

Some Things Don't Change - Ever

Student Government History began as part of the GAZETTE's 1973 summer research program. It has turned out to be a larger project than idle curiosity led the author to expect. The period of 1869 to 1930 has been covered so far. The aim is to continue the series until it has covered events to the spring of 1973.

The purpose is to present all but the most routine events. This is to let readers draw their own conclusions, rather than those of the author. If any theme has appeared, it is that today student government is remarkably similar to that of past years. The differences may well be an aspect of context rather than content.

This summary is prepared for those who were not able to follow the series to date.

The student government of 1869, which almost certainly started at the time of Dalhousie's 1863 reorganization, was simply a general meeting of all students - the Students' Meeting. Ad hoc committees carried out specific jobs such as financial control and operation of the reading room. A major event in 1869 was students' acceptance of GAZETTE ownership. Through the 1870's the Faculty societies were founded and the Students' Meeting concentrated on social events.

In the 1880's students became aware of themselves as a distinct group within the university. For the

next thirty years the Students' Meeting undertook a growing number of activities - athletics, phys ed, model parliament, drama, etc. These were financed by voluntary fee levies. Friction with faculty emerged in 1888, and continued over the issues of student discipline and control of social events. In 1890 the first written constitution was adopted, leading to a succession of formal guidelines.

Early in this century the executive emerged to act as a cohesive and influential group. Agitation for a compulsory fee began, and succeeded in 1911 when a referendum and mass student meeting forced the university to enforce fee payment. The price was simultaneous change from "mob rule" to a representative government built around an elevated Students' Council. The new Council was given responsibility for all extra-curricular activity and student discipline, within university rules.

In 1914 students raised \$20,000 for a Student Union Building, but had to settle for use of a house standing on the Studley campus. In 1916 women were given equal rights in student government. As the war drew to a close the Council decided that major societies should have wide freedom of action.

Shortly after the war it became clear that management of the students' house would be difficult, since only a committee was responsible. By 1923 the effort to

run anything more than a few offices in university buildings was abandoned.

The post-war enrolment increase brought with it need for true election campaigns, rather than the traditional reliance upon candidates' reputations. A referendum raised the compulsory fee from \$5.00 to \$7.00. There was considerable stability, with both Norman McKenzie (1921-23) and Len Fraser (1923-25) serving as President for two years. As in a parliament, the entire executive was chosen by Council following the general elections.

In the 1920's the Council spent a great deal of time regulating dances and handling disciplinary matters. It was a constant and unsuccessful fight to keep meaningful control of finances, since most funds were administered by societies and committees, not Council directly. The dance issue reached such heights that in 1923 a referendum was used to defeat Senate's proposal to restrict all dances to the campus.

Bitter old-timers lost several attempts to restrict women's involvement. More popular was the agitation for an open-air rink. In 1925 Council finally built one despite unexpectedly high costs. The rink's losses led to severe deficits, but Council proceeded with plans to start a year book. Meanwhile Dalhousie was visited by the British student debaters who inspired foundation of the National

Federation of Canadian University Students (NFCUS).

Finances were put into order by Gerald Godsoe, who served two terms as Secretary-Treasurer, then one as President. The generation passing through Dalhousie was one which went on to achieve much, dominating the country during the late 1930's and World War II. Many of the future leaders, such as Godsoe, were student leaders while at Dalhousie.

After a faculty/alumni/student committee was formed to ease Senate-student relations, attention turned to other matters. Orientation programs were started, Council meetings opened to the public and the rink sold when attempts to reduce the losses proved fruitless. Dalhousie joined NFCUS in 1927. Pacifism became popular, as did support for the League of Nations.

Even by 1930 there was little awareness that a depression had begun. A referendum put the fee up to \$10.00, enthusiasm revived for construction of a SUB and Council sponsored the opening of a university bookstore which students would govern. The new year book began to lose money in the face of poor sales, and true financial control was still a dream.

Sentiment emerged for a more professional approach. One result was a decision to hire a permanent Secretary-Treasurer to oversee finances. Another was moves towards having a professional football coach, rather than volunteers.

Scoop on Ford Assassination Attempts

by Mike Greenfield

Ace reporter Carl Philistein dug and dug until he got to the top man responsible for the two assassination attempts on President Ford. Osborn Ellite, Newsweek's editor, has confessed to having instigated both

assassination attempts.

"We were getting desperate", he told the press. "When you have to put a picture of Gerald Ford on as a cover story 9 times a year you know we're desperate. We figured a picture of his assassin would attract more interest." Ellite explained that the weekly's constant search for interesting cover stories led to the decision to try assassination.

"The first one worked out so well that we decided why not try it a second time. Believe me, there is no shortage of fringe lunatics in

California. We had thousands of qualified applicants willing to take a shot at it and get on the cover of Newsweek and Tyme."

"But a lot of the credit for the success of this idea goes to the photographers and researchers", he told reporters. "Chripes! These cover stories are as good as the ones that came out of the Vietnam war. Remember the one with the Vietnamese mother holding her dead baby, well I'm sure these assassination covers are as popular as that one."

"Ford shouldn't be sore", Ellite continued, "Heck, look at all the sympathy he's getting, and the free publicity. He should be grateful, we're helping him out."

In concluding the press conference Mr. Ellite discussed his plans for the future in light of the success of the assassination program, "To try again at Ford would just be redundant and would not come off as well. So we probably won't try anything similar too soon. But", he added, "you can't shelve an idea whose time has come."

Fee Increase to be Debated

Sodales has started off the year with the first of a series of workshops in debating, outlining the procedure used by other debating powers in the United States and the rest of Canada. These workshops are opened to anyone interested in debating or public speaking, and are going to be held throughout the upcoming year. These will usually be held at the time that Sodales regularly meets, that is at 7:30 in Rm. 316 of the SUB on Tuesdays.

Next Wednesday, Oct 1st at 12:30 Sodales is sponsoring an open air debate on the question "Is the fee increase justified?" This will be held in the area behind the grad house beside the SUB. It is hoped that this open atmosphere will promote not only observation but participation from the students in the form of questions and/or statements on the topic.

If there are any issues that you would like to hear or discuss in a structured manner then feel free to show up at one of the regular meetings of Sodales and mention it. "It is through discussion that progress and understanding are possible" If there are any questions concerning debating or Sodales itself then contact Stephen Campbell at 429-6228.

ARGYLE T.V.



Rockwell Model 12R Calculator

Anniversary Sale

\$29⁹⁵

Mail Orders Accepted

Particularly useful for household calculations — from balancing the checkbook to checking school assignments — this economical calculator is ideal for everyday figuring.

A.C. ADAPTER

2063 Gottingen Street

4
2
2
-
5
9
3
0