

"Mad professor" teaches teachers to teach

by Greg Neiman

Professor Julius Sumner Miller, of El Camino College, is a stubborn, rude man. He seemingly wishes to belittle his students by cutting off their explanations mid sentence, he enjoys singling out individuals for repeated attacks and inuendo, and is loath to tell his students the answers to par-

ticularly puzzling questions.

But I wish I would have had him as my physics instructor when I was in high school. Maybe I'd have learned some physics.

"Ain't I a nasty old man?" he asked his audience at a teachers convention last weekend. Having been trained to agree with him on virtually everything his

listeners raised their hands. "And I plan to be so the rest of my days."

Known to many as the "Mad Professor" on the television show *House of Frightenstein*, professor Miller used his magic show physics display and lecture at the teachers convention Friday to illustrate his views on teaching methods.

"I don't like the way classes are taught," he said. "Instructors don't give the students any intellectual excitement at all."

An example of his teaching style would be paraphrased in his view of physics: "If you don't think its enchanting, you're lifeless."

"Boil!" he commands to the flask of water. And it does, at the touch of his hands which were dipped in ice water.

Miller says teachers must teach their students to think in physics. An example: a candle is put in a beaker such that the top of the candle is below the upper

lip of the beaker. The candle is lit and dropped straight down off a tall building.

"You are equipped with a telescope to view its descent," he said. "What do you predict?"

"The candle will go out," said one audience member.

"Why?"

"Well, ..."

"That's not good enough. I didn't ask for a preamble. I asked you why you thought the candle would go out."

While the audience member was explaining why he felt the candle would go out, Miller again cut him off.

"That's not good enough. I want it in simple language. There's too many instructors who allow too much chatter in their classrooms. There's too much chatter and very little truth in the classrooms today."

Miller liberally quoted Shakespeare and various philosophers throughout his lectures, advising that students

must be taught the history of the subject as well as the subject itself.

"Its important as well to know what questions to ask," he said. The question 'what do you predict?' is much better than asking 'will the candle go out?'

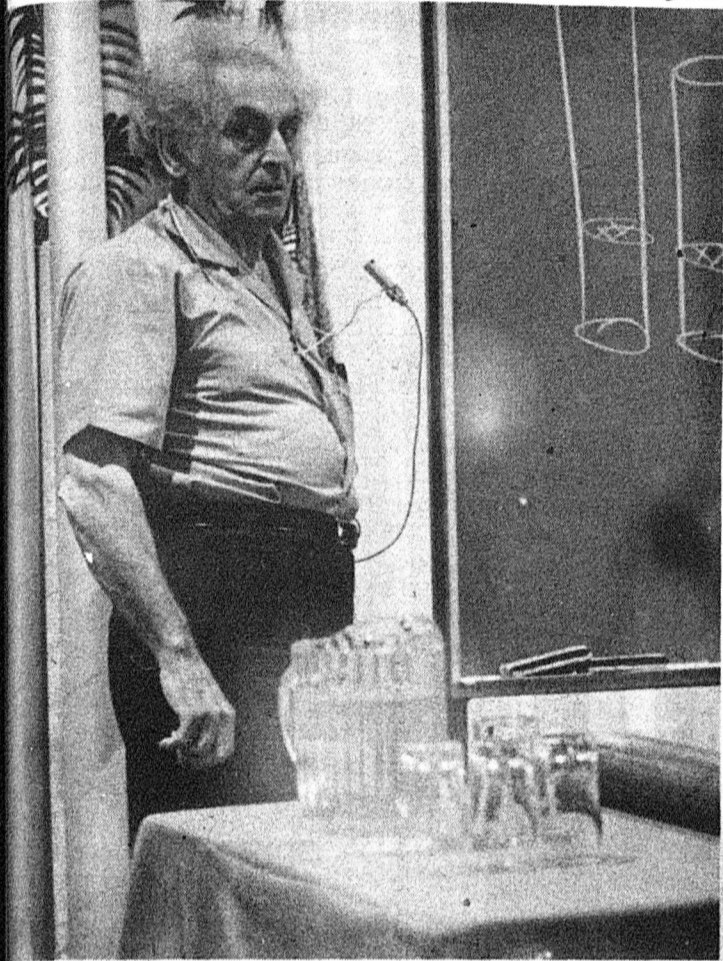
"I don't care what my students know about physics. Its what they understand that is important to me. I don't think any professor of physics teaches students to think in physics, they just teach physics."

"What do teachers of professors do? They tell the students the answers without any thought on their part. The parasites have the answers and they want very little more."

He dipped his hands in ice water and laid them on the flask. "Boil!" he commanded. Nothing happened.

"How many are glad its not boiling?" he asked.

I noticed a few put up their hands.



Professor Miller - "If you ain't enchanted, you're lifeless." Photo Greg Neiman.

Zoeteman seeks community aid

As the representative of a "new breed of student... facing an assembly-line type of education," upcoming SU president Len Zoeteman appealed Monday for "greater community involvement in halting the deteriorating quality of education in our province."

"We must overcome the idea," said Zoeteman, "that the university students are on one side of the river and the community is on the other. From a social and community point of view what happens at university can have a tremendous impact."

Zoeteman was speaking to a luncheon meeting of the downtown Kiwanis Club about the priorities of next year's Students' Union, and called community involvement "intrinsic" to the formation of valuable university policy.

Of present concern to students is the proposed 25% tuition fee increase which Zoeteman felt was unjustified "from a moral point of view... in the light of the federal government's 10% price hike guideline."

Dr. Daddy

KAMPALA (CUP) - Should you have need to address Ugandan President Idi Amin Dada in diplomatic circles, just remember that the man is a doctor, now in recognition of his scholarship.

The proper way of addressing Amin is now "Your Excellency the Doctor Field Marshall President Idi Amin Dada."

In any written communique this title should be followed by the letters V.C., D.S.O., M.C. in recognition of Amin's outstanding military career and his recent purchase of old British war medals.

Get it wrong and more than your face will be red.

"But," he continued, "it is not so much the quality of money we will pay extra as it is the actual decrease in educational standards occurring at the same time."

Zoeteman cited the lack of funding for the university's new Ahdahl computer and the large classes on campus which "push people through like fixtures on a treadmill" as signs of deteriorating university standards.

"We are starting to look at quantity instead of quality in university education," Zoeteman said, "and neither the students nor the community will benefit."

Zoeteman concluded his remarks by asking for support, help and advice from community organisations such as Kiwanis, in order that the Students' Union "can lobby and work more effectively with the provincial government."

Students' unions plan new links

by Kevin Gillese

According to the Federation of Alberta Students (FAS) spokesperson Terry Sharon, feelings of isolation and unwanted independence brought about the mid-February meeting between provincial, regional and national unions of students at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto.

"When you have a regional organization operating at one level in the educational system, a national organization operating at another level in that system and no coordination between the two - you don't always, or even generally obtain the best results," says Sharon. "We thought we should change that."

The upshot of that thought was the Ryerson conference. Representatives from the British Columbia Federation of Students (BCFS), FAS, the universities of Regina and Saskatoon, Ontario Federation of Students (OFS), Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS), and the National Union of Students (NUS) were in attendance.

One motion made at the conference called for a constitutional link between regional organizations and NUS. The link was to be in the form of representatives sitting on policy committees of both the regionals and NUS.

The rationale for that motion, says Sharon, arises from the tri-level funding and im-

plementation of education programs in Canada - at the individual university level, at the provincial government level, and at the federal government level.

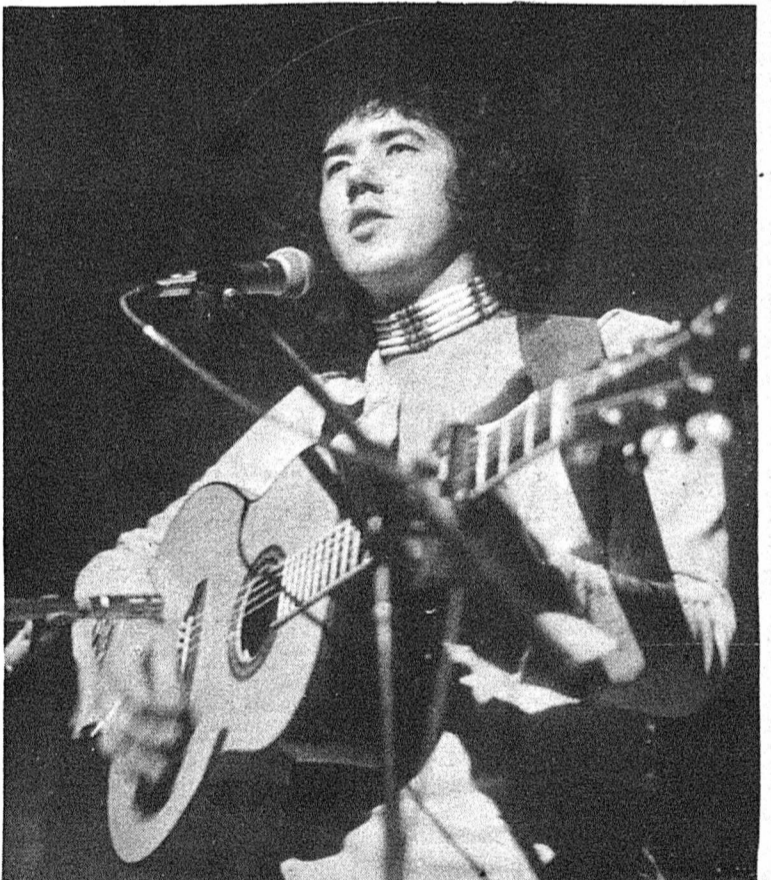
Sharon says all large Canadian organizations have the need for both regional and national operations with a linking system between them. "That applies to unions, interest groups, business organizations - every large association in Canada. In England you don't need a regional and national organization because they are basically a one-government system. But in Canada - in a federal system - it's an absolute necessity."

And thus the motion. Sharon adds that at the present time the motion is strictly informational. "FAS, like most of the

other organizations at the conference, had no initial position, and the motion produced at the meeting is solely to bring up something debatable in our provincial or regional meetings," he says.

Money matters were not even discussed at the meeting; "that's way in the future," Sharon says, "and we'd certainly need a referendum on each FAS campus before we would consider any monetary link-up between FAS and NUS."

The motion concerning personnellink-ups between NUS and the provincial or regional organizations will be discussed by the FAS executive committee this week and will be brought for formal debate to its spring conference on March 19-21 in Lethbridge.



In co-operation with Native Land Claims Week, March 8-13, Students' Union Special Events presents

in concert:

TOM JACKSON

Metis singer/composer from Winnipeg with the

ATCHEMOWN NATIVE THEATRE

performing their hit play,
"The Twin Sinks of Alan Sammy"

TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 8 p.m., SUB Theatre

Tickets \$3.00 at HUB Ticket Office and Mike's

UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

The application deadline for undergraduate awards is June 1. Applications may now be obtained from the Student Awards Office, Rm. 219, C.A.B.

NO TRANSCRIPTS REQUIRED