

The Great Depression hits

The Depression was first mentioned in the Dalhousie Gazette in an editorial on January 28, 1931. It would almost appear that no one wanted to admit it until the end of 1930, at least. The editorial was a demonstration of the confusion among economists and bankers about the cause and remedies of the Depression. More familiar ground was covered in the same issue by a column on the "decline of student activities". The author said that, "The majority of students are too lazy and unwilling to accept even a slight responsibility." It was implied that the decline was leading quickly to the disappearance of student activities. The NFCUS undergraduate exchange programme had been operating on a limited basis for two years, but Dalhousie was still unwilling to make a permanent commitment to it.

Under pressure the Students' Council agreed that it would buy gold "D's" for the athletes who qualified. There was still belief in a money shortage, however, and so the boxing budget was cut. The necessary constitutional amendments were made to establish the permanent Secretary-Treasurer-ship. The position was offered to Murray Rankin, a former Secretary-Treasurer who had been the first Commerce student chosen as President. Mr. Rankin had also been active in alumni affairs after his graduation. Council decided that those chosen for the Malcolm Honour Society should receive a parchment.

On February 2, several weeks after Stanley MacKenzie announced his resignation, Dr. Archibald MacMechan announced that he too was resigning at the end of 1930-31. He held the positions of Head

Librarian and head of the English Department, having been at Dalhousie since 1889. His efforts made possible construction of the MacDonald Memorial Library (now the Science library).

The newspaper's editorial column pointed to U.B.C. students growing beards until money was collected for the new stadium as a disgusting example of "collegiate" attitudes imported from the United States. The discontent with the uncontrolled number and cost of dances led to a call for a new system that would limit the numbers, stop the attempts to hold everything at a new hotel and keep the cost down where all students could afford to attend. The newspaper was so committed to professionalism in student government that in one issue it congratulated Council on deciding for a permanent Secretary-Treasurer; continued to push for a professional football coach; and, suggested that the Council should also hire an accountant.

February 1931 was early enough in the Depression and the Bennett administration for Prime Minister R.B. Bennett's fellow 1893 Dalhousie law grads to offer him a congratulatory address. The announcement of the "real" Munro Day programme, designed to replace a political event, indicated that there would be a half-holiday with Archibald MacMechan speaking on three university benefactors (George Ramsey, George Munro and George Campbell) followed by a minstrel show in the evening. Future Law Dean Robert T. Donald was chosen as a member of the Dalhousie debating team for the spring of '31.

The GAZETTE gave much coverage to the surfacing of the free speech issue at U.B.C. That

university was becoming Dalhousie's standard example of the folly of government controlled universities. The Editor of the Ubsysey had allowed articles critical of provincial government spending cutbacks to appear in the newspaper after agreeing not to run a critical editorial. The Editor was suspended by the Board of Governors, after which the entire newspaper staff resigned. The Students' Council tried to find a middle ground by refusing all resignations but the Editor's, claiming that he was incompetent and tactless. The staff still refused to work, and the university authorities gave in by revoking the suspension of the Editor. However, the staff were left fighting the Students' Council for rehiring of the original Editor. Every time that GAZETTE covered free speech disputes elsewhere it tended to take the attitude that "it can't happen here."

The newspaper gave little pre-election publicity to the Council elections, then took a mournful attitude towards the fairly low turnout of fifty percent in Arts and Science. When the new Council met it chose the Law representative, W. Gerald Stewart, as President. He had been student president at Mount Allison in his undergraduate career. As usual the only woman on the executive was the Vice-President.

The outgoing Council continued its work by discovering that 17 athletes qualified for gold "D's", so DAAC was ordered to put a new system for selection into effect "right away". It was agreed that Murray Rankin would be permanent Secretary-Treasurer for \$350 a year, commencing when the 1930-31 books were audited. Although it had been blamed to letting the situation

develop the Council refused to pick up dance deficits. R.A. Donohoe, a future Nova Scotia cabinet minister, received special praise for his work as GAZETTE Business Manager. The new system of financial control turned out to be little more than common use of stationery by all Council organizations and compilation of a student directory. The constitution revision made clear the Council's authority over student organizations on and off campus. This would facilitate attempts to control foolish expenses.

The constitution revision also cleared up some wording, enshrined the Committee of Nine, removed the President's vote except in case of a tie, required Council officers' authorization for society expenses and established a quarterly report system to keep Council on top of the financial system. The Handbook was made officially a Council project since the campus Y.M.C.A. had passed away, and the handbook editor would receive all profits up to \$1.00. The preoccupation with finances led to a requirement of Council approval for special numbers of the newspaper.

As the year closed DAAC was attacked for charging students' to enter play-off games, using a loophole in the free admission motion of Council. The University Store was already suffering because people ordered books and never bought them. Meanwhile, the final Council meeting was held at the Nova Scotian Hotel with the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Fred Pearson, the new Council president and Murray Rankin as special guests. The retiring university officials, Stanley MacKenzie and Archibald MacMechan, were given special awards by the Students' Council.

National Union of Students making housing policy

OTTAWA (CUP) -- The broad approach to the housing crisis contained in the statement prepared by Executive Secretary Dan O'Connor, results from a decision reached at the July Central Committee meeting of NUS.

At that time, O'Connor explained, discussion centred around short and long-term solutions to the housing crisis which would be facing students returning to school this fall.

The short-term solutions setting up rental referral services on campuses and finding emergency accommodation could only be done on the local level, the committee decided.

On a national level it was agreed that pressure would have to be brought to bear on the federal government, but it was also recognized, O'Connor says, "that this action could only be effective if students recognized that the housing crisis is a widespread social problem."

"The Central Committee feels that any efforts on the part of students to pressure government will only be effective on the long-run if we are linked up with the efforts of other groups working for improved housing."

It was this reason, he explained, that the Central Committee, which has representatives from each province, rejected a suggestion that a "National Day of Protest" be held over the student housing issue.

Because the linkups with other

housing action groups has not yet been forged, it was feared that the reaction by a public "which is itself feeling the housing crunch" might not be "too sympathetic".

But NUS, according to O'Connor, doesn't feel that such a tactic might be impossible for the future - once students are aware of their housing problems in the context of the

overall problem, and once the necessary contacts with other groups are made.

Don't let the banks get you

Students who had government loans last year and have not yet received them for this year should visit their bank managers immediately according to one bank official. The six month free interest period from the end of the last academic year is almost up and if the bank has not been informed that a student is registered in school for this academic year they will be forced to start compiling interest charges on previous loans.

Under the Canada Student Loans Act a student can borrow a specified amount from a chartered bank interest free for the period they are registered in school. Six months after the last academic year ends for which a student was registered the bank starts to charge interest. Since student loans are unusually late in Nova Scotia this year the six month free interest period is almost up on previous loans. Students who have not negotiated new loans for this year but are registered in school must go to the bank where their loans are held and prove they are registered (or conditionally registered) in university.

Without notification of registered status the banks will assume that a student is not in University and start compiling interest charges. Notifying the bank of registered status is a simple matter and only

necessary for those students who either are not receiving a loan this year but are still in school or for students who have not yet received loans but are expecting them soon.

