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Controversial ad retrospect

by Suzanne Lundrigan

The Students' Union made forays into the realm of civil rights over the summer when they published a highly controversial ad which called on the people of Alberta to take a look at the issue of civil rights in the province. The venture cost them approximately \$6,000.

"We decided to run the ad after a U of A student was arrested for walking past the Gainers plant," explains VP External, Michael Hunter. The Gainers plant was the sight of much union unrest over the summer. According to Hunter the student was simply walking down the street and was picked up during a "random arrest".

The ad, which opened with the statement, "Rights, what rights?" sparked much controversy.

"I was afraid that a rift would develop in council over the money."

Michael Hunter

Hunter's office received numerous calls from the public and the media. "Some people supported us, others were not pleased with

the action. Leo Leclerc from the Edmonton Sun called to tell me that the ad was just a symptom of 'summertime boredom'," says Hunter.

Further questions arose when it was disclosed that the Executive had decided to publish the ad without the approbation of the Students' Council. In the Executive's defense, Michael Hunter explains, "Time was a significant factor, we wanted to act immediately and Council was not scheduled to meet for some time. The idea of holding an emergency Council session was banded about but we decided the councillors would not appreciate being called in."

At the next council meeting the ads were approved with some changes to their wording.

The ads were run once again in the Journal the Sun and once again Hunter received a flurry of calls. "A gentleman called in to tell me that the ads would result in nothing. He then asked me if I would debate him on the issue. I asked him to name a time and a place... but nothing came of that," chuckles Hunter.

The issue was not dead yet. During a subsequent council

meeting, councillor Rob Splane questioned the idea of money being spent on the ads.

Students' Council financed the

"We decided to run the ad after a U of A student was arrested..."

Michael Hunter

ads from a fund established to lobby the government on educational issues.

"Splane didn't think the ads fell under the category of educational issues," explained Hunter. "I argue that without freedom one cannot get an education."

Splane moved that the fund be eliminated.

"I was afraid that a rift would develop in council over the money," explains Hunter. "So I decided to back down on the issue."

Splane's motion carried by a vote of 15 to 5.

Nevertheless Hunter feels that the ads did accomplish something. "The Students' Union should feel proud that they in fact lead the charge," he says.

SU Executive gets raise

by Emma Sadgrove

Students' Council has passed the first reading of a motion which would increase the salary of each member of the Students' Union Executive by 12.5%.

Rob Splane, last year's Vice-President Finance and Administration and a member of this year's council, proposed the salary increase from \$1050 to \$1200 per

month.

Salaries are usually reviewed at the end of each year. This did not happen last year because council did not reach quorum. According to this year's VP Finance, Tim Boston, Splane proposed the motion because he felt that this situation was unfair.

After checking with other students' union councils, Boston

found that the U of A executive is the lowest paid. At University of Calgary, for example, the president receives \$1500 per month and the vice-presidents receive \$1300, yet they provide "half our scope in services."

Boston also pointed out that the executive are not full time students and, therefore, do not receive the student tax benefits. He feels that the increase is fair "because the people in the position put so much time and effort into it."

SU President Dave Oginski said that "council perceived that the money was inadequate. We did not ask for the raises."

"I ran for the job at \$1050 per month and would stay at it for \$1050 per month," he said. The rest of the executive agree that they are not there for the money and enjoy the work.

Oginski suggests that the increase "is reasonable for what we do and what we are expected to do." Boston said, "I am putting my education on hold for a year." Craig Cooper feels that "we are underpaid in regard to other Canadian students' union executives, but I enjoy the job."

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