

# Students' Council Report

(Continued from page two) the delays, but received no answer. At the beginning of the term, then, we had no idea of our position in respect of the Editor, and the Council reviewed the situation at its first regular meeting on September 15th. The circumstances were roughly these:—we could in no way depend on the Editor at that time, since he had not answered our correspondence and had not returned to the University. The material was missing and nothing was being done that we knew of towards completing it.

The Council appointed a committee to proceed with the completion of the book, and a statement was issued to the Gazette to that effect. I was instructed to wire the Editor to send me what material he then held concerning the year book. That wire was not answered.

Towards the end of September the Editor returned to the University, and I met him. He repeated the reasons he had given the Vice-President and I in our phone conversation with him, but did not explain the incorrect statements he had then made.

The Vice-President and I decided to recommend that the Editor continue with the book, on the understanding that he would complete soon, for the following reasons:—If any adverse publicity were the result of his dismissal it could only harm the book's reputation with students and public, and reflect on other Dalhousie student organizations. The Editor alone really understood the plan of the book and the material required for completion. He could do the quickest job of completing the book. There was also, by no means the least consideration, a genuine desire to give the Editor every opportunity to make amends for the previous shortcomings of himself and the staff, and enable him to restore the good reputation he had previously enjoyed for the book of the previous year. I think the Vice-President and I both sympathized with the series of misfortunes that had overtaken him.

There was one final consideration that influenced the Council's acceptance of our recommendation: two years before the University

had made an important concession to the book in the form of the universal fee, and any undue noise might, we feared, induce the University to reconsider its concession. He was offered the help of at least one staff member, which he declined on the ground that there was not very much to be done. I have it on good authority that two weeks work would have completed the book then.

The Council approved this plan on October 3rd, and the statement previously issued to the Gazette was amended accordingly.

Before the Council again met on October 17th I was in touch with Mr. Burns by phone, and he told me that he had still not heard from the Editor. I asked the Editor why nothing had been done, and he replied to the contrary, saying that enough material for the time being had gone forward and that he himself had been in touch with Mr. Burns. The Council instructed me to write to Mr. Burns asking for a definite statement, which I did. Burns' answer indicates that the Editor in speaking to Burns had asked for proofs, as though Burns could only properly expect more material after proofs had been sent to the Editor. It indicates also the Editor had in fact sent in no material.

I read to the Council Burns' Letter on Nov. 8th; its vagueness allowed the Council to come to no accurate conclusion as to the questions raised at the previous meeting. The Editor again gave his assurances that copy was in the mail to Kentville, and that all of it would go shortly. The Council decided that a statement must be made at the Student Forum, and told me to press the Editor for completion before then, which I did and was assured that the last material was going in early in the week. Just before the forum the Editor repeated this, and told me that some football shots which had been previously done and mislaid were going in on the morning of the forum. I wrote to Mr. Burns for confirmation.

The Council at that time dealt also with the Law Society's letter.

I was unable to contact Burns before the forum itself and con-

tented myself with waiting for his reply to my letter. At that time also I had a supp besides our regular exam, and devoted only what time was absolutely necessary to Council affairs.

Burns did not answer that letter. He subsequently told the Vice-President and I that, expecting that the material was coming, he had written only to the Editor, who did not answer any of those letters or get in touch with Burns.

During the holidays I had still no answer from Burns, and I heard that he expected me to come up and see him. The Vice-President and I accordingly went to Kentville on January 2nd.

At Kentville we found pages 1-70 incomplete; it seemed, at first glance, that nothing at all had been done since the summer. Examination revealed that pages 71-92 were completed last term, and perhaps a few incidental things as well. Pages 1-70 were represented by individually complete pages, pages for which there were cuts but no copy and a large number of blank pages and miscellaneous cuts.

We told Mr. Burns that we would complete the book and enable him to print at once. He said that he was very relieved to hear this; he explained his reason for not answering my letter, and showed us his unanswered letters to the Editor. We spent most of the day in the shop and put together what we could. When we had no material left there were ten pages with nothing on them, and we instructed the foreman to delete them altogether, which he told us could be done. We had a book—an excellent book with perhaps thirty weak pages.

In considering this action—taken certainly without the Council's express authorization—it is necessary to consider also the actual alternatives that then lay before us. We could have satisfied ourselves as to what was there, and then returned to Halifax to consult either the Editor, the Council, or both. We would then be in a position, perhaps, to recommend that a committee do what we ourselves could do and did in Kentville. We had very little reason to feel sure that the Editor's assurances would be of any more value than they had previously turned out to be. It never occurred to me, at any rate, to think that the Editor would have the material virtually complete in his room without having sent some to Kentville as it was prepared. At least, had it occurred to me, I would have thought that he would answer Burns' letters if the material were actually ready. We decided, therefore, to go ahead. I had decided beforehand that that would be the best thing to do if the facts were what they turned out to be.

We were at least assured of a yearbook, which would result in relieving the printer of the embarrassing delays of the last eight months. We would have something to show the students for our months of supervision and something to indicate to the University that the Council had dealt with the situation responsibly. We would have a book to show the advertisers. These had been the considerations upon which the Council's original policy had originally been based; it seemed, in view of the Editor's previous conduct, altogether too late to worry about the quality of the book. Even as it stood then, the completed sections were very good indeed, and the substitute sections not too bad.

We had agreed that I would write to the Editor, since it seemed desirable that any dealings be in writing. The Editor learned about our action, and phoned us before the letter was written, and it was not sent.

On the night of January 3rd I told the Editor, after he had asked to be allowed to complete the book himself, that after what had happened during last term I could no longer extend the Council's confidence to him and that the matter was closed. He then asked for permission to distribute the books; I replied that that would be up to the Council, due to meet in five days time.

On the following day Mr. Coles came to see me and said that the

Editor had the complete material in his room. He had discovered from the binders that no time would be lost if we allowed the Editor to complete. I went with Mr. Coles to see the material, and agreed that he was quite correct. We had a short meeting with Mr. Lomas, and I reiterated what I had said the night before; as long as the matter remained in my hands I could not take it upon myself to return the book to the Editor's keeping. Mr. Lomas agreed with me, and the matter was again closed.

During the rest of that day and on the following day the Editor appears to have been quite active. He had an interview with the President of the University, and contacted the manager of one of the teams whose pictures would be omitted if the book was printed as it stood. He phoned the printers at Kentville. I do not know what steps, if any, Mr. Coles took in the matter beyond this.

On the following day the Editor phoned me, and said that he had been in touch with Burns, who was expecting Mr. Lomas and I to attend a meeting with the Editor and himself to go over the matter. I replied that unless there was anything to add that had not been said on the previous day I couldn't alter my decision and saw no point in meeting Burns. He then challenged my authority to suspend him as Editor of the book, and announced that he still considered himself Editor. I then told him I would call the Council at once. Mr. Lomas and I then called the Council; the Editor had also been in touch with Mr. Lomas and had told him that unless he heard from us by seven o'clock he was going to Kentville himself. We accordingly notified him of the meeting.

I had tried to get in touch with Mr. Burns three times during the time that the Editor had indicated to me that he would be in his hotel room, but on all three occasions he was not there. I managed to get him at six o'clock. He told me that the Editor had been in touch with him on the previous day, and asked him to stop work on the book; he had refused to do this, saying that he had instructions from Mr.

Lomas and I to proceed. He entertained, quite properly, the request that the dedication to the late Professor Richter be included in the book. The Editor apparently questioned our authority, and he consented to the Editor's request that he meet the Editor, Mr. Lomas and I to discuss the matter. He repeated his earlier statement to the effect that he had been most relieved when we had told him that we would complete the book. I gave him my reasons for declining to attend the proposed meeting, and told about the Council meeting that night, and he said that he would be glad to accept whatever the Council decided to do. I might say at this point that Mr. Burns throughout the whole unpleasant business has been unfailingly patient and courteous, and that the Council should be very grateful indeed for this.

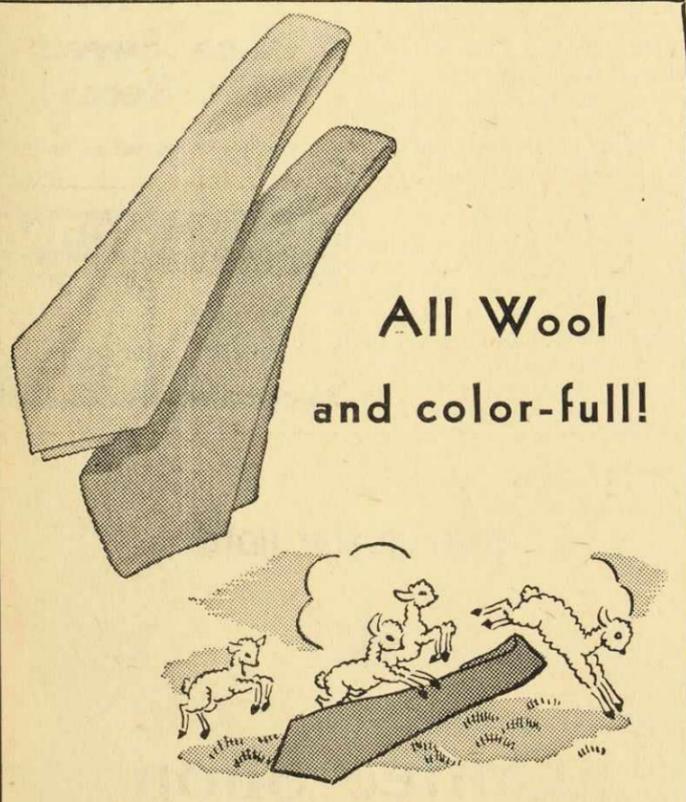
At the meeting that night I outlined the developments which had led to the present circumstances, and relinquished the Chair upon a motion from the meeting to that effect. Mr. Coles represented the Editor, and presented the same arguments, with the added factor of the Editor's action in having all the missing pictures engraved in any case. He explained to the Council that no time would be lost, very little discretion left to the Editor, and that the complete book was better than the present one.\*

The Council decided to ask the Editor to hand over his material to a committee, which was to complete the book as originally planned. Subsequent management would also be left entirely in the hands of the committee. Mr. Caldwell was dismissed as Editor of the book, and a motion was passed, at his request, to the effect that he be given credit for the work done by him that was being handed to the committee.

The committee proceeded to Kentville and completed the book and received all material from Mr. Caldwell. I have letters from Mr. Burns confirming this and the arrival of the books in Halifax. They are at the binders now.

Respectfully submitted,  
ARTHUR MOREIRA  
President.

\*The statement in this paragraph to the effect that Mr. Coles represented the Editor is not correct: Mr. Coles acted upon what he considered to be the important considerations of the situation, in the exercise of his responsibilities as a Council member only, and not as representing the Editor. An amendment of the report to this effect was passed by the Council, and the report is amended accordingly. —A.M.



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