

# McGILL CONFERENCE ON WORLD AFFAIRS

Last week Dalhousie saw fit to send displaced Albertans Lawyer John Burns and Arts perennial Gus Visman to the McGill Conference on World Affairs where among other things they reportedly discussed World Affairs. Following is Mr. Visman's version of what happened, officially.

By GUS VISMAN

The McGill Conference on World Affairs is the mildly grandiose title of an annual get-together in Canada's rumored sin centre where the weightier aspects of the world's problems are dissembled and examined in considerable depth.

"Regional Organization and Bloc Activity" were the meat of last week's pow wow. Although the weighty title struck some apprehensive chords as to what it might mean, the known attractions of Montreal proved overpowering: the invitation, together with a travel grant from our ever-solvent Students' Council, was gladly accepted.

## HIGHLY ORGANIZED

Arrival at the conventional hotel quickly confirmed fears that the conference is a highly organized, intensive affair, with a packed schedule filling three and a half days. Addressing itself to some 125 delegates ranging academically from the undergraduate to professional levels, sessions were alternated between top-flight speakers at the plenary sessions and three study group seminars where delegates got ample opportunities to expound their views.

## KEY ADDRESSES

Keynote address to MCWA was given by Prof. Ernst B. Haas, of the University of California at Berkeley. His thesis, a long paper prepared for the conference, is that the new supranational state seen developing in Europe today represents the beginning of a triumph of economics over politics. De Gaulle and fellow travelers in the theory of inter-governmental co-operation aside, Haas sees an underlying movement shaping towards Supranational government, in which economic, social, and technical decisions are for the most part made by high-ranking civil servants of the governments involved, who are concerned with the technical problems to be solved, rather than those political. This accords with an increasing "depoliticization" in the new Europe: the removal of ideology from politics. Statistics tend to replace ideology and dogma, leaving considerations of economic and social welfare having a greater influence on politics.

## SOVIET STUFF

Prof. Zbigniew Brzezinski, of Columbia University, spoke on "Regionalism in the Soviet Bloc." He has been called the only individual who can intelligently analyze Russian political development without being influenced by western propaganda.

Brzezinski contends that the recent phenomenon of mass nationalism in the Soviet bloc will likely lead to an economic alliance embracing the whole of Europe.

Citing factors such as the Sino-Soviet ideological rift, and internal unrest such as Hungary exhibited, Brzezinski feels that these elements are being aggravated by the phenomenal success of the west European economic experiment. "It can only lessen stability cohesion, and faith in the communist ideology. This trend is already showing in the fractioning of political philosophy into the many brands of 'true socialism', now appearing.

"The conflict between the USSR and China have forced the Soviet Union to relativize its former absolute ideas to inner state problems and domestic-oriented principles," he said. "This relativization of ideas is the first stage in the erosion of ideology."

Speaking on "Regionalism in the Middle East", Columbia's Prof. J. C. Hurewitz emphasized that the numerous attempts at supranational and regional government in the region since World War II have been largely unsuccessful.

Few common causes can be found to serve as the basis of a

unifying force, except such negative elements as the common hatred among the Arab states for Israel. There is little rapport between the major ethnic blocs such as the Arab nations or Moslem Africa. Even fewer unifying elements exist between these blocs. "The failure of attempts at regional government in the Middle East may be partially accounted for by the fact that many of the countries have only recently gained their independence," he said, pointing out that hard-won sovereignty is not easily relinquished at such an early stage.

Hurewitz could envision little hope for a regional unity in the Middle East approximating the achievements in Europe.

Rt. Hon. Paul Martin, Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs addressed the closing dinner of the conference.

Admirably breaking the tradition where Canadian Cabinet ministers characteristically say nothing very much as after-dinner speakers, Martin pointed out that "the various efforts at regionalism must not be misconstrued. They are not going back to a form of regionalism."

"The world is now in a stage of great transition, where the regional organizations that have served the nations of the world in past decades have disappeared or are altering, and I believe that to regard this change, or international regionalism, as permanent is not in accordance with the facts," he said.

## SOME OBSERVATIONS

Two-thirds of the delegates were American, and exposure to this group was fascinating, at the least.

Most of the Yank delegates were specializing in World Affairs or Government (even at the undergraduate level) and generally proved to be highly conversant with the topics considered at the conference. Significant also was their very objective approach to the world situation and the good-humored skepticism which they regarded official American policy, particularly in such delicate questions as the Cuban situation.

The Americans' views on Canada also held surprises. Most of them proved better-versed in Canadian affairs than we would have

expected, but they objected vehemently to the Canadian fears so often reiterated that Americans are actively interested in assimilating Canada into the United States, in all realms of economics, politics and culture. They debunked with great emphasis our great self-image of the plump northern virgin ripe for the coming of the Yankee debauch. Troubled enough with the territory it has now, they felt the United States would least of all want more responsibilities in the form of the annexation of Canada.

## Cross-Canada Representation

The Canadians represented every province except P. E. I., and it was delightful to find they were distinguished from the horde of invaders, not only by accent, but also a generally more relaxed attitude reflected in a far more prevalent sense of humor. In fact, if any general criticism must be levelled against the conference, it was a lack of humor, which seems a vital element to discussions of such a deadly serious nature.

## African Views Criticized

The Africans also deserve comment: coming from both Canadian and American schools, they present common but rather puzzling traits. They were voluble and contributed greatly to discussion, but inevitably gave the impression that they labored under the weight of huge logs pinned on their shoulders. While no one would or did deny the fact that great problems faced their homelands, it would appear to be pointed ignorance to harp incessantly on the injustices occurring without giving some consideration to practical solutions to these problems, which must reasonably take place over a lengthy period of time, and which must involve considerable sacrifice of effort on the part of their peoples. The rather pointed inference that the situation which exists is totally the fault of the colonial powers which formerly controlled their nations, and that as a result these powers should be obliged to give full redress — is illogical, not from a moral but practical standpoint, and the sooner the African fights through his own deep sense of hurt to present a constructive attitude in spite of his voice in

world affairs will be greatly enhanced. The criticism is perhaps a bit strong, but this attitude was very prevalent at the conference and it should be borne in mind that the Africans there represented the cream of their own societies and will undoubtedly occupy very influential positions there within a number of years.

In this vein, it was reassuring to hear Chief S. O. Adebo, Permanent Nigerian Delegate to the United Nations, give a very objective analysis of the role of regional organizations within the sphere of the U. N.

The McGill Conference on World Affairs proved to be a most enlightening and enjoyable experience. It is a specialist's conference, where a working knowledge of basic political science and some familiarity with world organization is essential. This is true particularly because delegates are expected to take a very active part in the conference.

## Newfie Meds to get aid

ST. JOHN'S, NFLD. (CUP) — Students interested in pursuing a career in medicine at Memorial University will receive special financial assistance from the provincial government.

Minister of Health, Dr. James McGrath, said last week at Memorial that the plan is to provide sufficient money for full medical education of pre-med students from first to last.

He emphasized that the plan is not one of pure benevolence and said, "Our main concern is to provide Newfoundland with sufficient doctors so that we may have the best possible medical service."

Fifty-five scholarships are being offered this year in two categories. Students residing in St. John's will receive \$800 a year for three years; students residing outside the city will receive \$1,200 for their pre-med education.

A \$2,000-a-year subsidy is offered to students when they attend mainland universities to complete their medical training.

Students who take advantage of the scholarships must agree to work in Newfoundland for at least four years. "We regard this obligation as being both legal and moral", Dr. McGrath pointed out.

On completion of four years of service within the province the doctor may leave Newfoundland, but would be required to repay the government for the last three years of their support. Another three years of service in the province would constitute repayment of this debt.

Doctors would be sent where needed but consideration given to where they would like to go. Dr. McGrath told the students that they would be paid salaries ordinarily applicable to the posts where they are serving at the time.



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