Dal's delegates meet MP's

by Cathy McDonald

To top off the five-day Canadian Federation of Students conference last week in Ottawa, about 100 delegates converged on the House of Commons in a lobby blitz.

"This was the best kind of direct action and it works," said John Logan, Dalhousie Student Union president. "It is better than writing a million letters."

Major successes of the conference, according to Logan, were the ample media coverage and the increased awareness of many MP's as to the effects of cutbacks on post secondary education.

"It was plastered all over the media, that's one type of success that nobody can debate. There were cameras in Regan's office," Logan said.

Specific results described by Peter Rans, Dal delegate, were that some individual MP's promised their support for the anticutbacks campaign and made assurances that they would lobby.

Rans admitted that these supportive MP's were mostly PC and NDP party members and some Liberal backbenchers, and stressed that the effectiveness of these promises will depend on the students.

"The meetings held with MP's showed us who our allies and enemies are," said Mike McNeil, CFS chairperson. The visitors explained to each member the

CFS platform and asked for support in the House against cutbacks that are expected when the federal budget is unveiled November 10.

"Now that our concerns are expressed the MP's will wait and see if students have the organizational skills and political muscle to back up our positions," Rans said.

Rans is confident that this support will be shown. "Delegates leaving the conference now have sufficient energy and dedication to see the campaign works," he said.

The Established Programs Financing agreement between Ottawa and the provinces will be renegotiated next March.



Delegates receive dubious welcome

by Glenn Walton

About 50 students representing the Canadian Federation of Students, conferring in Ottawa, received a dubious welcome when they converged on Parliament Hill on October 19.

Delegates hoped to meet with their individual MP's to lobby against proposed federal cutbacks to post-secondary education funding and planned to attend the House of Commons question period.

Arriving on the Hill clad in academic gowns and selling 'muffins for education' at \$2,000 apiece, the delegates were promptly directed to the freight entrance and told to leave their pickets outside.

Once inside they waited in line for an hour to get into the

Commons chamber and then were denied entrance on the grounds that the men were not wearing shirts and ties. Less than 10 (suitably dressed) delegates were able to get seats in the Chamber.

Mike McNeil, chairperson of the CFS Central Committee, said the security seemed to tighten around the CFS delegates. "We could have known the rules better," he admitted, "but I think (the harassment) was deliberate." McNeil added that the Speaker of the House might be receiving a letter regarding the incident.

Kathy Hagen, one of Dal's representatives, criticized the CFS staff for giving MP's just three days notice that the brigade was coming. Hagen was unable to meet Robert Coates, PC Cumberland-Colchester, as he wasn't there.

She added that if CFS had been better organized seats would have been reserved for their delegates in the question period.

The whereabouts of Dal's other representatives, Peter Rans and terrible John Logan, whether in or out of academic gowns on the Hill, was unfortunately unknown at press time, but the Gazette has reason to believe that security at the Commons had been forewarned and sent the Prime Minister to co-chair a conference somewhere in Central America.



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