

Prez worried about future of universities

by Richard Watts

Students' Union President, Robert Greenhill, says he is very worried about the future of post-secondary education in Canada.

Greenhill attended the Councils of Ministers of Education Conference (CMEC) in Ottawa last month and the Canadian Federation of Students Conference this month.

The CMEC was a conference attended by the Provincial Ministers of education who got together to talk about what the future direction education in Canada should take.

Greenhill describes the CMEC as a "frightening exercise in manipulation" that left him convinced of the "need for a strong unified opposition from students."

"Unfortunately," says Greenhill, "that opposition is not going to come from CFS."

Greenhill describes the CMEC as "very much of a set-up" in which delegates "were well manipulated, through the agenda and the choice of speakers."

Greenhill complained "the student representatives were under utilized" and not allowed to make their viewpoints known.

"The only student representative who gave a paper was the executive assistant to BC Premier Bennett," he said.

"At one point it was even suggested that students should not have representation on the Board of Governors since it represented a conflict of interest for students to vote on tuition since they are the ones who pay it," he said.

After the CMEC was over Greenhill says he looked to the Canadian Federation of Students to provide the voice through which students could make their viewpoints known and protect themselves and the future of post-secondary institutions.

"But they (CFS) weren't even organized well enough to organize their own conference," complained Greenhill.

Greenhill complained that CFS is not ready to provide any unified opposition to what he terms "a changing attitude of government" towards post-secondary education.

Greenhill illustrated this changing attitude by reading from a copy of a dinner address given by a former Rector at the University of Montreal.

Greenhill read: "It will be necessary to be firm and not to

hesitate to close university sections, departments, institutes or research centres which do not correspond any more to real needs or whose quality is mediocre."

"The worst part of this speech is that being a dinner address we weren't even allowed to question it," says Greenhill.

Greenhill complained further, "It was really frightening when they talked about financing of post-secondary institutions in that they took cutbacks for granted and spent more time discussing how they could be absorbed rather than whether the cutbacks are justified."

On reaching the CFS conference Greenhill was disappointed over the direction (or lack of it).

"Student organizations are going to have to bury their differences and fight things like post-secondary funding cutbacks," says Greenhill.

Greenhill said he and the delegates from Alberta disagreed with the decision by the CFS to lobby the federal government to do something about student unemployment.

"Unemployment is a motherhood issue and it falls right into the hands of the National Training Act which is an attempt to turn universities into glorified tech schools offering apprenticeship programs," says Greenhill.

Greenhill said usually student organizations have no trouble coming together to fight things like funding cutbacks but this time such unity was non-existent.

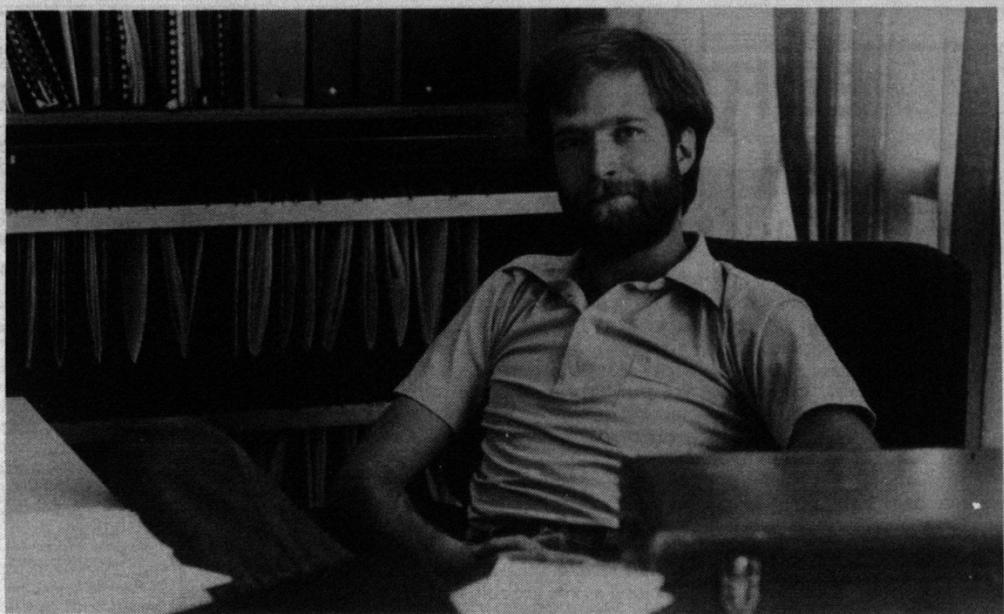
While Greenhill may have been disappointed by the lack of organization of CFS he had praise for the Federation of Alberta Students and the other delegates from Alberta.

"Alberta was the best organized caucus there, FAS did a good job of coordinating that caucus," said Greenhill.

Greenhill continued, "I realized then at the provincial level we are developing a very effective lobbying force but at the national level there is a considerable void."

Greenhill added, "I don't think CFS should be totally discounted, it is a young organization, it's just that it didn't appear very effective compared with the insidiously effective organization at the CMEC."

"They (The governments) can deal with a lot of opposition as long as that opposition is disorganized," he concluded.



SU President Robert Greenhill, threats to university from government will not be met by Canadian Federation of Students.

Photo by Ray Griguere

Students may get new English course

by Brent Jang

Students in Business, Engineering, Nursing, Pharmacy and Agriculture and Forestry may soon be reading Allan Fotheringham instead of Shakespeare.

A proposed English composition course, now being looked at by the English department's Curriculum Committee, includes the study of contemporary writers.

"The English course won't be remedial. It's to provide for students in different faculties," says Chairman D. A. Jackel of the English department.

"We're quite aware of the need to communicate with other faculties. We need to work together in this," says Association Dean of Arts, R. G. Moyles.

Dean Moyles says the proposed course, "a prototype of English 214," may even "encourage more people to come into the liberal arts."

"Some of our best students come from other faculties. That's not to say that taking a course in Shakespeare is

useless. Yes, there are some students interested in Milton, Hardy, and Dickens. At the same time, there are many other writers that are just as effective," says Association Dean Moyles.

Chairman Jackel agrees: "Do you have to look at Shakespeare or can you look at a variety of writers?"

According to Lois Ayling, BACUS VP Academic, students should at least have a choice: "If a person's not interested (in an English class), he's not going to do as well."

"I've got a lot of positive feedback. I think most students are in favour of it (an English Composition course)," says Ayling of comments she's received from BACUS (Business Administration Commerce Undergraduate Society).

"A well-developed (English) class would certainly contribute much to literacy," says Roger Smith, Dean of Business.

"Writing an essay on an 18th century novel helps your composition skills, but it wouldn't hurt to be able to

write a good business report either," says Dean Smith.

Chairman Jackel stresses that the proposed course is not designed "to take care of deficiencies from high school. By introducing students to different kinds of writing, they can prepare reports in a variety of ways."

"Obviously we can't teach students in Pharmacy how to write their reports, or teach Business students how to write theirs. We don't have the technical skills. However, the new course can be, if properly designed and taught, a good English course," says Jackel.

"You can't have reading divorced from writing. Nor can you have writing divorced from reading," Jackel says.

The proposed course will probably come before the English department for consideration and approval at the end of this term.

English professor Maurice Legris heads the Curriculum Committee that is now studying the course's content.

Gays threatened with sex change (sort of)

MONTREAL (CUP)—A special gay issue of Concordia University's student newspaper has met with threats of violence from some readers.

Three letters signed by "the committee to rid fags from the universe" were left in the *Link* office Nov. 22. After calling three gay issue contributors abusive names, the letter writers threatened violence if the *Link* publishes any further articles on the topic.

According to *Link* staffers, about 5,000 copies of the gay issue were destroyed the previous weekend. No one has claimed responsibility for either act and the police are currently investigating the situation.

Jon Wolfe, co-ordinator of Concordia's Lesbian and Gay Friends, was one of the contributors threatened with castration. Wolfe said his initial reaction to the letters was fear.

"(But) since I was willing to go out on a limb and write what I felt, I think it was a courageous thing to do," he said. "I will stand by that. I'm willing to be responsible for my actions."

Editor Don Pittis, who was also threatened, said: "The letters threaten our concept of freedom of the press. That anyone thinks they can change what we say by writing these letters is scary. We don't

revolve our whole opinion around a letter we receive from a crank."

Pittis added that this incident would not discourage the *Link* from speaking out on issues.

Mike Spino, engineering and computer science association president, said engineering students destroyed some of the gay issues. Spino said he saw many copies of the *Link* ripped up and strewn on the floor of the engineering lounge the day the issue came out.

"I know of certain people who are engineers who were deeply offended" by the issue, he said.

Many of those who spoke with Spino said they thought the issue expressed the opinion that "everyone is gay, or that everyone should be gay, or that everyone has gay tendencies."

Pittis agreed that the issue came from "very much of a gay point of view." But he added, "that was part of the purpose: to present the concerns and opinions of that community which is seldom seen. There's a gay presence at Concordia that has been ignored."

He denied, however, that the issue suggests everyone is homosexual. "It may have said there are more homosexual tendencies around than are publicly seen just because of the nature of public or social reaction to

homosexuality."

Spino said students angered by the issue wanted to send pornographic homosexual material to the editors, but felt this wasn't drastic enough.

"I feel some of the engineers have done something that they should not have done," said Spino. "There are alternative routes of a diplomatic nature that probably could have made this campaign more effective. The more immediate reaction is much more fun to them, I guess."

Wolfe said this is the first time he has seen a violent reaction to homosexuals at Concordia, although he knows of minor incidences of harassment. He said Lesbian and Gay Friends "are not at all afraid to lay criminal charges against anyone who does any violent act towards us. We're not going to disappear because somebody beat us up."

President of Concordia's student association Arn Kvam said the violent reaction to the gay issue is not restricted to the engineering faculty. "There's an incredibly conservative and reactionary community out there. For anyone who is not accustomed to the discussion of homosexuality, there were some very strong articles in that issue."

The human rights seminar to be held today in Room 158 SUB will begin at 2:00, not 3:00 as reported in Thursday's issue. *The Gateway* apologizes for any inconvenience this error may have caused.

GAB

by SKEET and Nielsen



ATTEMPTED HUMOR

by Abner Malle



DIARY OF A HOUSEWIFE-STUDENT

It is really hard for me! Really, it is! I get up early in the morning, put dinner in the oven then feed the kids breakfast before catching the bus to university. Then, after class, I have shopping to do, the house to keep, dinner to cook and, of course, my bridge club. With all that, I find it hard to get much studying done so I ask my prof to explain it in class. Well, today I asked him to give me the gist of the last two chapters and he screamed at me and told me to shut up. I couldn't help but start to cry. Just like that he became all nice and told me he would talk to me after class.

When we were alone, he asked me if I was having any serious problems. I told him all about the washing machine repair bill and Harry's dental work and the fact that my valium prescription had just ran out. Well, you wouldn't believe how nice he was! He patted my head and gave me one of his! I had to break the pill in half, though, because his are twice as strong as mine! (Be sure to tune in next week for "The Golden Bears on Gilligan's Island".)