

CFS faces membership test

OTTAWA (CUP)—With a deficit of \$65,000 hanging over its head, the Canadian Federation of Students faces two crucial membership referenda this month.

The 66-member federation hopes Brandon University students in Manitoba will vote to join CFS on Oct. 3 and the University of Calgary graduate students re-affirm their support on Oct. 10.

Although CFS chair Beth Olley says the national organization is not counting on the referenda to bolster its floundering finances, she admits any membership fees will certainly help.

"We're not banking on the referenda in our financial plan. (But) obviously they could improve our financial situation and our political

viability, which I think may be more important," she says.

The federation's deficit was estimated to be nearly \$96,000 in May. CFS shaved off about \$26,000 in the summer by dropping its position of accessibility researcher for a six-month period, scrimping on expenses and paying off debts to the University of Prince Edward Island. The organization recently paid off another \$5,000 in conference debts to UPEI.

Olley says she is optimistic the CFS will score a victory at Brandon University. Although a membership referendum failed there a year and a half ago, she says the university's student union is now supportive of CFS.

Ruth Pryzner, Brandon student union vice-president external, also expects a CFS win. She says students are more interested than ever in the organization and are willing to throw their support behind it.

"People are becoming more politicized on campus. I think they'll show up to vote yes and I hope they do because CFS is a national voice for students," she says.

Ten per cent of BU's student population must vote in the referendum for quorum to be reached. A CFS victory means full-time students will pay \$4 per year, and part-time, about \$2.

But the federation will have a harder time at the University of Calgary. Robert Gordon, grad society spokesperson says graduate students are concerned about the financial burden which membership

in CFS is placing on the union. The U of C graduate students have been members for more than two years and, according to Gordon, pay about \$10,000 a year in membership fees and travel costs to general meetings.

"We felt it was necessary to reconsider our position considering the widespread concerns about the organization. But we are not so concerned with the incompetence of the organization as we are with the burden it is placing on us."

Although no organized "no" campaign has surfaced, the graduate student union printed leaflets outlining the pros and cons of staying in the federation. It also set up rooms allowing students to organize either a "yes" or "no" campaign, but no one showed up.

Gordon says the vote, which will take place at a graduate students general meeting and needs 50 students to reach quorum, could swing either way.

"I don't think there's a strong feeling one way or another," he says. "As graduate students, we are intellectually very cautious and like to hear both sides of the story before making up our minds. But I would say it makes good financial sense to pull out and good political sense to stay in."

Two other membership referenda were scheduled for October, but one has been postponed and the other cancelled.

Mount Royal College in Calgary will hold a referendum in November, says Dave Linsley, stu-

dent union vice-president external. He says he thinks CFS will likely lose because colleges in Alberta, including Mount Royal, are more interested in participating in the Alberta Colleges and Technical Institute Executive Council, an organization similar to CFS's provincial wings.

Dalhousie's student council talked about holding a pull-out referendum last year but student union president Alex Gigeroff says pulling out is no longer an issue at Dal.

"One of the main reasons it was debated was the structure of CFS," said Gigeroff. "The new amalgamation makes CFS better equipped to serve regional interest."

The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design has also decided not to hold a pull-out referendum because the student union has reaffirmed its support for the federation.

"We're a small institution which means we can pull out because we feel we've been undermined by large institutions or we can stay and build solidarity between the smaller schools," says Earl Miller, student union vice-president. "We've decided to stay in and help out, instead of jumping the ship."

Meeting of the Young Liberals
Friday Oct. 5
12 noon till 1:30
Council Chambers
Dal SUB

Student journalists denied papal accreditation

OTTAWA(CUP)—More than 7,000 journalists were granted special media status to cover Pope John Paul II's recent sweep across Canada, but not a single student reporter was among them.

"Student press are not bona fide, full-time journalists, therefore not accredited," said Paschal O'Toole, public relations coordinator for the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Canadian University Press, which has a potential circulation of 350,000 at Canadian post-secondary institutions, refused to sign the release for the RCMP and as a result was denied accreditation.

CUP's decision not to sign a waiver was made after legal consultation. "It's outrageous that the RCMP wants this information. It's hardly necessary and it's an invasion of privacy," said Muriel Draaisma, national bureau chief for Canadian University Press.

"We did not want to supply any more information to the RCMP about the student press. I'm sure they have plenty already."

Asked what effect the student exclusion policy might have on the future relations between the Catholic Bishops and the student press, O'Toole said, "If the student press would like to write scurrilous material, or whatever, about the Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Catholic Press, by all means be our guests."

"Rome survived 2,000 years. I'm sure it will survive the (student press), he said.



The Catholic Bishops, the RCMP and the government task force assigned to visit logistics made the decision to exclude the student press, O'Toole said.

O'Toole said he had no idea how many student newspapers across the country applied for and had been denied credentials. He estimated that more than 13,000 journalists applied and only 7,000 were granted the special status.

O'Toole admitted full-time clergy, the Catholic and religious press in Canada received priority, no matter their size and frequency, because the event was a pastoral visit.

The government task force asked all journalists applying for accreditation to fill in a detailed application and a release allowing the information to be stored in RCMP Personal Information Bank P-20 or P-140.

RCMP Personal Information Bank P-140 is an exempt bank under Section 18 (1) of the Privacy Act, meaning that none of the information gathered in the investigation, relevant or not, can be accessed by the person applying for accreditation.



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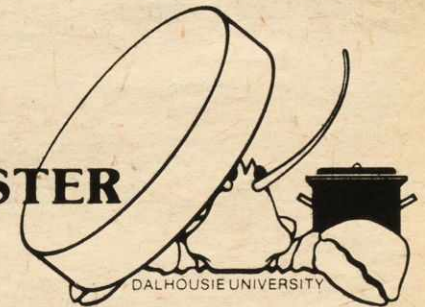
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