

Libraries deny responsibility for material on shelves

MONTREAL (CUP) - Concordia University Director of Libraries James Kanasy hopes to change a law that forced him to remove a book from library shelves last year, and he has gathered the support of the Canadian Library Association behind him.

The book was George Malko's "Scientology: The New Religion" and it was a book critical of the Church of Scientology.

Under Canadian libel law, the publisher of a book is anyone who makes the book available to the public, as a library does.

The Church sued the Hamilton Public Library and Etobicoke Public Library to prevent them from circulating the book. The Church also threatened other libraries with suit if the book was not taken off the shelves while the case was pending.

Concordia and St. Mary's were two universities in Canada that

said they had removed the book.

The Scientologists have since dropped their suit against the two libraries, an Malko's book is back on the Sir George shelves.

But the situation has raised some questions about the law in the minds of librarians.

If a library can be sued for libel, Kanasy pointed out, a threat is posed to intellectual freedom since the library should be able to make controversial material available to scholars and social historians

without worry of suit until the material is actually judged libelous.

"What we want to change... is that libraries would not be considered as having published a book for having it on the shelves and circulating it," Kanasy explained.

At its annual meeting in June, the CLA passed a resolution sponsored by Kanasy which mandated the CLA to convene a meeting of various professional

academic associations to decide what course of action should be taken in order change the law.

Kanasy expects the meeting to be held at the November conference of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

There are two possible courses of action. The first is to submit a brief to the Law Reform

Commission of Canada and to each of the provinces. The other is to select and contest an appropriate court case.

"I think both should be done... I think we should proceed with the first and then go with the second," Kanasy stated.

Meanwhile, in collaboration with the CLA, the Intellectual Freedom Committee is drawing up a manual of what should be done if a similar situation occurs.

Housing will affect college attendance

TORONTO (CUP) - The ability to afford suitable accommodation often determines whether or not a student will attend college or university, says the Ontario Federation of Students.

OFS spokesperson Dale Martin, in a recent issue of the Ontario Student said that although the cost of attending a post-secondary institution continues to be the prime deterrent to universal accessibility to higher education, board and lodging comprise the largest expenditure faced by students.

And this expenditure, usually about 60 percent, is often the determinant for attendance.

"An immediate concern is the absurdly low board and lodging allowance under the Ontario Assistance Program", he said.

With vacancy rates of one percent or less in most Ontario

centres; rents skyrocketing at anywhere from 15 to 50 percent per year; and food cost increasing at over 20 percent per year, Martin says the need for an immediate increase in the "living allowance" and the tying of this directly to the cost of living "becomes obvious".

"As this school year progresses, it appears certain that more and more students will be forced to decide between a place to sleep and their stomachs."

Martin believes the way to solve the problem will be reached through a major effort by all concerned to agitate for programs that will guarantee reasonable rents for adequate living space. But he maintains that students should guard against isolating themselves from the general movement for adequate housing at a reasonable cost.

"Ways must be found to join with

existing groups to articulate the particular needs of student tenants, while at the same time adding the student voice to those already demanding improved housing.

By associating student tenant unions to existing community groups, says Martin, the goals of raising student housing issues and establishing areas of common concern can be much more effectively pursued.

"In no way must students find themselves in a position of competition with the rest of the community for limited living space," he says.

According to Martin such a situation would seriously jeopardize the chances for any positive change by directing the attack away from the real culprit, the provincial government.

Enrichment through death banned

MOZAMBIQUE (CUP) - By decree published August 20 the Mozambique government has declared that the use of death as a means of enrichment is immoral. As death can no longer be profitable the government has banned private funeral parlors and

the private manufacture of coffins and funeral urns.

A department of Funerals will soon be set up in the ministry of health and anyone continuing private practice will be liable to six months in jail.

Man eligible to spend 1000 years in jail

AKRON, OHIO (ENS-CUP) - A 26-year-old confessed dope dealer in Akron, Ohio was sentenced to 570 to 1100 years imprisonment last week.

Joseph Curre pleaded guilty to 34 counts of conspiracy to sell narcotics. Judge James Barbuto issued the maximum sentence on each count.

But despite the long prison term, Curre will become eligible for parole in ten years.

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