

WHAT

The Gateway

Special SU Budget Issue

NEXT ?

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Students' Council passes preliminary budget

ART GALLERY, STUDENT RADIO, PHOTO DIRECTORATE AXED

The subject of a voluntary students' union will probably be the subject of serious debate by concerned students in the next few days following Monday night's students' council meeting.

The meeting gave approval to a preliminary 1972-73 budget which calls for drastic cut-backs in several areas of student services. The \$1,207,842 break-even budget eliminates the SUB Art Gallery (effective April 1), reduces Photodirectorate to one full-time photographer and his assistant, and to all intents and purposes, axes Student Radio.

The budget was drawn up by both the in-coming and out-going students' union executives. SU president Don McKenzie claimed that the cut-backs in services were necessary because of the decrease in net revenues from students' union fees in the coming year due to lower projected enrollments. He said that revenue would be down about \$72,000 from last year and that with a eight to ten per cent increase in administrative costs the money for Students' Union commitments "obviously had to come from somewhere".

Council then debated the budget section by section but not before Ag rep Hans Lung had moved that the budget be tabled until councillors had a chance to study it in detail. They had been handed the 60-page document at 2:30 Monday afternoon. "There are a

lot of drastic cuts in this budget," Lung said, "and I don't think it is fair to councillors to expect them to discuss it knowledgeably without having had a chance to study it." The motion was soundly defeated.

The new budget is the result of a set of priorities suggested by the present council. Academic affairs was ranked first, forums second, SUB third, and the media fourth.

The Academic Affairs Division will receive \$18,300. Eight thousand dollars of this amount will go for the salary of one executive secretary to co-ordinate GFC reps. Another \$9,000 will be paid out under Students' Council for an executive secretary (secretariat) to assist the executive and to provide continuity from year to year for Council.

The budget cuts are in the areas of direct student services. Treasurer Frans Slatter said that the Art Gallery was losing money and that by closing it the Union would be able to save over \$15,000 a year. Slatter went on to suggest that paintings from the Gallery's permanent collection could be sold. The budget, in fact, provides for \$5,000 revenue from the sale of capital equipment in the Art Gallery.

Wally May, Art Gallery Committee chairman replied that the U of A Art Gallery is the best student-run art gallery in Canada and that approximately 60,000 persons per year make use of its

facilities. He said that an art gallery is one of the things that should not be expected to make money.

Science rep Richard Lancaster then suggested that the Music Listening Room could be shut down instead of the Art Gallery since fewer persons use it. Other councillors felt however, that the \$7,000 difference would have to be taken from somewhere else and they could not see where it could be found.

Under the new budget, Photodirectorate, which presently has about 30 members who learn about photography and take pictures for the Gateway, will be disbanded. Instead a full-time photographer will be hired and he, an assistant, the Gateway photo editor, and the staff of University Publications will be the only persons allowed access to the equipment (or what remains of it).

Photodirectorate director Ed Lilley told Council that the most they could ever hope to obtain from the sale of the present equipment would be \$2,000. At the same time he said it would be virtually impossible for one or two persons to provide the number of pictures that the Gateway would require. He added that if at a future date Students' Council decides to reinstate Photodirectorate the cost of replacing the equipment would be prohibitive.

CKSR Radio, which is now operating on twenty-year old equipment held together with

wire, was given \$2,240. This amount is \$4,000 less than this year's budget which was frozen in February because the station had spent all its money. The new budget does not include a salary for the director although the Students' Union advertized the position and later hired Dick McLeish as director for next year. At Monday night's council meeting though the executive said that this verbal agreement was not binding on their part. CKSR was originally asked to prepare two budgets—one for FM radio, and one for cable radio if the first was not accepted. The people involved had no say in the final budget that was passed; they were informed of its contents Monday morning.

Two years ago a referendum was held on whether or not to raise students' union fees \$3 for SUB expansion. The referendum passed and at that time the radio station was assured that with the planned SUB expansion it could begin to plan for an FM licence.

because the money for the large capital outlay would be available at that time. SUB expansion has been delayed for the present though and the money for it went into reserves which cannot be touched except for that purpose. It is part of this money that Radio feels it is entitled to for the expansion of their station to an FM one.

McLeish says that there is simply no way the station could operate on the \$2,240 budget; there is for example a total of \$750 allocated for both albums and recording tapes. McLeish says that if the budget is not changed then it will effectively shut down the radio station.

In the final vote only three councillors out of 17 voted against the budget proposals. Perhaps the most vocal was Wendy Yurchuk who said, "I thought the basis of the union was to provide services for students. Tonight we've effectively gotten rid of most student services."

Students may overrule Council GENERAL STUDENTS' UNION MEETING SOUGHT

In a move to counter the threatened loss of the Art Gallery, CKSR Radio, and the Photo Directorate, several dozen students have organized a petition to call a general meeting of the student body and force student council to reconsider their budget priorities.

To call a general meeting, the petition must bear more than one thousand signatures and ID numbers of students. In addition, eighteen hundred students must attend the meeting when it is called. The petition is worded to force the general meeting before the end of March and before the newly elected council takes office on April first.

Don Ryan, petition organizer, feels that the necessary signatures will be forthcoming once the student body realizes what the present executive have deprived them of. He says there will be little trouble convincing students of the necessity of the Art Gallery and radio station because far more than one thousand students utilize these areas as a matter of course.

Don McKenzie, student union president, has said that the money needed to operate the Art Gallery, radio and photo directorate does not exist under the present system of priorities that council has decided upon. He says that the money is not available to keep the three areas in question operating. They might continue, he said, if there were "a reallocation of programs, we could cut the theatre back, cut the Gateway, fire student union personnel in

here.....we may have to."

These places are for students, somewhere for them to relate. We feel that the students' union's priorities are wrong in shutting down these services and we are going to call the meeting to force council to reconsider their ideas. They say they don't have the money but we can show them where to get it at the meeting, and one thing they can do to increase the available money is to fire the secretariat; that bureaucracy we don't need."

"An idea several students have had in the last few years" according to Maury Eman, a CKSR staff member, "that will probably be brought up at the meeting will be the idea of a voluntary participation in the student union. It would be left up to each individual as to whether or not he wants to pay the union fees. This would force council to provide only those services which would directly benefit the student and get rid of the empire building we have around at the moment."

At the moment there are several dozen people working on the petition but the organizer, Don Ryan, feels they need all the support they can get and would welcome anyone willing to lend their time to the struggle. "But the important thing is," says a CKSR member, "signatures and people coming out to the general meeting. We need them. If they are not forthcoming, the students are going to lose some really great and worthwhile things."

Council withdraws from Alberta Association of Students

Students' Council, Monday, decided to withhold membership fees from the Alberta Association of Students. Last year, the Students' Union spent approximately \$2500 for membership in the organization.

AAS is an organization established and maintained by the Alberta post-secondary institutions' Students' Unions to do research and lobby in the interests of Alberta students. The U of A is the largest institution in the province and, therefore, the financial mainstay of AAS.

AAS president, Tim Christian, said that this university's withdrawal would "definitely have a serious effect on AAS's ability to represent students."

Christian, who was U of A Students' Union President in 1970 - 71, says AAS cut its operating budgets to reduce fees and changed its program substantially "in order to meet criticism that came primarily from the U of A."

"At our conference last fall, the other schools accepted in good faith the recommendations of the U of A in reducing our

budget and re-orienting our program and their withdrawal may be seen as an act of bad faith," he says.

"Further, according to the AAS by-laws, an institution can only withdraw after a referendum has been taken. It is only fair that students themselves be given the chance to maintain or withdraw from membership in an organization which claims to represent them such as this."

AAS this year has performed a primarily research function. Three projects which are to report to the spring conference at the end of this month are one investigating student assistance, another investigating the question of tenure, and another is an extensive survey of graduate employment trends.

Two projects whose reports were brought down at the conference last fall are: a manual on the preparation of Course Guides which has been distributed across Canada, and a study of the socio-economic backgrounds of post-secondary students in the province which is being used in the student

assistance project.

Christian feels that these projects are of use to the students because they provide valuable information about student problems which is unavailable elsewhere and that U of A students get their money's worth from AAS.

He also feels that the necessary money for AAS, CKSR, and photo directorate can easily be found.

"SUB expansion is obviously no longer a viable project and yet the S U has been holding, in reserve, money for this project. The Students' Union should seek a mandate from the students to release this money for the operational budget — especially for an FM license for CKSR which was promised them under SUB expansion."

There is approximately \$100,000 in the SUB expansion reserve. This money has accumulated in the reserve fund since two years ago when students, in a referendum, voted to increase S U fees by three dollars for this project. Another referendum may be necessary to free the money.