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STUDENT COUNCIL AND THE UNION, 1919- 1932

FILE 621

STUDENT COUNCIL

AND THE UNION

March 23rd, 1927.

Errol Amaron, Esq.,
President of Students' Council,
McGill University.

Dear Mr. Amaron:-

I am returning herewith the documents left with me, namely:

A letter addressed to you on March 14th, 1927, and signed by Cyrus Macmillan, Chairman of the Department of English;

An affidavit sworn to before J.C. Simpson, Commissioner of the Superior Court, District of Montreal, by Gordon W. Webster on the 15th day of March, 1927.

I have read both documents carefully and discussed them further with Professor Macmillan and Mr. Webster, who came to my office for that purpose at 10.15 yesterday, the 22nd. In the course of our conversation Mr. Webster explained that the reason he did not wish to speak at the beginning of the lecture hour was because he had a lecture in his Law course from eleven to twelve, and he did not care to proceed direct from his lecture to address the students in the English class. He went on to say that his mind worked more slowly than others and that he wished to have some time to prepare what he was going to say. I have examined the Time Table of the Law Faculty and find that on Thursdays

Errol Amaron, Esc., - 2 -

there is no lecture between the hours of eleven and twelve which Mr. Webster could attend. I have verified this in consultation with officers of the Faculty of Law.

No doubt there was a misunderstanding. It is my opinion that there was no misunderstanding on Dr. Macmillan's part.

Yours faithfully,

Principal.

STUDENTS' COUNCIL OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY

MCGILL UNION
MCGILL ANNUAL
STUDENTS' DIRECTORY
LITERARY & DEBATING SOCIETY
PLAYERS' CLUB

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MCGILL HANDBOOK
RED & WHITE REVUE
MCGILL CANADIAN CLUB
SCARLET KEY SOCIETY
BUREAU OF APPOINTMENTS

MUSICAL ASSOCIATION:
CHORAL SOCIETY
MANDOLIN CLUB
MCGILL MUSIC CLUB
MCGILL UNIVERSITY BAND

April 1st 1927.

Sir Arthur Currie,
Principal,
McGill University,
Sherbrooke Street West,
Montreal, P. Q.

Dear Sir Arthur:

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter enclosing the correspondence about the Webster case. The Council has taken the following action in connection with this case:

"That as a result of an investigation carried on by the Students' Council and Sir Arthur Currie into the recent Student Council Elections, the resignation of Mr. G. M. Webster tendered on March 13th 1927 be accepted, Mr. Webster not having been able to satisfactorily explain his part in the misunderstanding which arose in connection with the Elections".

Will you please accept my personal thanks, as well as those of the Council, for the assistance you gave us in this matter.

Kindly accept my apologies for delaying in letting you know of our decision. It was due to much pre-occupation with examinations and other matters.

Yours very truly,

Errol B. Amaron.

President,
Students' Council.

DOCKET STARTS:

FINANCES

Montreal, 23rd November 1928.

MEMO RE McGill Union

Until 30th June 1919 the Management of the Union was in the hands of a Committee (not part of the Students' Council activities) composed of representatives of the University and elected student representatives. Under this regime it had been necessary for the University to contribute the sum of \$45,000. to meet deficits on running expenses. This represents a cost to the University of between \$3,000. and \$4,000. a year from the time the Union was built. On the 1st July 1919 the Students' Council took over the operation of the Union on the general understanding that the University was to pay for all major repairs, the students assuming all running expenses. For the first few years the Students' Council made a little money but this was soon more than absorbed by losses from 1924 to 1928 and the net result to the Students' Council after nine years is a loss of \$6,899.26. On the 1st July 1919 the Students' Council had a surplus of \$7,553.89. The Union losses would have practically wiped this out had it not been that the Council had a surplus from other sources. At the same time the members of the Council are seriously concerned about the gradual depletion of their surplus and they feel that unless some steps are taken it will only be a few years before the surplus is wiped out completely.

The burden is particularly heavy in the accounts for maintenance and repairs. During the last five years the expenditure on repairs to the Union generally and in the Cafeteria (including some alterations) has been about \$14,200. It does not appear that the Council can spend any less than this and keep things up even to the limited extent done in the past few years. It would seem that the Council could carry on ^{if} the University could see its way to contribute \$1,000. a year towards maintenance and up-keep.

Another factor in the situation is the change in the patronage^a of the students. As mentioned above a profit was made during the first few years and the Council was able to take care of all maintenance, repairs, and up-keep, but during those years the revenue of the Union was very much greater, both from the point of view of meals served as well as revenue from Tuck Shop, billiards, etc., eg. -

Revenue from billiards in 1921 was	\$3,735.00
For the year June 30th 1928 it dropped to	1,689.24
The revenue in the cafeteria in 1921 was over	25,000.00
In 1928 this had dropped to	18,000.00

The students explain that a large part of the falling off in use of the Union is due to the increase in Fraternities at the University.

In conclusion the uses the Union is being put to now are -

1. Meals for about 200 students.
2. Executive offices of student activities.
3. Committee Rooms.
4. Dances, etc.

and it is felt by many that these facilities could be afforded in some very much less expensive manner than now obtains.

A. G. M.

Clarkson, McDonald, Currie & Co.
Chartered Accountants

MONTREAL

GEORGE C. McDONALD,
GEORGE S. CURRIE,
KENNETH G. BLACKADER,
J. A. DELALANNE,
S. H. DOBELL,
TERENCE P. JONES,
H. M. S. LEWIN,
C. J. G. MOLSON,
D. L. ROSS,
F. L. WINDSOR.

TELEPHONE HARBOUR 5294

QUEBEC

R. H. KENNEDY,
L. N. BUZZELL,
J. GRANT GLASSCO.

TORONTO

CLARKSON, GORDON, DILWORTH,
GUILFOYLE & NASH.

G. T. CLARKSON,
H. D. LOCKHART GORDON,
R. J. DILWORTH.

261 St. James Street, West
Montreal

23rd November 1928.

Dr. C. F. Martin,
Acting Principal,
McGill University.

Dear Dr. Martin:

I have dictated and enclose a memo. which I hope will be of some assistance to you. It would be interesting to know how much the University has spent on major repairs since 1919 when considering the suggestion of the payment to the Students' Council of \$1,000. a year towards maintenance of the Union.

Yours sincerely,

George C. McDonald

McGILL UNION

STATEMENT OF PROFITS & LOSSES

FROM 1ST JULY 1919 TO 30TH JUNE 1928

Balance at Credit of Surplus of Students' Council as at 1st July 1919.....			7,558.89
June 30th 1920	661.28		
" " 1921	3,605.72		
" " 1922		2,419.59	
" " 1923	770.42		
" " 1924		1,166.84	
" " 1925		4,051.84	
" " 1926		2,472.28	
" " 1927		195.79	
" " 1928		1,630.34	
	<u>5,037.42</u>	<u>11,936.68</u>	
	-----	<u>5,037.42</u>	
<u>NET LOSS</u> - during above years-----		6,899.26	
		-----	<u>6,899.26</u>
Through Union's Operations Council's Surplus would be depleted to-----			\$ 659.63

McGILL UNION

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE AND PROFITS AND LOSSES

FOR YEARS 1920 TO 1928

	<u>1920</u>	<u>1921</u>	<u>1922</u>	<u>1923</u>	<u>1924</u>	<u>1925</u>	<u>1926</u>	<u>1927</u>	<u>1928</u>	
Repairs and Alterations - Union	231.14	581.57	1,344.54	1,264.00	1,213.93	2,750.88	1,064.46	1,159.72	1,306.31	
Repairs and Alterations - Cafeteria	2,633.23	1,554.91	1,167.47	1,126.10	2,059.18	1,556.64	484.95	643.25	2,232.05	
Light and Heat - Union	3,724.50	3,201.13	3,479.62	3,405.20	3,201.30	3,475.97	^x 4,030.66	2,890.69	2,565.71	^x Cartage ashes now inc.
Light and Heat - Cafeteria	*	2,420.46	2,003.66	1,698.37	1,638.25	1,522.40	1,651.03	1,621.04	1,109.52	
Cafeteria Profit or Loss	499.15	819.98	1,911.33	494.70	1,577.23	2,665.16	1,302.56	671.21	1,075.15	
Union Profit or Loss	661.28	3,605.72	2,419.59	770.42	1,166.84	4,051.84	2,472.28	195.79	1,630.34	

* 1920 Figures not available.

690 SHERBROOKE STREET WEST
MONTREAL, QUE.

TELEPHONE:
LANCASTER 7141

STUDENTS' COUNCIL OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY

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MCGILL UNIVERSITY BAND

Dec. 10th, 1928.

Doctor C. F. Martin,
Vice-Principal,
McGill University,
Sherbrooke Street, West,
MONTREAL, Que.

Dear Doctor Martin:

Enclosed please find some figures on the Council and Profit and Loss in the operation of the Union for the past nine years.

These were prepared for me by our auditors and serve to confirm my findings from our books here, but they are better prepared and show year by year our financial loss in operation.

Trusting that they may serve a useful purpose, I am,

Resepctfully yours,

H. Paul Melanson

President,
Students' Executive Council.

APSG:C

December
Tenth
1928.

Major George C. McDonald,
261 St. James Street,
Montreal.

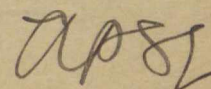
Dear Major McDonald:

GRANT TO STUDENT'S COUNCIL

I understood that Dr. Martin had communicated to you the decision of the Finance Committee in regard to granting the Students' Council \$1,000. annually to enable them to maintain the McGill Union Building without financial loss. I found in conversation with him this morning that he expected me to write you in regard to this matter.

The Finance Committee, at a meeting held on the 6th instant, decided that the question of this grant should be deferred until the Committee appointed to consider the question of the sale of the McGill Union property had submitted its report. This means that in all likelihood the grant will not be made for this fiscal year of the University which closed on the 30th of June next.

Yours faithfully,



Secretary

STUDENTS' COUNCIL OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY

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Nov. 27th, 1928.

Dr. C. F. Martin,
Acting Principal,
McGill University,
MONTREAL, Que.

Dear Sir:

It was with much surprise and no little alarm that in studying the finances of the Students Society I found that it had been operating at an annual loss of about \$1500.00 for the past several years.

Going into the matter more carefully it became evident that our funds were being depleted at an alarming rate, which if continued for more than a few years should leave us destitute. With this in mind, a meeting of our Advisory Board was called and it was suggested that the matter be presented to the University through you. Following my interview with you and Mr. McDonald I should like to present our case in the following manner:

The Students' Council is the regulating organization of the following undergraduate activities, Viz.

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. McGill Union | 7. Operatic & Choral Society |
| 2. McGill Daily | 8. Players' Club |
| 3. Alma Mater Dance | 9. McGill Debating Union |
| 4. McGill Annual | 10. University Band |
| 5. Red and White Review | 11. Musical Association. |
| 6. Scarlet Key Society | |

The Council is solely responsible for the finances of these societies and in the majority of them meets with no difficulty in making them sound financial ventures, with the exceptions to be referred to later.

The sources of fixed revenue to the Council consist of:

1. The Universal Fee of \$1.50 per man to the Council.
2. To the Union House 3.00
3. To the Daily 1.50
4. Interest on investment about \$350.00 yearly.

All this totals less than \$3000.00 on our "General Account"

The expenditures on "General Accounts", (other than the operations of our Societies, listed as Sundry Activities) more than absorb our revenue. So we have been forced to make each Society pay for itself as far as possible. Unfortunately during the past five years the Council has been falling behind in its ability to make both ends meet, that is by forcing the earning Capacity of the "Sundry Activities" to its limits we have been going behind about \$1500.00 yearly, and this debt has been taken out of our Capital which in 1919 amounted to \$7,558.89, and in July 1928 was reduced to about \$5000.00 which is invested in Duke Price Power Company, Limited, yielding 6%.

The reason for this yearly deficit points clearly to the inability of making the "Union House" pay for itself in spite of every effort of the Council, and each year we are forced to put into the Union Account all surplus earned in other branches of activity.

The Council took over the operation of the Union from the University in 1919. The management by the University had resulted in a deficit of \$45,000 for twelve years (from 1906-1919) an annual loss of about \$3,500.

It was agreed in 1919 that the University should pay for all major repairs to the building, ^{but} unfortunately, what was to constitute major repairs was not clearly defined.

For the first few years the Union did pay under the new arrangement, but from the session 1923-24 up to the present time, it has been operating at an ever increasing deficit.

The maintenance and repairs to the building have been a great burden, and quoting only these items for the past five years will prove enlightening. May I state here that only the very necessary work has been undertaken in the way of repairs and alterations, and that these have not really been sufficient to keep the building in the condition it merits.

During the past five years we have spent \$15,131.66 on "Maintenance and Repairs" as follows:

Insurance....	1536.48	
Electricity..	2436.60	(Power included)
Boiler repairs..	1825.61	
Blower system...	985.00	
Incidentals to upkeep.....	1447.60	\$ 8231.39
<u>Plus equipment</u>		
Chairs.....	354.00	
Alterations in Cafeteria	708.25	
Redecoration Ball Room.....	1185.10	
New Tables.....	230.63	2477.98

Cafeteria Equipemtn.....	2495.52	
Cafeteria Repairs.....	1926.77	\$4422.29
Total.....		\$15131.66

Over this period our operation of the Union has resulted in a deficit of roughly \$1500 per annum, which is more than accounted for by our outlay for "Repairs" alone.

With these figures in mind the Council would like to ask the University to contribute the sum of \$1500 a year towards maintenance and repairs, since both the operation by the University, which resulted in an annual deficit of about \$3500.00 per annum, and the operation deficit of the Council of \$1500 per annum, apparently demonstrates that, as constituted, the Union cannot pay for itself.

The Council would further ask that the University in considering this matter make their contribution retroactive one year and carry our deficit for the year 1927-28 of \$971.00, so that we will not be forced to sell a \$1000 bond of our remaining Capital of \$5000, which as stated above is invested in Duke Price Power Co. Limited. This will be necessary for operation of General Account for this session unless we receive assistance.

In asking for this grant the Council realizes that it is faced with a big problem in the Union House, and I would like to present to you the feeling of many of us in this matter. That the patronage of the Union has been decreasing rapidly year by year is evident to us who have been here for several years, and that it is now serving the purpose for which it was founded is questionable. In my opinion it is not.

The Cafeteria patronage has fallen off very markedly during the past several years, and we estimate that at present it "serves" less than 300 students of a total 1700 in all, and regular patronage is admitted to about 150, and frequently 150 are not served in two days.

Earnings from the Tuck Shop and Billiards were last year reduced 33% over the preceeding year and 50% over the session 1925-26.

Various reasons are offered for this situation, the most likely is that the Fraternities are taking in an increasing number of men, and they do not need the service that the Union offers. Again more Undergraduates prefer to spend their free time in the Theatres than in reading (this statement I believe to be well founded.) I do not think that the Undergraduate is doing any more work than formerly:

To summarize the Union serves for:

1. Dances
2. Cafeteria for 150 regularly. 300 a maximum

3. Executive Officers for the Council and its activities.
4. Committee Rooms.
5. Billiards which are poorly patronized at present.
6. Rehearsals for Theatre Plays.

It would seem that these facilities could be provided for in a less expensive manner than at present, and as suggested by a member of the Corporation, could be quite well housed in the proposed Gymnasium, or Recreation House. The members of this Council feel that such a plan is entirely practical, and I do not think would hesitate to suggest that the Union House be disposed of and the service it now renders be incorporated in the proposed building where "Maintenance and Repairs" would not loom up as the giant spectre which now confronts the Executive every year.

The unfortunate result of our financial strait is that we are not able to give the necessary support to many of our most deserving organizations, and it is felt by many of us, that we are forced to push less deserving activities simply because they net a revenue and that is not as it should be.

With regard to the Student levy. Each undergraduate pays \$17.00: \$10.00 of which goes to the Athletic Board. The remaining \$7.00 is divided among the various organizations. The total levy we believe to be the highest paid on the Continent, certainly in Canada, and it would scarcely be fair to suggest increasing this burden.

Now, Sir, I think I have presented the several angles of our troubles and will not burden you further. I hope that the University will understand our difficulties and see fit to help us.

Trusting to hear favourably from you, I remain,

Respectfully yours,

H. Paul Melanson

President,
Students' Executive Council.

P. S. I am enclosing a duplicate Financial Statement for the session ending June 30th, 1928, as prepared by our Auditors. This will set forth in a concise form our earnings and expenditures for an "Average" year and may prove to illustrate the manner in which we are forced to operate at the present time.

DOCKET ENDS:
FINANCES

McGILL UNIVERSITY
MONTREAL

THE MACDONALD PHYSICS LABORATORY

April 28th. 1928.

Sir Arthur W. Currie, G.C.M.G.,
Principal,
McGill University,
Montreal.

Dear Sir Arthur,

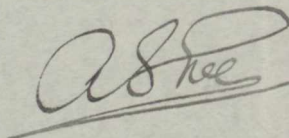
Students Council.

Dr. I. Mackay and I met the
outgoing and incoming Presidents of the
Students Council yesterday.

Their statutes are under
revision, and will be submitted to Corporation
early next session for consideration. The
points raised at the last Corporation meeting
will receive their careful consideration.

We agreed that matters had
better stand over for the present, as the
evolution of the Students Council will best
come from the Council itself, with, of course,
the approval and perhaps guidance of Corporation.

Yours very sincerely,



A. S. Eve,
Director of the
Department of Physics.

19th April, 1929.

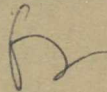
Mr. H. P. Melanson,
President - Students' Executive Council,
690, Sherbrocke Street West, Montreal.

My dear Melanson,

I wonder if you have ever taken up with the Students' Council the question of a subscription at the beginning of the year towards the Annual Banquet, or the question of abolishing it altogether?

Further, is there anything at all the Students' Council can do with reference to encouraging the students to practise some community singing for the sake of a decent Convocation and adding to our University spirit by putting a little more enthusiasm and pep into our student body?

Yours sincerely,



Acting Principal.

November 28th, 1929

Mr. Boyd Millen,
President, Students' Council,
McGill University.

Dear Mr. Millen,

I believe the elections for
the Students' Council come on shortly.
Please give me a confidential report on
those nominated, or come to see me about them.

Yours faithfully,

September 30, 1932.

Dean Nesbit, Esq.
President Students' Council,
McGill University.

Dear Mr. Nesbit,

Founder's Day Convocation will take place at twelve o'clock noon on October 6th. This hour has been selected in order to make a large attendance of students possible. I am most anxious that undergraduates, and particularly the freshmen, attend this Convocation, to give full recognition to the importance of the occasion. I am glad to hear that you will co-operate with us to ensure that proper respect be paid to the memory of our Founder, on the one day in the year when we gather to do him honour.

Ever yours faithfully,

Principal.

690 SHERBROOKE STREET WEST
MONTREAL, QUE.

TELEPHONE:
LANCASTER 7141

STUDENTS' EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY

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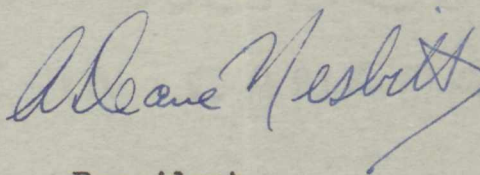
September 30, 1932.

Sir Arthur W. Currie,
Principal, McGill University,
Montreal, Que.

Dear Sir Arthur:

I shall be very glad to co-operate so far as possible in making the Founder's Day Convocation a success by ensuring the attendance of as many undergraduates as possible. I feel, however, if this is to be done, the Convocation should be at 12 o'clock noon. It would be almost impossible to get the students to return on a half-holiday.

Yours sincerely,



President

MEH/AVC.

690 SHERBROOKE STREET WEST
MONTREAL, QUE.

TELEPHONE:
LANCASTER 7141

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December 12th 1932.

Mrs. MacMurray,
Principal's Office,
McGill University.

Dear Mrs. MacMurray:

We are enclosing a copy of the Constitution of the Students' Society of McGill University (revised to 1931), and we are forwarding a list of the latest amendments to this Constitution, which were approved on November 16th, 1932, but have not yet been included in the typewritten copy we have on hand. I trust these will be perfectly clear to you.

Yours sincerely,

M. C. Heasley

MEH/AVC.
Enc.