

# Ward lays it on the line



## CUS and the withdrawal controversy has sparked concern on the campus

The following are excerpts from Doug Ward's speech at the Lister Hall CUS discussion last Sunday afternoon. In next week's Casseroles, we will print the comments of students' union president Branny Schepanovich.

I suppose that Branny will be arriving in a couple of minutes, so I'll spell things out.

He knows exactly what I'm going to say, and I know what he will say, so I don't think it will be an unfair advantage for him not to be here at the beginning.

In 1926 a group of debaters came over from the National Union of Students in England and had a tour of Canada. And at the end of it they suggested it might be a good idea for Canadian students to try and overcome the geography of Canada and get together on a regular basis and talk about their common interests.

And in the next year the National Federation of Canadian University Students was founded. NFCUS as it was called then, and was called until 1964, has developed quite a bit from that time.

During the '20s and '30s the major programs of NFCUS were concerned with overcoming geography, because we are a rather small university population spread out over a wide area. And there was no real national identity among students or among academics of any sort.

During the war years, of course, the universities just about closed down in Canada and there was no programming there.

And after the war the universities were full of ex-servicemen, who were most of all concerned about getting out of university and getting a job as an engineer, or in business, because they had families to look after.

The '50s saw the beginning of the really affluent society in North America, young people began to look to students' council as, I think, something of a sand-box. A little place where they could play. A place where they could learn to administer a budget, or administer a portfolio, or whatever that means. As a place where, if they worked hard enough all year, and smiled, and did their knitting at meetings, that they'd get a couple of extra lines of type beside their name in the yearbook. And this was some sort of status symbol.

I think that for a long time that's just about all student councils have been concerned with.

They have had increasingly large budgets in the past few years. Some of them have put up buildings for students.

But by and large their major

concern has been to hand out dribs and drabs of money for things that have gone on for hundreds of years. The putting out of newspapers and yearbooks and establishment of exchanges, the running of dances and other social activities.

But then there's a water-shed date in North America.

And I think it's just about 1960 when in Greensboro, N.C., a few students just about our age "sat in" in a restaurant and began a change in the whole posture of students in North America.

It was students saying that we may be apprentice doctors, and we may be apprentice lawyers, but we're not apprentice citizens.

We are citizens and we exist in a community, and that community has things to do. And that it is no longer adequate for a student government which handles large sums of money, and which controls quite considerable resources to just dole those out in a completely apolitical and un-strategic way.

Because if you make decisions about dances, that means you're not making decisions about other activities. And this has brought about a change in the student movement in Canada.

First, of course it has affected peripheral groups—religious student groups, activist student groups, the political parties.

And there was nothing really but silence from the main stream, from the average student. The elusive student, who is hard to find and hard to pin down. The student who couldn't give a damn about student council, because he's tired of their petty politics.

But there have been some changes. And some of it has started in the main stream. First of all in the early '60s, students began to get concerned about the largeness of the university. The development of the multi-versity.

And where the university before had been at least healthy, if paternalistic, now there were huge entrance classes of thousands of students with very little counselling possibility. And the disorientation which comes with change from high school to university, caused a development of great estrangement or alienation from the university by many young people.

And so NFCUS, and later CUS, began to concern themselves with the question of student mental health. And first of all we looked at the people who were dropping out and the people who were being the victims. And after working on that for a while we began to see that it must be a preventive question.

That we must try to establish a community where we can handle the problems that stress of education brings.

And education must bring stress. Education shouldn't be an easy or simple thing.

Education is something which should bother you.

And you should be shredded by colleagues and professors in your university intellectually.

But there comes a point in a large and impersonal campus where that shredding becomes not stress but distress.

And it becomes disruptive to life itself.

And there is a lot that can be done by student councils and by universities in bringing about changes in the environment of the university so that it remains stress and not distress.

And that's one of the first areas in which CUS has begun to zero on the basic problems of the university.

But that wasn't enough either. With the growth of the universities and the change in the financing of universities from private to public financing, the whole question of the cost of education arose.

And so CUS decided it was time to do a study to find out, and to show Canada, how poor the students are and how much money they needed from the public purse.

So that study was done. It cost \$80,000. A lot of that was your money in your CUS fees, a lot of it was money from charitable groups.

A lot of it came from the Government of Canada, which was very impressed by the program of the study and kicked-in \$20,000.

The only trouble is the study didn't prove the students in Canada are poor.

It proved that a percentage of them are poor. That a percentage of them need assistance to stay in university.

But it showed that, by and large, you and I are the Fat Cats of the society. That we come from the top six, or ten, or twenty per cent of the wage-earning families in Canada.

And we don't represent the farm family, or the rural non-farm family, or the poor family, or even the average wage-earner across this country.

And so, although the university has come to be paid for by taxation, which hits everybody according to what they have, you can't get at it unless you can kick in another \$1,500.

Now we all know of exceptions, and there are probably lots of people in this room who have worked very hard in the summer and very hard at part-time jobs, or taken a year or two out, to save their dollars to go to university.

And that is, of course, admirable.

But the question to ask of those people is what has happened to all the people who are on the same level as them.

People they knew who were bright and challenging them in their own classes—have they gotten to the same place?

Because the average student now spends \$1,400-\$1,800 a year on his education, in either direct or indirect costs, there is trouble. And this is only about a quarter of the total cost of education.

At this point there was break in the tape and about five minutes of Doug Ward's speech were lost.

And that I think is sort of the core of why I think students should be involved. And why I think it isn't adequate for the involvement to be on the part of small groups on the campus.

Because there is a student government and that government is elected.

And the trouble is that usually the only time government talks about politics or talks about issues

is during the election campaigns.

The only time student politicians will go into a residence and talk is just before the election.

And that's just about the reverse of what it should be. Because we should be concerned with the university and where it's going. And it shouldn't just be a few people talking about it in the student newspapers. We should be talking about it with faculty in our courses.

And that's where the university reform must come about.

Now CUS, as I have said, has been changing.

CUS is an inadequate, and in many ways a burgeoning, but bludgeoning, organization. It's an organization that has grown rapidly in the past few years. It's an organization that has received a mandate to both focus its activities and expand and deepen those activities.

And I will never get before a microphone in order to justify the

## Doug Ward...

By BILL MILLER

Fighting for universal accessibility seems like butting your head against a brick wall, but Canadian Union of Students president Doug Ward is confident it is worthwhile

Universal accessibility, shortened to univac by the student bureaucracy, is an attempt to remove all financial, sociological and psychological barriers to achieving post-secondary education.

The CUS student means survey has pointed out the negligible representation of the lower economic classes in post-secondary educational institutes, and univac is an attempt to improve the representation.

Univac calls for the abolition of all tuition fees, the provision of student stipends, and a program to initiate, promote, and co-ordinate research into the social conditions relevant to educational opportunity.

### STUDENT STIPENDS

Free tuition and a system of student stipends are essential to univac, says Ward, 28, but "stipends have little to do with the work we have to do right now. Stipends are a long-range economic goal."

Univac also calls for the rejection in principle of all systems of financial aid to students which involve loans, means tests, or conditions implying mandatory parental support.

"This means we are pushing for adequate bursary schemes," says Ward, or just Doug as he likes to be called, "with minimum means tests to make sure the recipients going to univer-



sity can get that money in such a way as they don't have to destroy their life at university with a job, keeping them from activities so important to their education."

Univac is basically trying to widen the bottleneck at the post-secondary level, but CUS is finding "students are getting