

CBC saved from increased government control

BY MARY VALLIS

VICTORIA (CUP) — Supporters of the CBC won a major victory in the House of Commons last week when proposed legislation was amended to prevent arbitrary government control over the public broadcaster's executive.

Bill C-44 — which recommends changes for more than 150 independent government agencies — was on the way to its second and final reading when a section allowing the government to appoint or fire the CBC's directors and president "at pleasure" was removed.

The move came about when Sarmite Bulte, a backbench Liberal MP, questioned Treasury Board president Marcel Masse about the section.

"What assurances can the minister give this House that the independence of the CBC will not be compromised?" asked Bulte.

Critics of the bill had said the section would open the CBC's doors to political interference from the House of Commons by allowing politicians to appoint or dismiss its president and board.

"The independent nature of the CBC must be upheld in law, in practice and in public perception — especially news broadcasts," said Bulte in a Nov. 16 letter to Masse.

Masse withdrew the section of the bill in question to "reduce the uncertainty" surrounding the broadcaster's independence.

The government will retain the right to make appointments to the CBC's board of directors, however.

Friends of Canadian Broadcasting, a national lobby group that fought the bill, called the turn of events a victory for Canadians.

"We're thrilled," said Tim Woods, who works with the group in Victoria.

"This is one instance where grassroots lobbying made a difference."

Woods said the section was withdrawn largely because of public reaction against it, including a letter signed by 21 prominent Canadian journalists and a widespread email campaign organized by the lobby group.

Even CBC president Perrin Beatty voiced his opposition to the proposed legislation.

Friends spokesman Ian Morrison said the campaign to stamp out Bill C-44 solidified support for the public broadcaster.

"There's a lot of support for the CBC," he said from Toronto.

Acadia profs want president's resignation

BY MARLA LANDERS

WOLFVILLE, N.S. (CUP) — Faculty members at Acadia University have voted overwhelmingly to demand the resignation of the school's president.

The university's faculty association voted to demand that Dr. Kelvin Ogilvie step down following a failed bid to offer a \$100,000 donation to the university in the event of his resignation.

A motion to that effect was rejected last Tuesday. Later that day, the association's members voted 89 percent in favour of calling for Ogilvie's resignation.

Beert Verstraete, president of the Acadia University Faculty Association, said most faculty members anticipate that "unless Mr. Ogilvie leaves his current position, a strike is inevitable".

But he added he doubts Ogilvie will bend to pressure from the faculty.

According to a news release

issued by the faculty association last Wednesday, the beleaguered president has demonstrated a heavy-handed approach during his term.

"Over the last few months it has become even clearer that his only 'leadership' tactics are to divide and rule the Acadia community... the sooner the board acts to replace Dr. Ogilvie, the better," the statement reads.

Last week's dramatic turn of events is not the first time Ogilvie's competence has been questioned. He has undergone scrutiny since 1997, when faculty and administration failed to reach a new collective-bargaining agreement.

Agreement negotiations continued until this April, when students requested a comprehensive review of Ogilvie's leadership. But the university's board of governors rejected the call and renewed his presidency for a six-year term.

Tensions have further mounted in recent months, due in

part to Ogilvie's unexplained firing of two alumni association executives.

The Alumni Association has voted to join the faculty in the fight to oust Ogilvie.

Earlier this month, Ogilvie received further attention when the university's 50-member senate voted to review his performance.

University officials downplayed the review.

"A review is done every year," said Bruce Cahoon, Acadia's director of public affairs. "It's just being done differently this time around."

Ogilvie also expressed a lack of concern over the process.

"An annual review is a required part of any position," he said.

"I think annual reviews are entirely proper. It was me who insisted in the first place that reviews of all Acadia employees, including myself, be carried out on a yearly basis."

Students will have offices

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before."

Furrow also says the students will have office space — just not in the new building.

"Ideally, everything would be under one roof. Not just Master's students, but all departments... but that would require a bigger building than we're going to have."

The department houses will be empty once the new building is open, and Furrow says a couple of the houses might be used as overflow office space for MA and PhD students. The university's original intention was to lease these

houses to students, putting the profits towards the cost of the new building.

Furrow also says graduate students could use the lockable study carrels in the Killam Library — some of which are currently being used as storage space.

But both Rostis and Leadbeater say the library carrels aren't good enough.

Leadbeater says study carrels are only available during library hours, unlike an office, which is always accessible. She also says the library spaces aren't all they're cracked up to be.

"It's like being in a cage."

Questionable marketing

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not to use the mailing lists after the mail-out.

In fact, Clegg never has the lists directly but gets its mailouts done by an outside company.

Representatives from Clegg offered contradictory explanations concerning their source of information on Dal students.

Susan Persaud, a Clegg telemarketer, initially said the company used school directories. But when told only people with valid student numbers can obtain the directories, she said she didn't know where they got them.

John Debono of Clegg says, as far as he knows, the company does not use student directories to get numbers for telemarketing.

He says the company's only sources for student numbers are from other credit card applications, magazine subscriptions, or contests run through Clegg.

But both Michelle Williams and Bridget Murphy say they have never had any kind of contact with Clegg in the past.

Neither has Jay-Lynn Wong. Wong says when a Clegg telemarketer called her about the cards, she asked where the information came from — and the representative told her they got it from the university.

"That's when I clued-in that something was wrong because I didn't think the university would give out that information," she said.

Clegg's Debono says the whole thing is a miscommunication.

He says the telemarketers,

usually high school, college or university students, don't always know enough about Clegg to be accurate when answering questions. And most importantly, he says Clegg isn't doing anything wrong.

"We're definitely not getting the information unscrupulously."

Debono's only suggestion is that maybe the students don't remember filling out credit card applications, magazine subscriptions or entering a contest.

"If we're calling people it's because they're our customers, they're on our customer database."

Shirley Anne Booth, customer services officer from the Better Business Bureau, agrees.

"[The students] must have filled out something somewhere along the line, and just don't remember or didn't realize what they were filling out," she said.

"The companies can't just pull that information out of the sky."

with files from Shelley Robinson

Women's issues promoted by appointment

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accompanied by a suggestion that May be considered as the first chairholder.

Dr. Sam Scully, vice-president academic and research says the program should be a good one.

"The chair speaks to a significant public policy issue and one which is central in a lot of Dalhousie programming. Therefore, the chair is a good fit and Elizabeth May is a good fit for first appointment."

Starting July 1, 1999, May — a mother, writer, activist and lawyer — will take residence at Dal to fulfil her term as chair. She

is taking a leave of absence from the Sierra Club.

The chair's program of activities is still in preliminary discussions with the faculty of health professions.

Scully says May will be "offering courses, series of lectures, and setting up research activities that will involve Dal students and faculty as well as outreach to the community."

Pamela Ray of the Maritime Centre for Excellence for Women's Health added that May will be "travelling to each of the Atlantic provinces for the purpose of delivering public lectures on women's health and the environment."



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