

cross-canada briefs

York takes on Tory cuts carnival-style

BY SARAH SCHMIDT

TORONTO (CUP) — Student leaders at York University transformed the campus into a circus to poke fun at the education policy of the Tory government and build momentum for an upcoming general strike.

In addition to speeches from leaders of the student movement and labour organizers, the day included the auctioning off of the university to the private sector, a graveyard for courses, a dunking tank where students could soak Mike Harris, a student workfare program, and a display of the university president's closet filled with students' money.

"We're told to be realistic because the numbers don't lie. But while most of us are being downsized, 52 senior officers of corporations made in excess of \$2 million and 6,600 profitable corporations paid not a penny in taxes last year," said David McNally of the York University Faculty Association.

Carnival co-coordinator Lori Galway says that this unique, clown-style political action is a lead up to two days of action taking place next month, which includes a citywide general strike on Oct 25.

Red Cross skips out on media circus at McGill

BY M.J. MILLOY

MONTREAL (CUP) — Faced with the prospect of a noisy media circus led by a prominent student politician, the Canadian Red Cross abruptly folded up its tents and cancelled the remainder of its annual blood drive at McGill University.

Due to "homosexual students who disagree with our questionnaire and wanted to donate blood" the Red Cross cut short the blood drive to protect the safety of the blood supply, according to a statement they released on Thursday.

"Our number one priority is the safety of blood," claimed Andre Mainyard, press representative for the Red Cross in Quebec.

"As an openly gay man who does not practice high-risk activities, [the Red Cross] reasons for excluding me are out of line," said Chris Carter.

Before Carter could follow through with his media event at the blood drive clinic, the Red Cross closed the doors. The Red Cross' actions have re-ignited a long simmering debate on campus about the blood drive and raised fears that the controversy is serving as a pretext for opponents who cannot accept Carter's sexuality.

"Chris Carter cancelled the blood drive and put lives of patients...at risk," shouted one protestor at a demonstration held Thursday afternoon.

Typo screws up student's loan

BY MICHAEL CONNORS

ST. JOHN'S, Nfld. (CUP) — A summer-long ordeal based on one clerical error has left a Memorial University student frustrated with Student Aid.

Steven Bailey, a first-year student, applied for his first student loan last January.

As far as he knew there were no problems until June 17, when he received a letter from Memorial University saying he still owed them \$1,450 in tuition fees, the exact amount of his loan.

The problems were the result of an incorrect date on Bailey's loan form. According to Bailey, someone at Student Aid filled in the year 1998 instead of 1996.

As a result, he never received the Canada Student Loan he needed to cover tuition for the winter.

"I got another letter July 6, and at that point I was phoning Student Aid, and I didn't get in contact with (Student Aid operations manager) Karen Tucker until mid-July," said Bailey. "She said that it had been cleared up."

But Bailey received another letter from the university saying he still owed tuition fees for January, and under university policy, students can't register for courses until all outstanding fees have been paid.

Bailey was allowed to register, but the matter of the misdated student loan has still not been cleared up.

"I asked them to cancel (the loan) and issue me a new one, but they can't do it because it has already been signed and turned over to the bank. It's been sitting on somebody's desk for five months."

Million dollar decision delayed

BY TIM COVERT

Students may get to take their opinion about donating one million dollars towards Dalhousie University's new Arts and Social Sciences Building (ASSB) to the ballot box.

Set to make the million dollar decision at its Sunday meeting, the Dalhousie Student Union council was forced to delay its decision.

After a confusing, and at times heated debate, the motion was referred to council's constitution and policy committee.

The committee will advise council on the pros and cons of going to a plebiscite or a referendum. They will report back to council on October 21, the date of the next council meeting. A decision on the donation will likely be made then.

At its September 29 meeting, council decided to vote on whether or not to donate \$1 million to the ASSB at their October 6 meeting. It was felt this would allow councillors time to discuss the issue with their constituents.

Arts Society president Steve Johnson and vice-president Ian Carr attended last Sunday's meeting, as well as representatives from the History, Economics, and English societies. Only one of the two Arts Society council representatives — Terence Tam — was in attendance.

Johnson said that the representatives were at the council meeting to express some concerns their constituents had with the new building. The first Arts Society meeting with quorum had just been held four days earlier. At the meeting there were many society members who were surprised when asked how they wanted their council reps to vote on the matter.

"[The society members] expressed concern because there wasn't enough time to consult their faculties," Johnson said in an interview after the meeting.

"They instructed the DSU reps to vote to table the [ASSB] motion."

Kevin Lacey, member at large, moved that the ASSB motion be tabled until the next meeting as soon as council began to debate it. His motion was defeated and discussion about contributing funds to the ASSB continued.

When the concerns of the Arts Society members regarding the informed nature of their constituents was raised, the Law students' rep Jim Rossiter motioned to reconsider tabling the ASSB motion.

Rossiter's motion was also defeated and debate continued.

Arts rep Tam mistakenly motioned to close debate, forcing council to put the ASSB motion to a vote. In the confusion, apparently, many of the new members thought that council was closing debate on one of the earlier motions to table, instead of on the ASSB motion itself.

Tensions high, a motion was made to reconsider closing debate. The motion passed and council continued debate.

When the meeting ended,

DSU Open Forum will take place Thursday, Oct. 17 in the SUB lobby to discuss the contribution of \$1 million to the construction of the new Arts and Social Sciences Building

council had decided not to vote on the ASSB motion. Instead, it referred the matter to the constitution and policy committee.

The Dalhousie Arts Society held an emergency meeting yesterday at 3 p.m. to discuss the aftermath of Sunday's meeting.

Once constructed, the ASSB would contain the offices of the many Arts and Social Science faculties — which are at present located in a

scattered array of old houses around campus — and add classroom and lecture space. At a council meeting on Sept. 15, Dalhousie President Dr. Tom Traves asked if the students

would contribute to the building by using a large portion of the money they had raised towards the Capital Campaign Fund.

Students at Dalhousie began paying \$25 a year towards the Capital Campaign Fund this year after voting for the fee in a referendum held on October 11, 1995.

Part of this money has been used for the computer lab in campus copy and part for the installation of the blue light system.

The question of whether or not this money should be used towards a new ASSB was often overlooked on Sunday. Debate focused on the merits of the building itself.

"We've never said we were against the building," Johnson said.

It was simply the fact that Arts

students were not informed that prompted their objection to the quick vote.

Johnson said that students need to be informed, but he does not feel the ASSB motion should be put to referendum.

Johnson said that a referendum "wouldn't get a fair representation of campus."

"The Arts Society has 3300 students. If we didn't want [the ASSB motion], we could have a massive campaign to vote against it. We just want to know how the students feel so we can direct our reps."

Dalhousie Student Union president Brad MacKay also dislikes the idea of a referendum.

"It's difficult to get this information out," said MacKay.

"The problem with going to a referendum is that not everyone knows the details."

In order to ensure that students are adequately informed about the decision the DSU is going to have an open forum next Thursday in the SUB lobby dealing exclusively with the subject of whether the Union should donate money to the ASSB.

Asked whether the building will go ahead without the money, MacKay said that the University only needs to match the \$6 million dollars promised by the province in order to fulfil their end of the funding deal.

"If the money is raised the project will go ahead. The advantage to donating is it gives us a great deal of participation and say and impact on the planning process. It's a proactive way of seeing the student get what they want out of the process."

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Student issues top CASA agenda

BY GORDON LOANE
THE BRUNSWICKAN
(SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE)

Fredericton — Delegates to a policy conference of the Canadian Alliance of Students' Associations (CASA) fear cuts in government funding and resulting hikes are beginning to take their toll on universal access to post-secondary education.

The delegates, representing 11 student associations at various universities across Canada, passed a resolution calling on both the federal and provincial government to undertake a comprehensive and credible study on the effects of tuition fees upon accessibility.

Until the study is done students want tuition fee increases each year to be held to the rate of inflation.

"Because of inadequate funding universities have been put in the position of raising tuition fees just to maintain some degree of quality," said Kelly Lamrock of the New Brunswick Student Alliance.

"The result has been both a negative effect on student debt loads and access to post-secondary education," he said.

Students also want a more comprehensive work study program to be introduced by both

levels of government.

"Work study programs allow students to work for their assistance," said a resolution adopted at the conference.

"We are not asking for a free ride," the students maintained.

"Giving students the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge to practical work is a benefit to all involved."

The students emphasized, however, that work study programs should not be seen by government as an opportunity to cut back other forms of assistance like summer work projects or student loans.

Students further asked that CASA lobby the federal government to introduce a graduation incentive rebate.

"The federal government should commit to a one-time tax credit to a person upon graduation," said a third resolution adopted at the conference.

Students leaders were also concerned about the interest rates commercial banks are charging when student loans are consolidated upon graduation.

The delegates said that they felt student loan interest rates should not exceed those that otherwise would be required for a personal loan.