

Soc: Comply or "Good-bye"

by Ken MacDougall

This is the second in a continuing series of articles on the university and its budgetary crisis. We originally stated that we felt that any programme of economic austerity would result in an attempt to weed out the non-conformists in faculty. We also stated that at least three professors, two in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and one in the department of Romance Languages, are not having their contracts renewed.

This week, we examine the situation in the Sociology Anthropology department, to see just how well this development suits our hypothesis.

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Everyone should be aware by now (and probably sick of hearing about it) that there is something definitely wrong in the Soc/Anthro department.

Yet professors refuse to talk, are unavailable for comment, or insist that everything they say be off the record.

The whole affair seems to have its roots in the purge that took place at Guelph from 1968 onwards. Don Grady was a member of the Soc department there, as was Rolf Schliewen, Don Clairmont, J. J. Mangalam, and Nick Poushinsky. Poushinsky was working on his M.A. at the time, under Grady's supervision.

Grady had been voted by the faculty at Guelph to receive tenure. The Administration turned him down. Clairmont resigned in protest.

report exonerated Poushinsky. The Dean was satisfied with the report's conclusions. The Course Union screamed "whitewash," and Clairmont, now departmental chairman, screamed back "bullshit" just as loudly. The affair died a happy death (supposedly) during the summer.

The report, however, made one interesting recommendation, whose presence in the document is suspect. The recommendation was that non-Ph. D. faculty should not, in future, teach required graduate or undergraduate honours courses.

THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE

During the summer, Professor Mangalam assumed the Chairmanship of the Graduate Committee, and incorporated the report's recommendation into the restructuring of the Graduate programme.

That action was illegal. Most members of the faculty, including the non-Ph.D. members, have clauses in their contracts that make them members of the graduate faculty. The action implied that a departmental committee could rewrite a faculty member's contract, which, of course, it cannot.

THE CHAIRMANSHIP

During the summer, Clairmont resigned as Chairman of the department. Enter S. D. Clark.

A Faculty Search Committee approached Clark to see if he would accept the job of

Chairman. (Here it must be noted that Clark was a natural choice for the position. His credentials are impressive, and he has an international reputation in his particular field.)

Clark said he would consider the offer, although he never really wanted the position. The GAZETTE reprinted stories of Clark's problems at University of Toronto, and the issue gave Clark a convenient excuse to refuse the offer (a choice he says he and his family have never regretted).

THE OTHER SUMMER PROBLEMS

During the summer Rolf Schliewen and Professor Stolzman had prepared a twenty-two page report which documented numerous cases of irregular procedures within the department. Their report charged the Executive Committee of the department, and most specifically, Don Clairmont, with the breaches of democratic protocol, and demanded a faculty meeting to discuss the situation.

The meeting never occurred, although the report was to be discussed at the November meeting of the department (fully three months after its publication).

THE PURGE BEGINS

During the latter part of November, the department held a formal meeting to consider faculty for tenure. Three members were considered: Don Grady, Rolf Schliewen, and Nick Poushinsky.

Grady was denied tenure by a narrow vote of faculty. Poushinsky and Schliewen were to receive one year extensions of their contracts, but Dean MacLean advised the professors that the university could not renew. This means that both Schliewen and Poushinsky will be leaving in July of this year.

WHY?

*Grady still has one year remaining on his contract, so why was he considered for tenure this year? He was brought before the faculty to be considered under a Senate Regulation that allows a professor to be considered for tenure early, if his case has special merit, and his competence is so unquestionable that it would be unfair to make the professor wait an additional



Art MacKay/Dal Photo

Nick Poushinsky... student troubles

year to receive the honour. As such, the department was wasting their time considering Grady, since the entire procedure will have to be undergone again next year. Many department members concede this point. Some are prepared to fight to ensure that Grady receives reconsideration.

What has Grady done to receive the immediate attention of the department? He is popular with students. He is a departmental dissident. He went against the "all-for-one" atmosphere of the department last year, and sided with the Course Union in pressing for an impartial hearing into the Poushinsky incompetency allegations.

The other thing to consider is why the Dean went against the recommendations of the department and did not renew Schliewen's and Poushinsky's

contracts? MacLean has never publicly stated that the reasons were budgetary, but Clairmont has stated that the course loads of these two professors are not at capacity, so they, regrettably, had to go.

However, Clairmont has also publicly stated that he did not like the Schliewen Stolzman report. In addition, the departmental rumour mill places Clairmont as the source of several barbed comments regarding Schliewen and Grady's competence. There is no question, in Clairmont's opinion, that Schliewen has bucked the status quo of the department, and now it appears that Schliewen will pay — by losing his job, over the body of Nick Poushinsky — Clairmont's best friend in the department.

Schliewen's competence as an academic is unquestioned. Students and the Course Union

Peter Clarke/Dal Photo



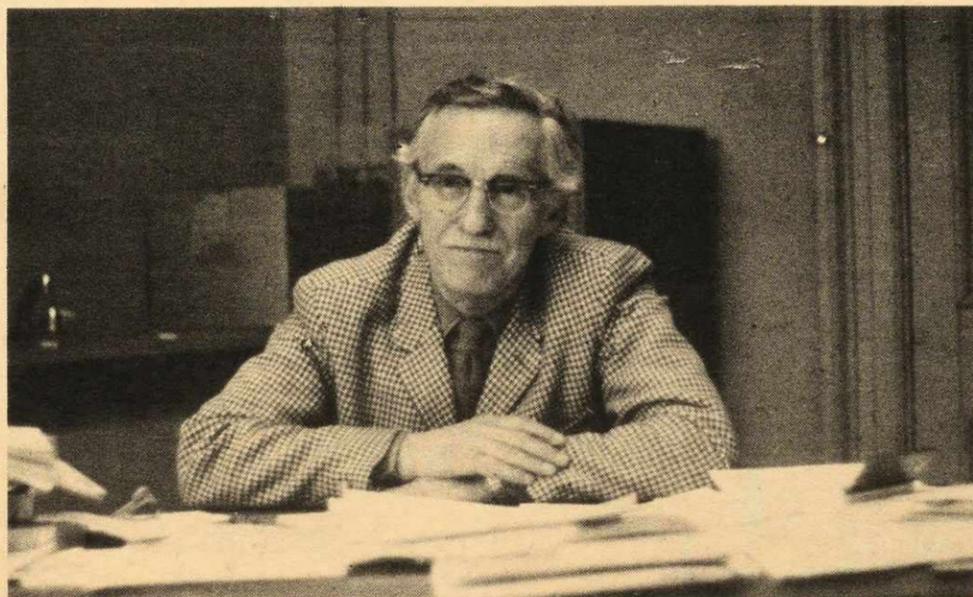
Rolf Schliewen... has student support

The next year, the Guelph administration would not renew Schliewen's contract. Mangalam, who had supported Grady, Clairmont, and Schliewen, decided to quit as well. He did so, despite having tenure at the university.

All these professors eventually ended up at Dalhousie. Poushinsky, who left Guelph to do his Ph.D. at York, came to Dalhousie when the department needed someone qualified to teach statistics.

Last year, students charged Poushinsky with incompetence, and the Soc Course Union called for an investigation. The Ombudsman, Ian Chambers, and the Dean of Arts and Science, Guy MacLean, urged the department to initiate a formal investigation.

The department did initiate such an investigation, and their



S.D. Clark... caught in the middle (?)



Peter Clarke/Dal Photo

Don Clairmont... manipulator?

support him. So do members of the department. Now, if the Faculty Association were to assert itself, perhaps this situation might be cleared up once and for all.

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NEXT: Departmental chairmanships are always beautiful things for any faculty member to fight over. In the department of Romance Languages (soon to become two departments — French and Spanish), things are doubly interesting. Professor Rasmussen, who is now chairman, is approaching retirement age. This means that two positions will soon be open.

How does all this tie in with one member of the department not having his contract renewed?

Paul Deveau/Dal Photo