

# This Is Your Council

The Student's Union of St. Dunstan's University is a corporation comprising all full-time students attending this University and organized for three purposes: (1) to be the official representation of the student body, (2) to be the official channel of communication with the administration, (3) to co-ordinate student organizations and activities.

The first and second purposes of the union have been to a large extent ineffective due to a breakdown in communication between the council per se and the union at large. It is superfluous to add that students can hardly expect a faculty-student communication if they cannot or do not participate in a student-student communication.

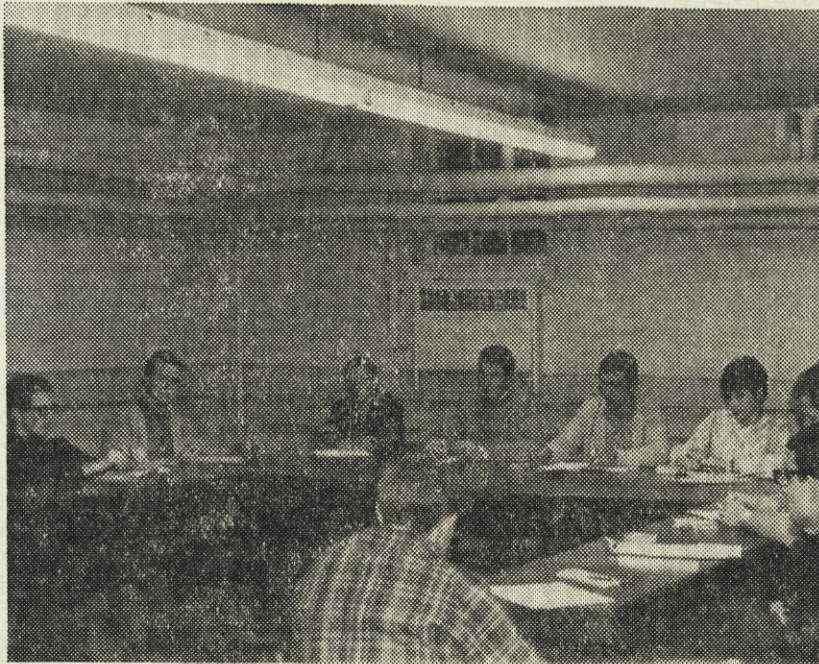
There are several steps which can be taken to improve relations between the hierarchy and ordinary members of the union. The ordinary member should use the structure that has been set up. He should use the class meeting to make his president accountable to him concerning union affairs. As it stands now, there is little accountability with the result that the union oftentimes fails to express the views of the majority. In this case the onus is not on the council but on the union member.

Individuals acting in groups which are represented by special members usually never see the representative of their interest from one end

of the year to the next. This is another example of communications break-down. With one person representing several interest groups, it is the duty of each group to see that its views are not being undermined to the benefit of another group. The onus is again on the ordinary union member.

ed of what is going on, the union meetings are open to him, the minutes are posted on the bulletin boards, and the Red & White reports Council news. The information is easy to obtain. It's up to the member to digest it.

The calibre and talent of council members is the whole union's responsibility. Coun-



The system of student government is set up by all union members at the semi-annual and annual meetings of the S.D.U.S.U. If an individual or group feels there is something lacking in the system, they are permitted to propose amendments directly. The onus is on the ordinary union member.

Should one feel that he is not being adequately informed, he should write to the editor.

cillors are elected by the student body at large, by classes and by groups. The leaders of the union will reflect either the interestedness or indifference of its members.

It cannot be over-emphasized that the ordinary member must relate himself to the union and he will have an excellent chance of doing just that at the semi-annual meeting on November 8th.

## Leadership Conference A Campus First

On the weekend of October 20-22, a group of students composed of Student Council members and class representatives met in Alberton for a course in group dynamics. The course was given under the direction of Father James Kelly and Errol Sharpe.

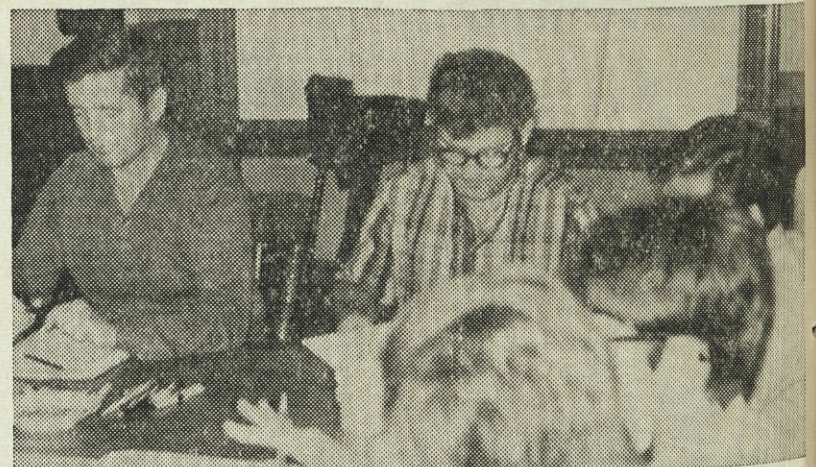
A course in group dynamics is the scientific way of understanding the power that is contained in a group. One might assume that the power possessed by a group is that sum of the powers of the individuals involved but this is not true. It is simply the measure of the power of the group in which individuals achieve a unity of identity. Not only does such a course indicate the reality of power structures but also trains people to utilize them.

The first session of the conference was held on Friday night. Discussion was held on how Student Council activities tie in with education and on the general purpose of the conference. After an agenda was set up for the conference, each of the students present gave a resume of their past experiences and their reasons for attending the conference.

In the session on Saturday evening the group discussed means of remedy the situation.

The Sunday session was a demonstration in the step by step use of group dynamics method in a meeting. Two model council meetings were held: the first with the actual council members and the second with other students occupying the positions of council. In both cases, the meetings dealt with a hypothetical problem and were observed by other students who wrote an evaluation on their handling of the problem. Parliamentary procedure was not used in either of the two meetings.

Perhaps it would be good to state the difference between parliamentary procedure and the method employed by Group Dynamics. The difference lies in the method of reaching a decision. In Parliamentary procedures, a motion is passed or defeated by the majority vote. In Group Dynamics a proposal is passed unanimously in preference to its alternative on the condition that, if it does not work, then the other will be tried.



The Saturday morning session was on the nature of the university. This discussion merely served as an example so that the trainers could show the students how to use the process of Group Dynamics in discussion.

The outline of how to deal with a problem when group dynamics is employed is as follows:

1. Identity problem.
2. Look at resources and data at our disposal.
3. What further information do we need.
4. Provisional proposals or alternatives.
5. Clarification of all.
6. Testing for consensus.
7. Decision via reciprocal consensus.
8. Implementations.

On Saturday afternoon the conference broke up into small committees to discuss what the dominant problems of the S.D.U. students were and how they could combat them. The general consensus was that the basic problem was lack of communication between the students and student leaders, and between students themselves.

In Council, Group Dynamics could be used by holding straws votes to find out the consensus of the Council before passing the final motion.

In summary, the conference was a success and was purposeful to all who attended. Father Kelly and Mr. Sharpe gave only a basic course in group dynamics but it was sufficient for several reasons. Those who attended the conference were given several important insights. First, how to use the potential of the group most efficiently. Second, the point of sensitivity training, that is, each member of a group feels his responsibility to the group and vice-versa. Each listens to what others have to say and tries to discuss, not with emotions, but with facts.

Those who attended the conference were Philip MacDougall, Tom Green, Mary McInnis, Leo Broderick, Terry McGarragle, Bill Tully, Eric Milne, Rita Curran, Pat Sinclair, Cathy Gallant, Ian Donahue, Bob Gaudet, Virginia Peters, Marilyn Reno, Judy MacKenzie, Father James Kelly and Errol Sharpe.

I AM ATTENDING

THE SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8th at 7:00 p.m.

BEING HELD IN THE GYM

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