

National Student Day at Dalhousie

by Bernie MacDonnell

Most people on campus are not aware that something is going to happen on Nov 9th. At this point, having spoken in the S.U.B. and the residences, and distributed printed material throughout the campus, it is the hope of the NSD committee that people are beginning to get a feel for National Student Day. And an understanding of what the project has been designed to accomplish. Yet, handicapped by a small work force, it is clear that we have not reached a large number of students and, consequently, some are still in the dark.

National Student Day, despite all the well-intentioned(?) rumours to the contrary, is not a holiday from classes. As well, it has not been designed to collect the pseudo-activist minority into a huddle on abstract theories of education systems.

Rather, the day was conceived with the intention of beginning a large scale discussion of fundamental student issues. Concerns that we are all faced with and force to deal with almost daily, but very often do not recognize as being common problems. Of course as we know, no one knows what they will be doing next year, where the funds for further education will come from or where they may find a job. But yet, when we raise these questions we generally let them pass and resign ourselves to the fact that, as always, we will face these problems as individuals, regardless of the uncertainties and inequalities.

While this approach may have been workable, if less than satisfactory, in the early years of this decade, it is not at all clear that such practices will be sufficient in the future.

The expanding economy of the sixties is gone, and government appears to be no longer in educating a skilled management class that can not be employed. The sluggish period of the seventies has radically altered governments' view of the importance of post-secondary education. The Henderson Report in Ontario, the Graham Report in Nova Scotia, the Alberta Governments sweeping increases in tuitions, moves by the Feds reducing to reduce money for education—all these factors suggest the new mood within government circles, they all illustrate that a darker day is on the horizon for students. Indeed, if current attitudes prevail in the backrooms of the Nova Scotia

cabinet, we at Dalhousie may watch our Student Aid package deteriorate even further while the question of increased tuitions (already the highest in the country) remains painfully salient.

These new realities demand that we re-think our traditional approach to collective student issues. It is our view in the NSD committee, that the first step in the evaluation pro-

cess must be the initiation of discussions among all students concerning basic student needs.

Thus, on Nov. 9th we have prepared lectures and workshops on the three issues which are the most pressing at present: student aid, employment, and housing.

We hope that the debate arising from these topics will enable everyone to gain a better grasp of

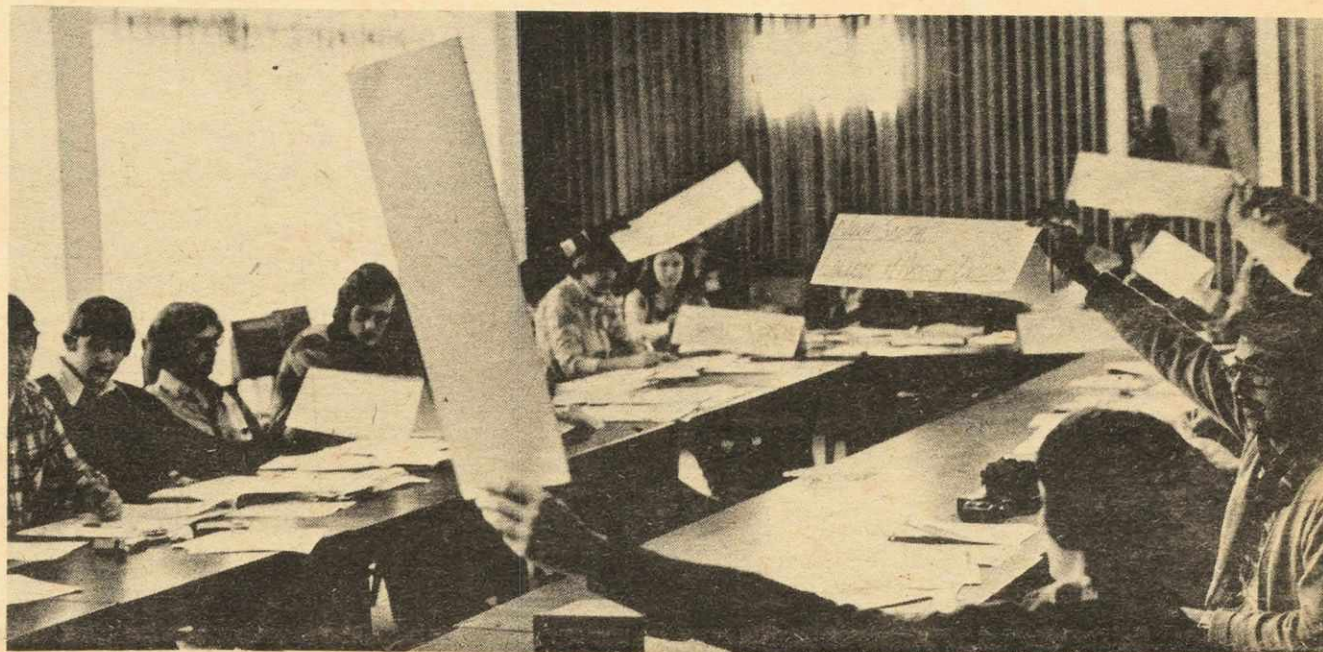
the complexities of our current position; and, hopefully, will begin a period of consciousness-raising that will cause all students to realize that only through united action can we hope to reverse what appears to be the imminent decay of our already inadequate and unequal education system. National Student Day demands your immediate attention.

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Students leaders endorse NSD

Sackville (CUP)—With only nine days to go, the Atlantic Federation of Students endorsed National Student Day as an opportunity to inform students and the general public as to the complexities of the common problems of students. They hope that "the grass roots of Canada's student population will develop a heightened awareness of their situation" through educational work being done by student organizations in the region.

Delegates to the October 31 conference of AFS were urged to return to their respective campuses and hold general meetings on the day of concern where common issues and proposals could be discussed. This would give student leaders the mandate they need to confront the government with the concerns of students.

Unfortunately, too few student leaders in this region had done enough homework on National Student Day and at this conference they were forced to admit that very little work had been done on their campus to prepare for the day of

concern. These delegates were urged to return to their campuses and organize for the day as best they can within the short time remaining. They were told "at the very least, a general meeting of all students should be called and the students informed of the issues".

National Student Day is November 9 and is being observed by students across the country as a day for educational work about the fundamental issues facing students: the rising cost of education, government cutbacks in education, student unemployment and the quality of education.

AFS to go bilingual

Sackville (CUP)—"We must be constantly aware that we are here to organize for all Atlantic students and that there are five french-speaking post-secondary institutions that we do not presently represent. It is vital that we consider ways and means of relating with the students at these institutions. It is vital that we consider, again, bilingualism for the Atlantic Federation of Students in order to serve the students in this region. "With these words a delegate to the recent conference of the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS) reminded that organization of its earlier promise to bilingualize.

The federation has come under heavy criticism from the student union at the Universite de Moncton for its seeming unwillingness to

seriously address the question of bilingualism in this region. Past promises had been broken and delegates from Dalhousie University in Halifax were concerned that the federation would not follow past resolutions that call for a bilingual AFS.

On October 31, delegates to the regional conference decided that "cost can no longer be a factor in this issue, we must take a principled stand for bilingualism regardless of the seeming inconvenience it may cause some present members of the federation". The next conference of the federation, slated for November 27, will be complete with translation services for the french language. As well, the delegates reaffirmed their intention to bilingualize the written communication of the organization.

Due to the Remembrance Day holiday, next week's Dalhousie Gazette will be coming out on Wednesday rather than Thursday. All copy must be submitted by Monday at noon.

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