

# Regina administration blackmails student council

*What happens when administrative paranoia*

*explodes on a western campus?*

*Persecution*

By George Russell

REGINA (CUP) — People who advocate censorship usually have something to hide.

The board of governors of the University of Saskatchewan is blackmailing the Regina campus student council into establishing editorial control over the student newspaper, the Carillon — for the greater good of the university, of course.

It's the most naked form of blackmail — the board has even issued press statements about it. Shut up the Carillon or we won't collect student unions fees. No student union fees, no student union.

According to the board's press release, the Carillon must be controlled because the paper "has pursued an editorial policy clearly aimed at undermining confidence in the senate, board of governors and the administration of the university."

The board has shown no willingness to discuss whether or not the editorial policy is justified. Instead, a cloud of supplementary reasons for censorship of the Carillon have been tossed at the public, none of them substantiated.

## INDIGNATION

Administration principal W.A. Riddell says the Carillon must be censored to halt a groundswell of popular indignation directed against the university.

Riddell also claims the Carillon must be censored because it's "obscene". He was quoted on the obscenity charge in the Regina Leader-Post, but he told this writer in a subsequent interview the charge was a "red herring".

Riddell also says censorship must be established because the community is not contributing enough money to a university fund drive.

No one is willing to discuss the possibility that the Carillon must be censored because it has been telling the truth.

Within a few miles of the Regina campus are the legislative buildings of the province of Saskatchewan — and the offices of Liberal Premier Ross Thatcher. For the Regina students, that means the government is one of their neighbors — not a very good one.

The history of the conflict between Ross Thatcher and the Regina campus spans a couple of years, culminating this October when 1,500 students marched to the legislature, where they confronted Thatcher and Pierre Elliott Trudeau over the inadequacy of the student loan system in Saskatchewan.

They got no adequate response — in fact Thatcher refused to discuss the matter publicly at all.

Student loans have been one of the Carillon's favorite topics during the last two years — especially since they broke a story last February, explaining how Allan Guy, currently minister of public works with the Thatcher government, had claimed and received a \$1,000 student loan while drawing a salary in excess of \$16,000. The story, understandably, drew national interest.

It also drew intense local interest from Riddell, who attempted to stop the story from breaking by first trying to contact Carillon editor Don Kossick and then trying to get to the printer. Neither attempt worked.

Within two weeks, the president of the Re-

gina student council received a letter from Riddell, asking why the students union should be allowed to continue using the name of the university, and, significantly, why the university should continue to provide space on campus for the Carillon.

The answer to all three questions was presumably contained in a suggestion by Riddell that a "policy board" be created to direct editorial policy for the paper — exactly what is being "suggested" by the board now.

But the student loan issue was not the only issue the Carillon has covered during the past two years, and again, much of the material for their stories has been supplied by the provincial government.

Even before uncovering the good fortune of the minister of public works, the Carillon — in fact, the entire campus — had been deeply embroiled in the question of university autonomy.

When the government announced last year the formation of a "general university council" superceding the usurping the powers of the Regina faculty council, the Carillon joined the faculty in claiming university autonomy was threatened externally.

Fears at Regina deepened when Thatcher announced later the same year the government would approve the university budget section by section, rather than all at once — a procedure allowing direct political intervention in university affairs.

Riddell announced that the government had changed its mind regarding the second decision, but failed to convince the Carillon that the autonomy of the university was in any less danger. He also failed to convince Alwyn Berland, dean of arts and sciences, who resigned

last September.

His resignation statement covered the front page of the Carillon, expressing fears that Regina's autonomy had been undermined by Thatcher's actions of the year before.

He also condemned the silence of the Regina administration in failing to respond to the attacks. The administration, Berland said, had also refused to defend him, when he attempted to point out the financial straits of the university and was attacked by a provincial minister for his pains.

## NOT SO DIPLOMATIC

The Carillon has not been so diplomatic. It has implied that the administration has acted as apologist for the government, rather than face a renewal of interest by the government in the separate sections of the university budget.

Since Berland's resignation, the Carillon has gone even more deeply into the question. In October, the paper examined the make-up of the University of Saskatchewan board and senate, which govern both Saskatchewan campuses, and pointed out the predominance of members residing in Saskatoon or holding degrees from the older campus. The implication was that the membership of both bodies had a great deal to do with the respective allocations to each campus. Nine members of the board are in the pay of the provincial government.

Riddell, meanwhile, launched an extensive campaign against the poor showing of faculty and students at Regina in contributing to the "good image" of the university in the community. Community reaction showed up, he said, in a poor response to a university capital fund drive.

The fund drive was necessary because the provincial government refused to allocate sufficient funds to the university for capital expansion.

On November 15, the next week, Riddell escalated the conflict by stating the Carillon might "adversely affect the university budget if it wasn't cleaned up." He referred to the board's threats against the student council of the previous year, and hinted darkly that "the business office has to have some direction" before the second semester at Regina would begin.

Sure enough, as the Carillon revealed in a special issue within the week, the budget was adversely affected — to the tune of \$2 million. The paper rather unnecessarily pointed out that the provincial government set the final budget figures.

In view of that fact, the Carillon probably found it unnecessary to point out that the "community" Riddell mentioned must consist of the small cluster of buildings forming the Saskatchewan legislative assembly.

The real question at Regina is a political one: the Carillon has displayed an unhealthy and positively unstudent-like interest in exposing the provincial government's unfairness to faculty and students alike, and the government will not allow it to continue.

In retrospect, the Carillon's gravest "irresponsibility" probably lay in reprinting the election platform of the Thatcher government — a year after the election.

They should have known that wasn't allowed.

