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a supplement section
of the gateway

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—Scarth photo

NOW THAT WE'VE CLEANED UP THE CRICKET CLUB

... will we have three or four vice-presidents?

Students' councils are dead

By DANIEL LaTOUCHE

Student councils are dead ducks, and everybody should be happy about it—especially student councillors themselves.

There is nothing tragic in this process and instead of looking for new ways of keeping the traditional structure alive, student leaders should start thinking of new patterns for themselves and the student population.

We have already started to do this in Quebec.

I don't intend to tell you what to do; the student and social situations of our two societies are too different.

Student councils have a rather long history in Quebec.

In universities and classical colleges, the first task of students, usually with help from the administration, was to build a representative student council responsible for student affairs on campus.

GOVERNMENT

The functions of these student governments were numerous.

1. Organizing student activities.

Even if we never had the number of student activities that you people have, we do have dances, parties, carnivals, debates and championships to arrange, and for this you need a co-ordinating structure.

2. Representing students to the university administration.

Once a year the chancellor would invite student representatives to discuss frankly and openly the problems of the university community.

At the University of Montreal, the ritual was very precise. The sector, or president, until last year always a bishop, would invite the whole council to his office.

Everybody sat down on the floor in a most paternalistic atmosphere. The rector would tell them nice little stories about the state of his health and why they had to build a 1.5 million dollar mobile escalator so he would not have to climb 100 steps to reach his office.

3. Acting as a school of "democracy".

Students in the faculty of law always jump for the chance to practice parliamentary procedures in council.

The most up-to-date game on any campus was to think of the best new structure for the student council. Should we have two houses? Weighted votes? Should the executive be composed of four vice-presidents or three vice-presidents?

Very soon student leaders realized how irrelevant they were in a rapidly changing society. It is very nice to deal exclusively with student problems, but what use is it to the rest of society?

CHANGE NOTHING

For the man who never was at university and whose children will never go there, all your discussions on whether or not the students union should build a SUB change nothing.

Students as a group didn't want

to be absent from the building of a new Quebec. They chose to participate in the "revolution tranquille", some violently, some peacefully.

OUT OF THE IVORY TOWER

They stepped down from their ivory tower and their football games. They abandoned their red or blue university jackets and decided to go to work to change the nature and functions of their traditional student structure.

They did not modify the structures themselves, but instead damaged the spirit behind the structures.

Most of all they gave themselves an intellectual tool, an integrated concept by which they could be present in the life of society.

They called this ideology le syndicalisme étudiant... student syndicalism.

Basically, student syndicalism defines the student as a young intellectual worker; clearly states there is no such thing as student problems but only student aspects of national, societal problems.

OUT OF CUS

One of the natural consequences of student syndicalism was the withdrawal of French-speaking Quebec students from the ranks of the Canadian Union of Students. They had a nation to build, and couldn't afford to lose time planning travel schemes, debating championships or Second Century Week.

They had nothing against CUS and Canadian students, just something else to do: organize all Quebec students (and not only French-speaking students) to play an active part in la revolution tranquille.

L'Union Générale des Etudiants du Québec—UGEQ—was born.

We duplicated the student structure of Canada—but with a different goal in mind.

It still kept its role as a representative body, responsible for student activities, but the main emphasis was on political pressure.

ONLY IN EDMONTON

The idea a student council should not take any political stand disappeared (it still seems very alive in Edmonton), and students went on strike to protest government inaction on education—some of them asked for an independent and free Quebec.

They took concrete action to show their social concern—picketing with strikers, a sit-in in the Premier's office, boycotting convocation ceremonies.

At the same time they fought for general accessibility to higher education, with the abolition of fees.

"We, of the Canadian student press, are embarking on a program of self-examination."

Those are the rather pontifical words of CUP president Don Sellar at the closing banquet of the Canadian University Press Western Regional Conference last Saturday.

And that is what is happening in student newspapers across the country. They are closing their ranks and tackling the question of what is a student newspaper.

The story is on C-4 and C-5.

Opposite this column is Daniel LaTouche on student government. He outlines the changes in Quebec in the first of a two-part series.

LaTouche is a 21-year-old graduate student at the University of British Columbia. In past years he has been editor of the University of Montreal's paper, Le Quartier Latin, and international vice-president of L'Union Générale des Etudiants du Québec.

mistakes

Last week we ran an article on the front page entitled "failing creatively." It should have been credited, under the headline, Gabor Mate of The Ubysey. Our apologies to Mr. Mate.

On C-3 there is a non-jargon discussion from a student in a jargonistic field. Stan Lawlor, a graduate in sociology, talks about equality.

Next week's Casserole will include a feature from Irene McRae, arts rep to council, on her summer trip to Cuba.

DOES LSD IN SUGAR CUBES SPOIL THE TASTE OF COFFEE????



about LSD by Dr. Timothy Leary, Ph.D.

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