DIE Board should go back to performing a "judicial role" with respect to student discipline and stop playing a political role in Student Government.

"It's gotten to the point where the SU elections are only the first step in Students' Union democracy and the main political forum becomes DIE Board after the elections," said Greenhill.

"I think Student Government has been really hurt by all this DIE Board guerilla warfare and the small population of active Students' Union members has been really torn apart when we should be working together," said Greenhill.

Greenhill said he hoped that with some changes to the By-Laws governing SU elections campaigns could go back to operating on "policies and strategy" rather than the "logistics" of posters and pamphlets.

## Opposition question still in air

Analysis by Stephen Phillips

Two paradoxical conclusions were reached at a PSUA forum held last week on the question of who should be named the Official Opposition in the Alberta Legislature.

The three guest speakers, George Oake of the *Edmonton Journal*, Peter Gorrie of the *Sun*, and Professor J.P. Johnston, all agreed that the NDP caucus should be chosen over the two Independent MLAs. Yet they were equally unanimous in the view that the Tories will not designate the NDP and will instead divide the extra funds and special privileges accorded to the Official Opposition equally between the two groups.

The first conclusion was hardly surprising. Every daily newspaper in the province has come out in favour of Notley and Martin, and they have been joined by observers from outside the

province, such as constitutional expert Eugene Forsey and even a number of Saskatchewan Tory MLAs. Moreover, public opinion appears to support the NDP's case by a wide margin.

The real question, then, is why informed observers should be convinced that the Tories are going to deny the NDP Official Opposition status? The consensus of the three speakers at the forum was simply that raw political power, not constitutional propriety and certainly not a sense of fair play, will be the decisive factor in Speaker Amerongen's decision. In fact, it was argued that the Tories have been playing politics with the naming of the Official Opposition by delaying it for four months and pretending that it is a matter requiring study. To everyone but the Tories the issue is cut and dry. Indeed, Gorrie, Oake, and Johnston all agreed that the matter could and should have been

settled soon after the election.

What do the Tories hope to gain by splitting the office of Official Opposition between the NDP and Independent members? Gorrie and Oake were quite explicit in stating that the Tories want to cripple the opposition at any cost. They pointed out that in view of the past performance of Walter Buck and Ray Speaker in the legislature, the Tories could not make a sounder political investment than to give them half the opposition budget. Gorrie noted that philosophically, the ex-Socreds are Tories in everything but name and have been hopelessly inept in fulfilling their opposition role. He was particularly scornful of the poor-quality research that they have produced in the past.

Oake went even further, describing Buck and Speaker as "clowns" and commenting that putting them in charge of supervising the government "would be like making Hermann Goering Hitler's jailer."

The NDP, on the other hand, consistently does its homework and since 1975, Grant Notley has provided more effective opposition than the four Socred MLAs combined. It is for this reason, the speakers argued, that the government will kneecap the NDP before the legislative session has scarcely begun.

They also felt that the Tories can and almost certainly will get away with this emasculatation of the opposition because of public indifference toward the issue. It was remarked that in virtually any other province there would be a public outcry over the government's handling of this issue. But in Alberta, as Gorrie observed, "People see the government as a board of directors and are happy as long as Alberta Inc. is making a profit." In other words, when it comes to trifling matters such as the Opposition, jackboot tactics are fair game.

It would appear, then, that despite the 18.75 per cent of the provincial popular vote gained by the NDP in the November 2 election, the best Grant Notley and Ray Martin can hope for is to share equal billing with a couple of MLAs who between them won a minuscule 1.0 per cent of the provincial vote.

## Iranian terror campaign

MONTREAL (CUP) — An anti-Khomeini group has claimed that Ayatollah Khomeini's Iranian government is responsible for the Feb. 24 stabbing of an Iranian student at Concordia University.

Massoud Ramzi, a representative of the Montreal branch of the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran, said Khomeini's government "is carrying out a (worldwide) campaign of terror" against those who oppose the regime's political views.

Mohamed Reza Khalegi, a Concordia engineering student and Mojahedin supporter, needed five stitches to close a facial wound he suffered in the stabbing. According to Khalegi, after the incident his assailant ran off shouting, "Death to Mojahedin!"

The Mojahedin are an Iranian faction that helped Khomeini's forces overthrow the shah's regime in 1979, but who are now bitter opponents of his regime. Ramzi claimed Iranian embassies are co-ordinating such activities, which are often aimed at students. According to the Montreal-based Muslim Iranian Students' Society, who are supporters of the Mojahedin organization, anti-Khomeini

students in France, West Germany, and Pakistan have suffered similar attacks.

Ramzi said anti-Khomeini students are concerned that the Iranian embassy in Ottawa is spying on students at Concordia by monitoring the students' activities against Khomeini that include distributing anti-regime information.

Elizabeth Morey, Concordia's international student advisor, estimated that 90 per cent of the 150 Iranian students at Concordia are Mojahedin supporters.

Employment and Immigration Canada announced this week that Iranian visitors and students in Canada will be allowed to apply for permanent residence without leaving the country. Applicants for permanent status must ordinarily apply from within their homeland.

Some Iranian students say it is dangerous to return to their homeland where opposition to the regime is punishable by death.

Almost half of the 2,000 Iranians in Canada expected to benefit from the new federal regulations are students. Many of these students have had their funding cut off by the Iranian government because of their suspected anti-regime activities.

BAZ

by SKEET and Nielsen

