

Many students protest ban on dances

Student Government History #54

Last week the controversy arising from university president Carleton W. Stanley's March 1932 veto of a student glee show was described. On April 4 the Student's Council received a report on the resolution of the problem. "The Committee of Nine had met to consider the state of disagreement between the student body and President Stanley. The Committee had decided that the whole state of affairs was the result of a misunderstanding and that it would exercise the authority which rightly belonged to it in the future." The committee had three members from Senate, alumni and students, and to it had been given authority in athletics and other matters of concern to both students and the university.

Forgetting past problems over damage to rented pianos the 1930-31 Council had rented one which was soon destroyed in the temporary gym fire. A year after the fire Council decided to see if the university's insurance would cover the loss. Council decided to support by moral suasion the Committee of Nine's endorsement of dances being held on the campus. Instead of a farewell party the Council voted to give themselves two Convocation Ball tickets each.

Outgoing president Gerald Stewart suggested that future presidents should be paid, but there was severe opposition from the Council. As an alternative they agreed that the president would be an honorary member of societies and would have free admission to all functions. To quote the minutes, "Council voted unanimously against the payment of a salary to the incumbent of an honorary office

such as this." The officers of the Council were still chosen by the Council from among its members in a parliamentary style. The final Council meeting, called to make the Pharos appointments, rejected Art Meagher among others while it chose James Vooght for Business Manager. Meagher is now a Professor of Law and has held several important provincial government appointments. Among the 1932 graduates who went on to achieve distinction in their careers were Gordon Cowan, Richard Donahoe, G.I. Smith and Catherine Olding Hebb.

When Carleton Stanley was called upon to present a message to the freshmen of 1932 he had the sense to write only two paragraphs, instead of the lengthy address he made shortly after his inauguration. Also at the beginning of the year was an editorial, sparked by fee increases at the University of Manitoba, stressing that in such times the students should not have to bear the sudden financial burden of universities.

The first meeting of the 1932-33 Council took a step in the dance situation that no one else had dared - a ban on all off-campus dances. It was also decided that a draw would be held to allocate the dates among various societies. Senate was petitioned to give a half-holiday for interfaculty field sports and the university authorities were thanked for allowing the bookstore to move into the gymnasium building. In response to a DAAC (Dalhousie Amateur Athletic Club) request for publication of all constitutions the Council decided that student organizations should be required to

file their constitution with the Council. Eventually this became a requirement for recognition. It was decided that the Council would pay the \$554.45 Athletic Field debt to the university.

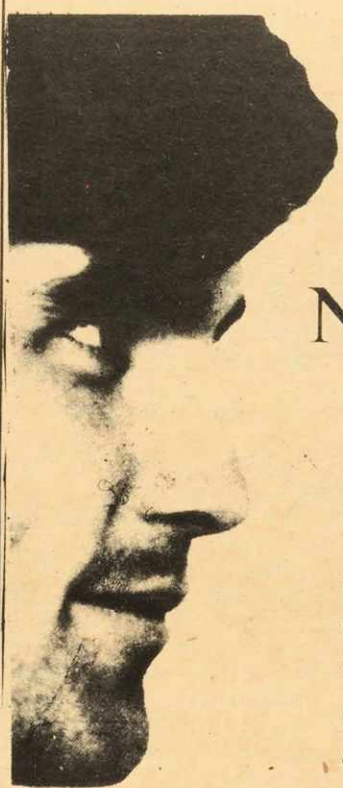
The ban on hotel dances was not very popular with the GAZETTE. It gave the story a banner headline - the first time that Students' Council ever got such attention. A sub-headline was "Many Students Protest", and the article said that the Editors had been besieged to point out that the ruling did not meet the approval of the student body. The newspaper did not like hotel dances, but in response to Carleton Stanley's glee club fiasco it had already opposed compulsion in the matter. The same issue covered Stanley's speech to students and faculty which praised the NFCUS undergraduate exchange, criticized colleges' lax role in international affairs, defended the recent fee increase at Dalhousie as resulting in a fee that was still low, and suggested that all dances be held in the gym.

Stanley's speech was given several hours before the Students' Council enforced on-campus dances, and the mover of the motion was the Freshman representative, but the newspaper did not draw any links. The Students' Council dance in the gym was a major success but the newspaper coverage stressed the unsuitable surroundings and uneven floor. The paper obviously felt that it had found a marvellous issue, and for a third consecutive week dances were front page news. The Law and Medicine Students' Societies decided to oppose the ban,

and an article predicted that Council would be unable to withstand the major societies' pressure.

The Students' Council tried to proceed with normal business, passing budgets and withholding year book salaries until the Pharos debts were collected. The major budget increase was for badminton. A committee was chosen to investigate cheaper methods of producing Pharos before the book got its graft. Gladys Jost was chosen as Vice-President to replace the vacancy created by Margaret Sadler's departure. Council made its first investment in a lecture since the turn of the century by approving one on the Los Angeles Olympics.

The results of the hotel dance ban could not be avoided, however, and so 24 days after the original decision Council rescinded the motion in the face of a delegation from Law, Medicine, Commerce and Engineering, the major sponsors of hotel dances. These societies claimed that the gym offered poor acoustics, poor catering and poor accommodation for guests. The rescission was unanimous, and Council then recommended that there be a Law-Medicine and a Commerce-Engineering dance to at least reduce the previous year's level of waste and expense. If this was done each pair was offered a date in the gym for a second dance. Ultimately this was only accepted by Commerce-Engineering since Law and Medicine could not agree. The newspaper gave its blessing to the compromise.



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