

gateway

Thursday, January 27, 1983

Don't do this, don't do that...

...what're they tryin' to do, make a good boy of you?
Supertramp

Council debates viability of FAS

by Richard Watts

The future of the Federation of Alberta Students (FAS) was furiously debated in Students' Council last Tuesday.

Council went into a 'committee of the whole' to discuss the question which involved a removal of the chair, removal of speakers' time limits, and a general removal of order as the debate began.

The future of the provincial lobby organization is in serious doubt as they face money problems and a serious image problem.

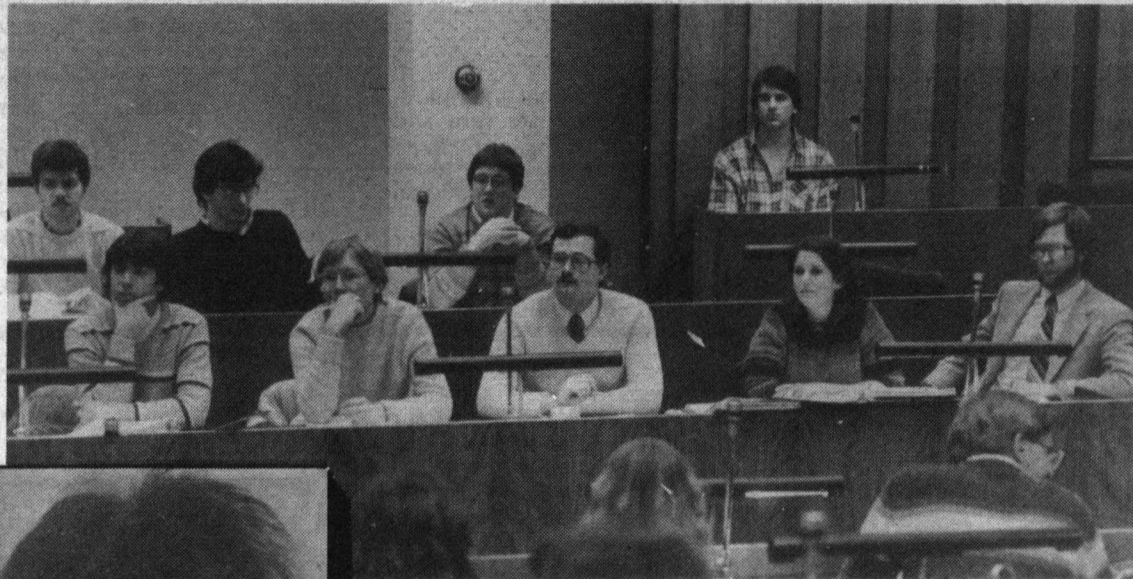
Council rep for Engineering, John Koch, was vocal in his opinions. "I am in favor of letting FAS die, I think they have zero credibility and I think it is time to see the writing on the wall and let the organization die a natural death."

Koch's objections spring from what he perceives as a lack of democracy in the organization, a lack of credibility both within and outside the membership.

Says Koch on the democracy within FAS, "I'm a member of FAS and I've never voted on anything and I'm hardly ever aware of what they are doing on my behalf."

Koch expanded, "Last year they had a free tuition policy and I would never have supported that and I think the majority of students would not have supported it."

Arts rep Dwayne Chomyn responded by saying, "We in Council select the delegates to go to FAS conferences and I think if their has been a lack of democracy



Students' Council furiously debated FAS. Inset: Don Millar, FAS president

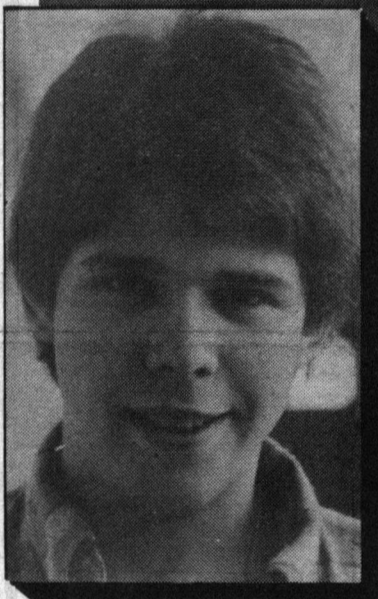


photo Ray Giguere

in the past it is largely our fault." Chomyn urged Council not to give up on the provincial students' organization. "The structure is there and I think we should hang on to it and try to build it into a better organization that will work for us at a government level."

Chomyn's opinions were echoed by SU President Greenhill and the SU VP finance Roger Merkosky.

Said Merkosky to Koch, "FAS is not an entity unto itself; we are all members and I think it is up to us to take part and with democratic means shape a new

organization."

FAS president Don Millar addressed the criticisms by admitting there had been problems in the past with the FAS executive taking too much authority unto itself without consulting the membership. This "lack of democracy" was a major contributing factor to the "image problems" the Federation was facing now, said Millar.

But Millar countered by saying that the Federation had tried very hard to make the membership take as much responsibility as possible for the decisions

of the organization to counter "historical problems."

"We can't rewrite the past so let's look to the future and build," said Millar.

Millar also said the best way for students to gain credibility with the government was to know what you are talking about and have a wide base of support.

Millar said a provincial student organization researching and lobbying the government to maintain "accessible and high quality post-secondary education" is the best way to keep a commitment from the government.

Koch and others, notably SU VP Internal Ray Conway remained unconvinced.

Conway's doubts spring from the University of Calgary recently dropping out of FAS. Conway said he "questioned the validity of an organization" that claimed to represent all of Alberta's students when in fact it did not.

It was suggested by Commerce rep Brian Thomas that a referendum be held with questions being asked on the upcoming SU executive elections.

This motion was defeated by Council, the principal objection being that there are already three referendum questions being placed on the ballots.

Koch afterwards complained, "It's ironic that most of the people who objected to the referendum are those who harp about democracy and are also pro-FAS."

"The truth is they're scared; most students don't know about or even care about FAS."

Year-old case revived

SU in court: sues city over paper seizure

by Wesley Oginski

A lawsuit currently between the U of A Students' Union and the City of Edmonton may determine whether the Gateway has the same powers as any other media organization.

Police and Fire officials confiscated approximately 12,000 copies of the Gateway's November 19th issue without official department sanction. Peter Michalshyn, the Gateway Editor-in-Chief, was contacted and informed the next day who had removed the papers from their distribution boxes and the SUB loading dock and why.

Investigators felt that information given to the Gateway reporters about a fire in SUB would be detrimental to their investigation. The fire occurred in the late hours of November 18, 1981, in a hallway behind SUB Theatre connecting CJSR and the Gateway offices. Soon after the Fire Department put out the blaze, police and fire investigators talked to reporters and a story began to unfold.

Shortly after the seizure, the SU filed suit against the City of Edmonton and the University of Alberta for \$200,000 in damages. The University was eventually dropped from the suit. Some councillors felt it was inappropriate to bite the hand that feeds them.

In October of 1982, suspect Pat Just was convicted on three counts of arson, the first being the SUB fire.

The lawsuit itself will focus on the actual damages incurred as well as points of principle.

"It is a point of principle," says SU President Robert Greenhill. "The Gateway should have the same freedom of expression as any other newspaper. The should not be subject to seizure."

"I do not want the newspaper (the Gateway) to tow the standard line," he adds. "It is absolutely essential for us to defend the rights of the students."

Current Gateway Editor-in-Chief Andrew Watts says, "Obviously it (the seizure) was breaking the law. It was a complete abrogation of their (Police and Fire Department's) responsibilities."

The lawsuit itself is currently in a state of limbo.

"We have instructed our lawyer (John T. Haunholter) to bring it (the lawsuit) to examination by the end of March," Greenhill explains.

Examination of discovery, a pre-court hearing, will decide if there is sufficient evidence to continue to trial.

"If it has to go to trial," Greenhill says, "It could take another year at least."

Watts is of the opinion that

many people have been derelict in bringing forward the case to a conclusion.

"We have been derelict," he says. "The lawyer has been derelict and so have the Students' Union."

Muddle over employees rights

by Ken Lenz
Have you ever been shafted by an employer?

Students often feel that they have very few rights while working part-time during University or full-time during the summer.

However, there are actually very few distinctions made under the law yet employee rights are still occasionally compromised.

Both full-time and part-time workers are often victimized by their employers who are almost invariably aware they are acting outside the boundaries of the law.

Everyone should be aware of some basic rights they have as employees and should make sure these rights are upheld.

All workers are covered under the Workers Compensation Act and are eligible to receive all the wages which they lost due to injury.

The claim must be reported to your employer immediately and you should get a Doctor's certificate to back up your claim.

Greenhill, though, maintains, "It should be possible to reach settlement soon after examination of discovery."

Says Watts, "Personally, I

think settling out of court is good because it's over quicker."

"I do not think the principle would be lost," he adds, "but a court hearing would make it (the issue) more public."

Minimum wage is now \$3.80 per hour and with time and a half for any hours worked in excess of eight per day or 44 per week.

If a holiday falls on a day of the week that you would normally work and you have worked for a company for at least 30 days you should be paid for the day; if you work on that holiday you are eligible for double time and a half.

There are very few legal distinctions made between full-

time and part-time employees.

If you have a complaint against your employer regarding either wages or rights to compensation you should phone 427-3731 or 427-1100 respectively.

If either of these boards find anything shady or crooked about your employer they have the power to audit all company records kept for the last five years, maintaining the confidentiality of the plaintiff at the same time.

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Gateway rookie night! See page 10 for details!