

EXCLUSIVE:

# The Green Side

John Eldon Green, who had been a lecturer at SDU for the past several years in the Philosophy department, agreed to talk to our reporter about his case. The Editorial Board wishes to remind the student that the following interview is but one side of a rather complicated issue.

**Q.** It is commonly known that you have instituted legal action against St. Dunstan's because of the action of the University in discontinuing the former Philosophy 6 course which you taught. Would you care to comment?

**A.** On my attorney's advice, I have no comment to make at this time on the form of litigation which he has initiated in order to obtain appropriate remedies and relief from the courts in my interests. I would, however, like to emphasize that my attorney's actions are founded on the circumstances surrounding my dismissal, and my instructions to him in no way question the right of the University to discontinue my course. My concern is with the violation of my rights, which the action of the University involves.

**Q.** Would you mind explaining why you have taken this action?

**A.** The reason is very simple. On August 5th I received notice of my summary dismissal from the University staff, through the medium of a letter from the Secretary of the University Senate. I considered that the action of the University constituted a serious violation of my rights, and that there was not much to be gained by an appeal back to the body which committed this violation of my rights in the first place. I therefore placed the matter with my attorney.

**Q.** Was this letter the first indication you had that your course would not be continued in the Fall?

**A.** During the second week of July, I was at a private party with Dr. MacLellan, (Head of the Philosophy Department) and as we were leaving quite late at night I mentioned to him that I wanted to discuss with him some changes I proposed to make in the content and method of the course. He then advised me that there was a possibility that the course would not be offered, because of his fear that it might attract a sufficient number of students to prejudice his plans for additional courses in the Philosophy program.

**Q.** Was this not, in fact, notice?

**A.** I was hired by the President and I presumed that notice of termination of my employment should come from his office at least. In any case, who could believe that at a time students are clamouring for courses which are relevant to today's times, that the academic senate of a University would discontinue a course on the grounds that it might attract too many students, when there was no hint of any question regarding the content or standards of the course, or of my ability to teach it.

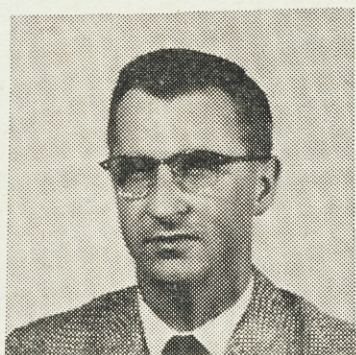
**Q.** Did you contact the President after this conversation with Father MacLellan to learn anything about your status?

**A.** It is not the usual practice of my attorney to

their employer to see if they are being fired. Doctor MacLellan did tell me that he would have a final decision within two weeks, which would have been July 23rd or 24th, and when that deadline was passed I assumed that his proposal had been rebuffed by either the Administration or Senate.

**Q.** What explanation do you have for the decision to terminate your course with so little notice?

**A.** I am sure that the University relied on the assumption that as I was a part-time employee of the university, it was probably an indifferent matter when I was dismissed. I believe some may have been of the opinion that no contract actually existed between myself and the University, and that, therefore, the usual ground rules did not apply. This, however, is speculation and nothing more.



J. E. GREEN

**Q.** To get back to the legal action. This seems to me to be a rather serious step. Did you contact the University regarding a settlement before having recourse to the courts?

**A.** Yes. Before instructing my attorney to act in the case, I first contacted the President, by letter, to confirm that I was dismissed, because I had a right to receive this information from the President rather than from a Senate officer, along with the usual courtesies to the effect that my work had been appreciated and so on. The President wrote to confirm that my course was being discontinued, and I was therefore no longer a member of the staff. I then wrote expressing my concern over the situation and requesting compensation. The President replied both in writing and verbally to the effect that he preferred to discuss the situation in person rather than in writing, and would I care to see him. At first I indicated that I would talk to him but later, after consulting my attorney and on his advice as well as for certain personal reasons, I decided against a personal interview.

**Q.** Would you care to explain why?

**A.** As I say, the decision was primarily on the advice of my attorney who did not wish me to prejudice my own case. My personal reasons were obvious enough. In the first place, I was claiming compensation as a matter of right and did not wish it to appear in the light of a gratuity awarded by the University. In other words, I did not want charity. I did not want

with the President, as this was the reason I had engaged an attorney. In any case, it appeared that the University was of the opinion that no rights were involved or the action would not have been taken.

Secondly, I have to confess that I was jolted at my summary dismissal when I had every indication over the past two years that the course would continue as long as I was available and the students elected to take it. I certainly did not think that the Philosophy Department would chop a course because it was getting popular. The President had concurred in this action, as Chairman of the Senate, and I frankly did not relish such an interview.

The decision was made. I wanted compensation and I wanted out. The issue became one of violated rights and resulting compensation and that was for my attorney to work out with the University.

**Q.** Was the University informed of this fact?

**A.** Apparently there was some confusion about my intention, but it was made clear by my attorney when he wrote the President informing him that he was acting in my behalf and that negotiation should be through him. I do not know why it was expected that I should set myself up for another humiliation. As a matter of fact, my experience from my involvement in some controversy regarding the future of higher education in the province made me hesitate to walk into any further unpleasantness.

**Q.** Do you question the right of the University to discontinue a course?

**A.** I wouldn't question the right of the University to close shop, let alone discontinue a course. That is not the issue here.

**Q.** Would you teach at the University again?

**A.** The question may be factious, but it deserves an answer. I want to make it clear that there is no question of my loyalty to and continuing interest in the University, and I expect to continue my interest. While I would not teach in the Philosophy Department again, I would have no reason to withhold any services from the University should they be required. I want to repeat my action is for damages resulting from this particular action of the University, and I see no reason why a settlement cannot be reached. If the University recognizes that damages are owing to me, or, on the other hand if their position is vindicated, then I see no reason for bitterness. Just because a person almost bleeds to death is no reason why he should develop a prejudice towards blood.

**Q.** Do you think the University would hire you again, in any capacity?

**A.** I think it would be unfortunate if, for example, the University wished to offer an

under-graduate Mapor in Social Work but declined to do so simply because it might have to consider me as a teacher.

**Q.** Mr. Green, what do you think was the real reason for your dismissal?

**A.** In fairness to the University I have to repeat its distinction: I was not dismissed, the course was discontinued. Obviously this is a matter of legal semantics for my attorney. Since this was the only course I taught, I no longer had a position on the staff. As to the reasons for the decision on the course, I accept those stated by the department. If anyone believes in unconscious motivation there is wide room for speculation, as in any decision of this sort, but I would not wish to comment on that.

**Q.** Mr. Green, the suggestion has been made that you are anti-clerical. Is this true?

**A.** Is it true that the suggestion has been made? I believe so. In fact, I am sure that one or two key people in this decision believe that I am anti-cleric.

**Q.** Are you?

**A.** It all depends on your definition. If an anti-cleric is one who produces anxiety in the clergy, then I am anti-cleric. I have a predilection for producing anxiety - I even do it to my boss, and why the clergy should be exempt is unclear to me. The fact is that anyone who so avidly espouses change as I do is bound to create controversy and cause anxiety. But as for my being anti-clerical, the suggestion is absurd.

**Q.** But this action is directed against the clergy.

**A.** Not at all. This action does not involve the Catholic Church, nor the Catholic clergy. St. Dunstan's University is a body corporate, independent of and sometimes unresponsive to the Diocese of Charlottetown. If a group of clergy wish to totally identify the university with themselves, and then call me an anti-cleric because I have brought this action, then I suppose in that sense I am anti-cleric.

**Q.** This action must have caused you a lot of difficulty. Would you do the same thing if you could have foreseen the trouble?

**A.** I regret the necessity for the action, and the hurt it has undoubtedly caused, just as I regret the occasion for it. I am sure people will part company with me on this issue, and that the demand for my time and services will lessen in some area. Possibly if I were a single man I might have made like the Arabs and silently stolen away but this has materially affected my family and in the same circumstances, given the same sequence of events, I would have no choice but the one I made.

**Q.** Will we be seeing you at the University?

**A.** Again, I see no reason why not. Maybe even in the Coffee Shop.

Thank you, Mr. Green.

## Viet Nam Students Tour Universities

MONTREAL (CUP) — Three representatives of the National Liberation Front of South Viet Nam arrived in Montreal on September 26 to begin a tour of Canadian campuses.

The visit is sponsored jointly by the Student Christian Movement and the Canadian Union of Students, in order that Canadian students may become "acquainted firsthand with the position of the NLF in that war, and may personally question the rationale behind the NLF's actions in the war."

The students were roundly booed and hissed down as they addressed a crowd of 900 rowdy students at Sir George Williams U. The crowd was antagonistic from the moment the student speakers entered the hall.

After unsuccessfully trying to explain their views of the war, the trio were forced to cancel a question-and-answer period.

At a press conference given upon arrival at Dorval Airport Wednesday, Luyan Sou, the group spokesman said their primary purpose in coming to Quebec was to explain the situation in Viet Nam.

The Sir George crowd wouldn't listen.

Sir George External Vice-President Jean Sicotte said of the disturbances created by the students: "Freedom of speech is a basic right in a democratic society."

"I am ashamed."

In contrast to the rowdy reception received at the hands of Sir George students Thursday, the visiting Viet Nam students were applauded loudly as they entered to address 900 McGill students Friday.

Under the chairmanship of Laurier Lapierre, the meeting allowed the Vietnamese to explain the Viet Nam war from the inside.

At a question period afterwards, their answers were sometimes evasive.

Asked if they condoned the killing done by the Viet Cong, they answered that their was a war of liberation. "We are not killing people who are foreign to us like the Americans are."

Asked what their people would do if the bombing stopped, their spokesman said they could not answer questions which began with "if".

The students, all members of the Central Union of Students of South Viet Nam, are visiting Quebec centres under the sponsorship of UGEQ.

The students are scheduled to travel through Quebec over the next two weeks.

No plans to visit other Canadian provinces have been re-