

Toronto President's speech interrupted

TORONTO (CUP) — University of Toronto students attending president Claude Bissell's opening address Monday (Sept. 16) were greeted first with a copy of Jerry Farber's "Student as Nigger", and then a juicy piece of watermelon just to bring the point home.

The handouts were provided by the Ontario Union of Students. Farber's article, widely circulated last year, compares the student as second class citizen with the status of the American black. A huge sign reading "Welcome back Mr. Charlie" was unfurled inside the hall, a reference to the teacher's role as happy slave.

Most freshmen were unfazed by the welcome, but were a little startled by the OUS stunt performed during Bissell's speech. Three students jumped up on the stage, posed for photographers and then disappeared. One of the three wore academic robes and aped Bissell for a couple of minutes.

Apparently, this type of thing is planned for the classrooms as well this year in order to stimulate students to action.

Bissell was shaken by the display, but managed to continue with his speech. All the while, he kept his eye on student president Steve Langdon, perched on a balcony, as if wondering if anything more were going to happen.

In his speech, Bissell stressed his definition of democracy and his commitment to "openness", and accused students and faculty of not accepting their democratic obligations in the university; "but a system such as this demands an alert and active academic community. I don't think we have such a community, either among staff or students.

"In the university," he said, "the non-democratic element is greater than it is in the state. It arises from the fact that the university is not concerned with general welfare, in which goals may vary, but with a particular area, where there can be only one principal goal - the preservation, dissemination, and expansion of knowledge, and knowledge of a particular kind, knowledge that can be expressed in words or symbols."

Concluding, Bissell said, "from the ferment today will come a finer sense of community. There can be no community in a university unless it is based on a community of ideas. What we are looking for is a diminution of routine and a release of intellectual energies. In short, we are seeking to establish an ideal society, and that is a task which, in the nature of things, is never finished."

After the meeting, 200 students clustered around Langdon to talk the speech over. Langdon disagreed with Bissell's remarks on knowledge: "Knowledge is only important when it is applied."

Phil Besnick, the mimic in academic robes, said Bissell "talked about a philosophic commitment to knowledge, and this university has about \$1 million in contracts from defense agencies."

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WUSC claims Treasure Van 'too much trouble'

Treasure Van—the world University Service in Canada's traditional pre-Christmas international souvenir sell-in—is being dropped on the UNB campus. The decision follows a resolution at the WUSC National Assembly meeting calling for less involvement in charity programs and more concern with "matter of domestic and international political importance."

Although the tone of debate at the Assembly meeting indicated an ideological split between an activist left wing interested in developing student awareness of political issues and moderates favouring piece-meal charity, WUSC members at UNB tend to see the issue in a different light.

Indo Shukla, treasurer of UNB WUSC, claims that Treasure Van has simply become too much trouble. "Everyone

wants it", he says, "but nobody wants to work for it." Mr. Shukla is in favour of retaining Treasure Van as it is the only source of revenue for the WUSC scholarship program.

UNB WUSC, however, must follow the National Assembly's decision. Treasure Van could not operate without the national organization's backing.

There is still \$200,000 worth of Treasure Van inventory on the National WUSC books, and the program will last until this back-log has been disposed of. Mr. Shukla says that this will mean one more Treasure Van this fall.

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