

# National Action Week not so active or national



**OTTAWA (CUP)** - Some mourned the post-secondary education system in Canada by wearing black armbands, others boycotted classes, still others sent postcards to their federal governments.

And lots and lots of students just went to class like nothing was going on.

Last week, January 18 to 22, was National Action Week and student councils at many Canadian colleges and universities pushed their students to get organized and active about government underfunding of post-secondary education.

"There seems to be activity in every province," said Tony Macerollo, chair of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), the national student lobby group which coordinated the Week.

Macerollo attended a forum on January 19 at the

University of Guelph, Ontario where classes had been cancelled for an hour. Macerollo and student council president Jim Ryan debated Guelph Conservative MP Bill Wineguard, about the roles of the federal and provincial governments in funding of post-secondary education.

"We got about 500 students out and we had a frank discussion about transfer payments and the confusion between the two levels of government," said Macerollo.

A "bitch rug" was the most popular event of the week at Douglas College in New Westminster, B.C, said student council vice president Fiona Cairns. Students wrote complaints down on paper, graffiti-style.

"We just took this huge roll of paper and stretched it across our concourse. We

taped it down and then attached all these pens and markers to it. Then everybody wrote down any complaints they had about school," said Cairns.

Cairns said many of the complaints were about the lack of adequate parking and other space problems on campus. Cairns said about half of the students who wrote on the "bitch rug" didn't take the exercise seriously, "but we got a lot of complaints that we can work on."

Cairns said the council also tried to encourage students to wear black armbands to mourn the demise of Canada's post-secondary education system, but this didn't go over as well as the "bitch rug".

"I guess they thought that wearing armbands was too radical," suggested Cairns.

Students at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland and Simon Fraser University in Victoria dropped bottles containing SOS messages, into their respective oceans.

"Exchanges between regions will be stressed, to get student unity in the forefront of national efforts," said Anne-Marie Vaughan, student council president at Memorial.

Students at Memorial also invited federal politi-

cians to enjoy the traditional student aid meal of Kraft dinner and took them on "underfunding tours" of the campus - outlining problems with over-crowding, day care, and inadequate sports facilities.

In the prairies, enthusiasm for the week was low.

"Maybe we should be calling it the national week of inaction," said Lyndon Surjik, chair of CFS-Saskatchewan, about the lack of interest from post secondary institutions in the three prairie provinces.

"As far as I know, only the University of Regina and the University of Calgary grads are taking part in the one hour boycott of classes on Tuesday," said Surjik.

The University of Regina students used the hour to host a forum on post secondary education issues.

"We will be asking students to get up and explain their beliefs about education, and we have invited the assistant deputy minister of education along to listen," said Surjik.

Saskatchewan and Alberta students are making

use of the national CFS postcard plan which sends cards to federal Minister of Finance Michael Wilson and Secretary of State David Crombie demanding the elimination of differential fees, and provincial accountability for federal monies earmarked for post-secondary education.

In Manitoba, only the University of Brandon participated in the Week of Action. Shelley Ireland, president of the Brandon University Students' Union, said she was surprised at the lack of support for the week. Brandon students only participated for one day - the "National Day of Mourning" on January 20.

"We are trying to get students to focus on the issues in education which are not up to snuff, such as higher tuition, student aid, underfunding, and the problems native and international students run into," said Ireland.

"Unfortunately we have the problem of getting our students interested, too," said Ireland.

## Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship

This past weekend, 13 IVCFers from UPEI headed for Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship's annual bible retreat in Malagash, N.S.. It was an exciting time. In three little cars we made a little convoy and headed for Borden. We arrived at Malagash just in time for the evening snack and after that we heard guest speaker, Andi Crowll speak. He spoke on what being a Christian was all about (Love, humility, and servanthood). We also had small group meetings. These were a great opportunity to get to know people from other universities. In our small groups we discussed many issues throughout the weekend such as: evangelism, sex and integrating your faith and your mind.

Saturday morning saw the break of another great day. Andi continued to talk on servanthood, and also spoke on the 'grey' areas of Christianity. Some of these were: divorce, drinking, denominations and destinations. On Saturday af-

ternoon we had time to prepare for the upcoming variety show, as well as play some snow sports.

Later in the evening Andi spoke again to an enthusiastic crowd. When he was done we had a 'bear pit' session. Here, students asked Andi questions concerning the topics that he had been speaking on, and questions that were completely unrelated. Andi had many interesting and good points to make. He was liked by everybody (I'm sure the fact that he looked and acted like Howy Mandel had nothing to do with it).

The variety show was 'good fun', to quote Wannie. Our very own group sang the Marine Forecast in an Anglican Chant.

The UPEI IVCF group will never be forgotten.

On Sunday we met with our small groups again, but not until after we had a worship service. We then ate up, packed up, cleaned up and left for Cape Tormentine.

By the way, did you know that 11 people can fit into a Honda Civic?



STAND-UP CHAMELEON