

## Help for future college students

Today we are in an era of rapid intellectual and technological growth. Skilled labor is in demand across Canada, yet are we getting the best qualified students from our universities and technical schools? Or are there many, who for various reasons are unable to obtain a higher education? One cannot deny that post high school education is principally for the rich man's child. This should not and must not be the case.

Today only 13% of students graduating from high school in Canada go on to university. By comparison 40% of students graduating from high school in the United States attend university. Obviously more of our high school graduates are qualified to attend university. Where are they? Why don't they attend?

It would seem apparent that lack of social, financial and intellectual stimulation prevent them from doing so. Canada can ill afford such losses if she is to continue to develop rapidly. It is an economic and social necessity that she develop her human potential to the greatest possible extent. Therefore, something must be done to rectify the present serious situation, and this obviously is to remove the barriers to post-secondary education. This is a free, democratic society where all should have equal opportunity. No one should be held back because of social or financial reasons if they are academically qualified and have the desire to attend a university. The answer to these problems is universal accessibility.

Universal accessibility is in essence a simple concept, although it possibly sounds quite complicated. It is the background principles of this philosophy of education which are more complicated and controversial. The concept of universal accessibility implies that there should be no barriers for an academically qualified student who desires to go on to university. Perhaps the strongest grounds for such a philosophy of education is the often-quoted statement that in our democratic system there should be equal opportunity for all.

Since, at the present time, great numbers of students are prevented from attending by social and financial barriers, the Canadian Union of Students passed a resolution in favour of universal accessibility. The Union, which represents 135,000 students in institutions of higher learning across Canada, felt that the problem was sufficiently serious to warrant immediate action and set as its immediate goal the elimination of tuition fees. This is one positive step toward the eventual goal of the elimination of barriers. With the elimination of all barriers there should exist a state of free education for all students involved in post-secondary education.

— Supplement Staff.

## Brunswickan

# HIGH SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT

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Credits also to The Muse and The Ryersonian.



(Reprint from the Muse, Memorial University of Newfoundland. These views are not yet typical of UNB but they are firmly believed and practiced by the French Canadian students of Quebec. —Ed.)

## What is

We may be at the beginning of a new era of student action in Canadian post-secondary educational institutions if our friends in Quebec continue to be successful in spreading the gospel of student syndicalism.

Student syndicalism is a French Canadian idea for turning student governments into dynamic organizations analogous to trade unions. University students form a union in, order to gain recognition for themselves as legitimate members of society who fulfill the useful role of learning.

The students' council in the traditional university is analogous to the guild. It has no views on education, no long range philosophy; it initiates no reform binding on succeeding councils and hence is unable to initiate many of the reforms that are most urgently needed.

The program of student syndicalism is aimed directly at this sterility of conventional student government. Syndicalists claim the first goal of the students' council is to serve students. The service must be based on the needs of the students as young intellectual workers and his needs as a citizen of the nation. Thus, the service must be primarily concerned with working and living conditions, and with the integration of the student into the community.

The services are usually grouped under three headings:

—Financial Services: scholarship discounts, cafeterias, vending machines, fee reduc-

tions, etc.

—Educational Services: debates, conferences, lectures, publications, newspapers, clubs, etc.

—Cultural Services: art centre theatre, etc.

Unlike the guild concept of student government, the student syndicate, or union, adds a new dimension to service. Trigger for launching student syndicalism at the University of Montreal was a student strike, not for better food in residence, or for cheaper textbooks, but on behalf of workmen at the university who

## student

were attempting to form a union, presumably to gain better working conditions.

Quite naturally, student syndicalists make certain demands of the educational system. The primary aim of the movement is to remove all university fees and enable all students to enjoy a decent standard of living without reference to their economic background.

Those active in the movement feel also that students should have a greater voice in university policy and to this end they propose that both faculty and students be represented on boards of governors. There have also been

related to education. For example, a university student body might decide to conduct a "war on poverty" in its area, both through practical programs and the exercise of pressure on the government.

At the same time, student syndicalists believe that students should use their collective power as a pressure group to help solve social problems unrelated to education. They feel that even though it is necessary for any interest group to fight for better conditions for itself, it is also necessary for that interest group to recognize itself as an interdependent part of the total community. In this way, student syndicalists propose to make the voice of the student much more effective in the nation.

The theoretical construction of student syndicalism begins with a theory of the student. In Canadian universities the present role of the student is often of pure consumer. He passively collects the masses of data dictated by his professors. Examinations do not evaluate the development of his creative potential but only his fidelity to the formal curriculum.

The student is not trained to transform the learning he consumes into something he can use in a socially respon-

## syndicalism?

proposals that students and junior faculty members be seated in the senates and on senate committees.

Student syndicalists believe that students are citizens by virtue of their role as learners, and like any other citizens they exercise their rights in the nation by virtue of their community participation. For this reason student syndicalists feel it necessary to work for the removal of social problems not directly

sible way. Therefore he becomes alienated from his own studies, he is socially irresponsible, and hence he is rendered a dependent of society. The student depends on aid — state aid, private aid and family aid — for his existence. It is considered preferable to aid the student rather than remunerate him for the work he does in his social role.

Essentially, student syndicalism  
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