

## Real Students

# It means Confront-Confront

"What this Union needs is real Students"

The above slogan was once the basis for the platform of a candidate for the presidency of the Canadian Union of Students.

He lost, but the statement remained relevant.

In their development from a service-oriented organization to a socially-oriented union, the delegates and leadership of CUS have attempted to analyse and rectify the problems which students face. Some of these deal directly with education, some do not.

When people deal with problems and obtain little success, they get impatient. CUS delegates and workers are no exception to this. Consequently by 1968, CUS policy reflected long-range solutions which were quite radical. It espoused disenchantment with normal channels for change, and solidarity with people's struggles throughout the world. But the local membership of CUS i. e. you, the students at Dalhousie often saw little relevance in this sort of policy. I suggest that this is precisely because the majority of students have not been collectively involved in attempting to solve the problems of Canada and of Canadian students.

CUS Congress 1969 responded to this dilemma by concentrating on issues and problems related more directly to the day-to-day life of students; in particular, unemployment, housing, course content, and accessibility to education.

One of the major commissions at the Congress was that on Education. We tried to arrive at a common understanding of course content and structure. The basic theme was that education presently serves the function of justifying our society and teaching people how to adapt to it.

Not only does education serve to perpetuate the status quo, but the concepts and methods are imported largely from the United States. Even the content is basically American. Canadian examples may be thrown in as an afterthought, eg. Samuelson's text on economics, but the Ameri-

can domination of our economy is undoubtedly reflected in our educational institutions. Where is the story of the Canadian Indian and his subjugation? Why did a "responsible" government allow our resources to be raped by American capital? Why does sociology use an equilibrium model of a society which is infested with basic inequalities?

In order to criticize our society and the tenets which underlie it; more importantly to act towards changing it, students must learn to challenge the ideology of the university and organize to orient it toward relevant questions.

This means study - study the oversights of literature analysis, study the implications of engineering and medicine in terms of whom that knowledge serves, study the value positions of explanations in social science which claim to be impartial.

It means confront - confront mystical explanations, confront irrelevance, confront the use (or lack of it) to which knowledge is put.

It means organize - organize in a course, organize in a Department, organize in the University.

It means demand - demand student control over curriculum, demand that experts in a field act responsibly with their skills, demand that courses become relevant to the problems which we as citizens should be solving.

Much of this strategy is aimed toward the building of a Critical University. As well as transferring knowledge and expertise, an education should develop the capacity of students to fundamentally question the nature of their society and the power relations which maintain it.

This involves more than the free flow of ideas. It means testing those ideas in practice.

At Dalhousie - does economics teach us about structural under-development; does Sociology teach us about cultural deprivation and the class system; does engineering explain why new buildings or machines are constructed in capitalist society; does biology explain why pollution remains a crucial question; does history deal with people's struggles which are so obscured in our annals? If not, why not? If so, what then?

As the raison d'être of educational institutions, students must pose these questions. No-one else will. As the onus for this work must lie at the local level, what this union needs is real students!

## CUS and Housing

In a letter to delegates of the Canadian Union of Students Congress, Dalhousie's housing situation was named one of the worst two in the country. At registration, six hundred Dal students - that's 14% of the full-time enrollment - were without places to live. There is a waiting list of 100 at Shirreff Hall alone.

In view of the upcoming referendum on C.U.S. membership, it should prove valuable to consider what C.U.S. does with such vital issues.

First - C.U.S. does consider the housing problem to be of key concern to students, and therefore to its own programme. Housing was one of the areas discussed at the recent CUS Congress.

Publications providing background information are available to all students from CUS - directly, or through CUS outlets. Besides general information, some papers deal with specific aspects - such as the establishment and operation of student co-op housing. A new and up-dated set of information is being prepared currently and will be available shortly.

The policy evolved at the CUS Congress was that student housing problems could not be isolated from the housing problem in general and that "the crisis must be attacked from an overview." Mere stopgap measures could not hope to alleviate the problem. Several policies recommended by the Congress included that municipal zoning regulations should allow for maximum use of existing accommodation, that tenants associations must be encouraged and supported, and that research must be undertaken.

With regard specifically to student housing, CUS policy is that residence decisions must be made by the residents themselves, that students share in planning of all new residences, and that housing increases must keep pace with enrollment increases.

Specific action that the CUS Secretariat was directed to take include further research and data collection, and the production of a housing Handbook and housing Bulletin to keep students aware of all pertinent news and information. Information on government regulations, housing experiments, resources will be included.

A few points are illustrated by the foregoing outline:

1) That CUS sees student problems in the context of the whole society; there is the realization that the university - including students - does not exist in a vacuum.

2) One of CUS' main functions is as a resource centre. Plenty of material - publications, advisory personnel, field-workers, speakers - are available to Dal students to help with our problems. Or do you think we have none?

3) CUS doesn't DO things for students. It can provide us with information, ideas, experience, and inspiration. But it cannot - and should not - fight our battles for us. Our problems aren't in Ottawa - they're here - on Dalhousie campus, in Halifax, and in Nova Scotia. It's up to the local union - and that means the local students - to struggle to cure what ails us. CUS can help and support us, but it can't do it for us.

Jeanie Macdonald

# The Chaplains

On the third floor of the SUB there is a door which some would call relevant to campus life while others would ask "what for?" The sign on the door says CHAPLAIN OFFICE.

The chaplains live in a world of student trauma and puzzlement that rarely makes the front page of this or any other university newspaper. As a consequence many students who do not have problems(?) or at least never sought help from the Chaplains often wonder what purpose they serve on campus.

The majority of students never see the interior of the Chaplains Office. The Roman Catholic Chaplain, Rev. Gordon MacLean, says that he sees about 400 out of 1600 Roman Catholic students on campus during the school year. However, he feels that this is all that one could expect to reach and his office does seem to be busy most of the time, there being two people waiting to see him while I was interviewing him.

## Sex, God, and Adjustment

Sexual problems, conflicts about their beliefs in God, and adjustment to an essentially insecure environment are some of the dilemmas which students bring to the Chaplain Office to seek advice.

"A typical case," said Rev. Don Trivett, Anglican Chaplain, "is a freshman who, having essentially decided to marry a girl back home, comes to University and finds a completely new world with new freedoms, ideas, and people. When he forms new relationships he becomes confused about the old ones and sometimes needs someone to help him clarify the situation. If he comes to the office and asks for a chaplain, whoever is in the office at the time will talk to him, unless he specifically asks for a Catholic or Protestant Chaplain."

Catholic students often visit their priest-on-campus, Rev. MacLean, with problems in regards to the policy and power structure within the Mother Church. Rev. MacLean sees the Catholic Church as going through a major struggle like the reformation and many students are confused about this.

## Birth Control, Mixed Marriages

Despite the controversy aroused by the Papal policy statement on birth control, Catholic students on this campus have rarely discussed this issue with Rev. MacLean. The resident priest (an MA student in Philosophy) assumes that (1) either they do not want to discuss it with him because they are practicing it or (2) they act according to their own conscience and haven't gotten hung up on it or (3) they are not practicing it.

When asked what his advice would be to couples considering birth control, either married or unmarried, he said it was his view that the decision is one that has to be made by each individual according to his or her own conscience.

One vital problem that keeps Rev. MacLean hopping is mixed marriages. Over this past summer he performed 27 marriages and 19 of them were mixed.

MacLean feels that success or failure of a mixed marriage depends on the mutual respect of each partner for the other partner's religion. Approaching it from this viewpoint he often finds himself in the paradoxical position of having to defend the Protestant stand to the Catholic partner. He says that this rather bewilders the Catholic partner but he feels that it is absolutely vital that there is a mutual respect.

## Beyond Counselling...

Any realistic picture of the activities of the Chaplains on campus would not be complete if it included only their guidance role. They are constantly in contact with the Student Counselling service and Student Health and any cases which involve severe psychological stress or impairment of the learning process may be referred to one or the other of these services. But aside from the guidance role the chaplains also are active in panel discussions such as the one organized by the Medical Students last year on the morality of organ transplants and the controversy about when death actually occurs. Rev. Trivett, Anglican Chaplain, served on that panel along with psychiatrists and other doctors, and took part in discussions with the Med Students. This year he is working with the final year nursing students in human relations discussions to prepare them for work with people when they graduate.

Rev. Trivett also represents the Chaplains on the Student Services Planning Committee, an organization concerned about the non-academic part of student life which has representatives from Student Health, Student Counselling, the Awards Office, Manpower, the Athletic Department, Students' Council, and Kings.

Rev. D. S. McDougall, the United Church Chaplain, is also involved in different discussion groups besides his regular counselling duties.

A pet project of Rev. MacLean is the Folk Mass he conducts on the third floor of the SUB every Sunday. These gatherings usually characterized by live wire comment and discussion amongst the students and between he and the students. He says he rarely speaks or "preaches" for more than five minutes and then he throws the meeting open for discussion.

## Radical Clergy??

The three Chaplains, Trivett, McDougall, and MacLean are known for their liberal views and all three expressed the opinion that the average clergyman outside the University would not be able to establish a rapport with students if they tried to communicate with the students the way they do with their congregations. They feel that students are more free to question things and are more honest in their evaluations.

## Milton's Own Bag

Dear Milton,

Cheerleaders!! God damn it: They know nothing about the game and yet they prattle on. Rah Rah Sis Boom Bah. Why in God's name do girls in University prostitute themselves in freezing weather and pouring rain? What is the answer, Milton?

Signed, a disturbed Harry Chest

Dear Hare Bare,

You're right; you're right; you are right Harry Chest and it is about time someone got up and shouted "Screw Cheerleaders!" On this green earth I can think of nothing more useless than a beautiful, long legged, shapely young lovely, especially when you can watch those neat guys all day and not be bothered by icky girls.

While their social tweeny masquerade goes on Harry, it is my belief that a cheerleader already has one foot in the bawdy house door and I'm sure you feel the same way. As this is a problem close to my true self, perhaps we should meet somewhere and talk about it after the next game. Say, Harry, why not in the locker room?

Yours forever, Milton

Dear Milton,

In the past John Graham represented to me a nice cigar chomping white knight. How my friends are saying that Mr. Graham is everything from a little Caesar to the past cha cha champion of the Arts Annex, and one girl I know said he was the closest thing to a Blue Meanie she had ever encountered. Clear my brain please Milton?

Signed, Dusty Nales

Dear Dusty,

It's funny, you know, but I always passed Mr. Graham off as just another pretty face, but now in digging for an answer to your queries, I came up with some knowledge that might disperse your fog-webs.

In an article in Argosy, I discovered that one John Graham purchased from a Henry Hicks one building known as the SUB and paid for his acquisition a handful of trinkets and beads. With the building also came the right to marry and divorce all those within its confines and also the power to regulate the conception of children by the faculty of an aforesaid Dalhousie College. This right I later learned was revoked in 1968 by Dave Stevens of the Building Bungling Board so we can forget about that one. In fact, Dusty, if I were you, I would just forget about John Graham. If you forget about him he will no doubt forget about you too.

Signed, Milton the Mouth

P.S. A promise to my six readers: if you write to me, I'll write to you.