

# MP says Internet should be policed for porn

By Chuan Goh- with files from Bruce Rolston, (CUP)

ILLEGAL MATERIAL OF A PORNOGRAPHIC NATURE is rampant on the Internet computer network and must be stopped, says a Reform Party MP.

Myron Thompson, the Member of Parliament for the Alberta riding of White Rose, has received copies of a story containing depictions of sexual acts between an adult male and young boys. The story came from a constituent complaining about the presence of material of this nature on the Internet. Thompson said he was disgusted by the contents of the story, called "Cub Scouts II," in which a group of young scouts with their adult leader set out on an expedition that eventually involves the leader engaging in sexual activity with his charges.

"You can't find anything more gross than what you find there," said Thompson.

Thompson said he is concerned about the ease with which material of an obscene or pedophilic nature can be accessed by virtually anyone with a computer and modem.

"Without a doubt this material violates even this government's lenient standards of what is and is not allowed in Canada. This is pornographic," Thompson wrote in a press release. "The current regulations state any depiction of sexual acts with children is not allowed. This story depicts and details adult/child sexual acts. It is in violation -- why is it not stopped?"

Shannon Smith, a member of Thompson's staff, said Thompson is particularly concerned about the accessibility of Internet pornography to children.

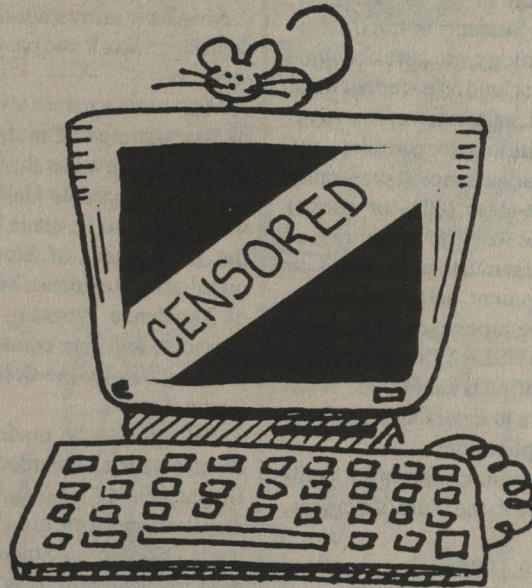
"The people that are best at it [accessing Internet pornography] are kids between ages 10 and 14," Smith said. "Parents should be able to prevent their children from getting hold of material that might not be beneficial to them."

Smith said computer manufacturers should consider implementing lock-out mechanisms that would filter illicit pornography away from the eyes of children.

Conceived in the 1970s as a computer communications system for academics involved with the United States Department of Defence, the Internet has evolved into a loose network of thousands of computers with millions of users worldwide. Lacking any form of central authority, the highly decentralized nature of the Internet creates special problems for police

investigations, says Detective Constable Michael Kostiuk of the Toronto police's Special Investigation Services.

"The problem with [policing] the Internet is that illegal material comes from thousands of different sources. Pornogra-



phy is going all over the place," said Kostiuk.

Internet investigations tend to be lengthy, wide-ranging, and are hindered by the ambiguity of the laws governing information access, Kostiuk said. Investigations often involve officers constantly scrambling to trace sources and catch up to offenders.

Any mechanisms designed to filter out illicit material are bound to be eventually circumvented, he added.

"Every lock has a key, and it's only a matter of time before some hacker finds the key," said Kostiuk.

Richard Malinski is president of the Toronto FreeNet, a new network that allows free public access to the Internet. He says the responsibility for ensuring that minors do not have access to Internet pornography rests with the parents of the children.

"We as parents have to be the controlling force when it comes to deciding what sort of material our children can or

cannot access," Malinski said.

The Toronto FreeNet allows pornographic material on certain Internet newsgroups to be accessed by registered users. Although any member of the general public can become a registered user, minors require the signature of a parent to do so.

The thousands of different Internet newsgroups that may contain material of a questionable nature make it almost impossible for public-access Internet providers, like the Toronto FreeNet, to censor Internet pornography, Malinski said.

Malinski said he also has ethical concerns.

"I don't do censorship because that leads one down a slippery slope. If you start filtering in one newsgroup, why don't you filter elsewhere? Why not filter books or television? We have enough restrictions on questionable material and we don't need to put more restrictions into place," said Malinski.

It's up to users -- and in the case of minors, their parents -- to decide what sort of information they may or may not want to access, he said.

"We let the user make the choices. We don't have the manpower to do any policing ourselves. We won't take anything off [the FreeNet] until the courts themselves take action," said Malinski.

Most universities' information technology guidelines prohibit sexual harassment, but say nothing specific on the access, sending, or display of obscenity on university computers.

However, a year ago, some universities, such as the University of Toronto, blocked receipt of the Internet newsgroup "alt.sex." Network operations director Eugene Siciunas said at the time that U of T was concerned that some of the material on the group violated the Criminal Code's definition of obscenity.

But U of T administrators accepted it was more a show of compliance than an effective act of censorship. As Siciunas conceded, the material could still be accessed by the experienced Internet user.

Meanwhile, MP Myron Thompson said he and his staff are continuing to monitor the situation on the Internet. But concrete solutions still elude him. "There must be something that can be done," Thompson said.

## Foreign Service to reject History and Political Science grads

By M-J Milloy (CUP)

THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND International Trade recently decided not to recruit any new foreign service officers in the coming year from political science or history.

In response, the McGill Political Science Students' Association and the History Students' Association have started a petition protesting the decision.

"The foreign service has, for one year, decided to only hire economics, business administration and commerce stu-

dents," said Gibran van Ert, president of the History Students' Association at McGill.

Individuals will also be considered only if they are proficient in Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, Arabic or Russian.

To enter the foreign service, applicants write a standardized examination and are selected on the basis of their results. The new policy makes clear that no examinations will be considered that are written by graduates without the new prerequisites.

Opposition to the policy has been widespread. In addi-

tion to the McGill student associations, the Canadian Political Science Association has also taken a stand against the move.

"The reason given for this policy was budgetary

shows, concerns of Asian-Pacific security are less important than creating 10,000 new Canadian jobs."

Neither explanation provides much solace for many political science or history students.

As noted in the petition, "Many students at McGill and across the country enter political science and history with the intent of preparing themselves for a career in the foreign service."

Professor John Zucchi, chair of the McGill's history department, said, "Students have only recently been informed of this new policy. It was wrong

to simply announce it for next year's hiring." Zucchi noted, "If this policy was in place in 1920, Lester B. Pearson would not have been hired."

The organizers of the petition say they hope this policy will be reconsidered for this year, and not imposed in future years.

Even if the policy remains in place for this year, student activity will force the Department of Foreign Affairs "to think twice... and plan better in the future," Zucchi said.

**"As the recent trade delegation to China shows, concerns of Asian-Pacific security are less important than creating 10,000 new Canadian jobs."**

constraints," explained Professor Elisabeth Gidengil, chair of the McGill's political science department, adding that, due to cutbacks, the policy is "targeting areas of acute shortages."

Professor Evan Potter, also of the political science department, said "Canadian foreign policy has always been motivated by trade."

He explained that, although overshadowed in recent decades by the cold war and regional security, foreign policy is now "returning to the natural state of being economically driven," he also said, "As the recent trade delegation to China