

McKenzie voices views on external politics

By GLEN ARGAN

Canadian student leaders have matured to the point where they now see more benefits arising from consultation and lobbying with various levels of government than from the confrontation politics common in the late 1960's, according to Warren McKenzie, president of the UNB student's union.

McKenzie said that now, "We realize that a well-prepared, well-documented case, consistent pressure by your lobbyists in the provincial capital or the federal capital, can accomplish more than the students of UNB running around the campus with picket signs."

Yet the development of an adequate lobby for students is not an easy task and requires that students of this campus band together with other universities in regional and national organizations in order to facilitate communication and provide a united voice to the government.

In a situation where each separate university attempts to do its own bargaining with the government, no common theme runs through the various talks and the government is able to play the interests of one group of students off against another. As well, they may fall into some confusion about exactly what students want and thus excuse their own inaction.

McKenzie stated when he became SRC external-coordinator a year and a half ago, "we started communicating with other universities about their priorities and what they were doing there and we found that the things we had in common were actually quite extensive." Problems with student aid and housing were seen as the most pressing common problems.

The next step was for the Maritime universities to get together last fall "and work out some kind of unified approach so that we're all saying the same thing at the same time." Out of this process arose the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS) which is able to speak to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission on behalf of 40,000 students. Besides developing a unified policy, AFS also allows for a division of labour on various research projects combined with a pooling of the information acquired.

Each province in AFS has its own caucus which deals directly with its own government, but always with the consciousness that its problems are shared with students in other provinces.

The organization is now seeking to have the provincial governments recognize it as the legitimate voice of students. Governments should be able to approach AFS and find out what the student position on an issue is. This would eliminate the situations where a government comes forward with legislation which they "feel students are going to like," without really knowing what students perceive as being their interests.

McKenzie moved on to argue that "NUS (National Union of Students) is the same type of philosophy on a bigger scale." Although, technically, education falls under provincial jurisdiction, "it becomes a very serious grey area at the university level because a lot of the money which goes into the university comes from the federal level."

Furthermore, the Canada Student Loans Plan is a federal program, although restrictions on this program exist at both the provincial and federal levels. This is one area which NUS is continually working on to get improvements.

Essentially, NUS works to provide a united voice for students at the federal level and to provide nationwide communication among student bodies. For instance, it attempts "to make sure that students have input into the policy-making bodies at the federal level." It also spoken out against the green paper on immigration which would affect the status of all foreign students. NUS has a much broader research capacity than

AFS in that it can afford to provide full-time fieldworkers and research staff.

When questioned as to whether NUS might become as estranged from the common body of students as did the now-disbanded Canadian Union of Students, McKenzie was emphatic in insisting that the university situation now is completely different from the confrontation-style politics of the late

1960's. He suggested that about 95 percent of Canadian student leaders are anxious to avoid the situation of direct confrontation which precipitated the disillusionment of CUS. "We cannot have that duplicated because it does not produce anything concrete."

"What we really need is communication amongst student unions and what we really cannot have is a group of executive

members of any national or provincial organization out on their own, without reference to what the students in the province or the country want, making decisions."

NUS makes its policy at meetings where representatives of all its member student unions are present and not at national executive meetings. Thus each institution has a say as to what are serious student needs and it is their combined voice which gives direction to the executive.

"I think what we have in NUS, what we have in AFS and in student government in general right across the country is a maturation of student governments." We have achieved a better awareness of what channels to use, what a lobby can do for us and what it takes to make a good lobby.

It takes time for any organized group to become recognized as having a legitimate voice, but McKenzie believes that soon governments will listen to regional and national student groups in the same manner that they listen to labour unions.

Quite often, governments don't know what students want and need and it is the duty of NUS and AFS to provide them with that information. However, "in many cases, for various reasons, some of them political, some of them totally unathomable, we have difficulty in getting the government to see our point. This is where a lobby representing 40,000 students can step in and say 'Look! You've got to listen to us.'"

NUS is not falling apart through internal division as CUS did, nor is it on a downhill slide of any sort, said McKenzie. It represents 350,000 students and more universities are holding referendums this fall on whether or not to join.

McKenzie also took sharp issue with a comment in last week's Brunswickan suggesting that as we get more involved in NUS, it will become more difficult for us to get out.

"If you are committed and there are solid gains being made by that commitment, then why would you want to pull out? And if they're not being made, then I cannot see anyone remaining committed to an organization that's not doing anything."

He concluded the discussion by asserting, "We feel that there is a very definite value in this organization (NUS) and that the student body should give it a chance and vote for the referendum. And, in six months, allow the people who are involved at that time to evaluate it and make a recommendation either that we continue or that we get out."

Lecture to be given

The historic geodetic record and its applications in geology and geophysics will be the topic of a lecture to be presented by Robert O. Castle at UNB.

The first part of Dr. Castle's lecture will take place Tuesday, Oct. 7, at 7:30 p.m. in Head Hall, Room C-11. The second part follows on Wednesday, Oct. 8, at 3:30 p.m. in Head Hall, Room H1-10.

Dr. Castle is a research geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey in Menlo Park, California. His talks will cover topics such as earthquake prediction, and is open to interested members of the public.



Photo by Stainless Steve

Student union president recently explained to The Brunswickan why he wants this university to join the National Union of Students. The referendum is slated for October 22.

Christian Science lecture held

James M. McGrew, a Christian Science lecturer from the Christian Society of Boston spoke in the Student Union Building, U.N.B., at the invitation of the Christian Society, Fredericton.

Mrs. Marion Cumming, a member of the Society, introduced the lecturer.

"To Christ Jesus there was 'no circumstances beyond healing,'" Mr. McGrew said.

"Every situation presented to him, whether it was the death of Lazarus or a storm at sea, he used as an opportunity to prove the

absolute control of God."

Mr. McGrew was in business more than 30 years, holding executive positions as an officer and director of a large worldwide manufacturing corporation. He was Controller of The Christian Science Publishing Society from 1966 to 1973.

Since 1966 he has been in the public practice of Christian Science. He is currently on an extensive tour as a member of The Christian Science Board of Lectureship.

"Your Unlimited Opportunities" was the title of his lecture.

Engineers run a derby

The Great Canadian Coaster Derby will be one of the highlights of this year's engineering week.

The fourth year mechanical engineers are challenging the whole university. "We want some competition," their spokeswoman said.

Entry forms are available at Room 212 Head Hall and the entry fee is \$2.00. Prizes will be awarded.

The spokeswoman advised that persons or groups planning on entering should start building their vehicles now as the competition is likely to be stiff.

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