

**Atlantic conference planned**

**Decision about NUS status necessary**

A meeting of the Atlantic post-secondary institutions is to be held at SMU on April 28. The conference is being organized mainly by Dan Lamey, the SMU delegate to the Nova Scotia Association of Student Unions. Its purpose is to investigate the very real possibilities of an Atlantic association being formed and to work out the

Atlantic position for the NUS conference to be held a few days later.

It is hoped that this planning will enable every effort to be made at getting an agreement out of the NUS conference. As a preliminary, Dal President Mike Gardner, through the N.S.A.S.U., is asking that all the Atlantic institutions apply for NUS membership so that they

can participate and actually join at the Dalhousie conference if they wish to.

Lamey says that the Atlantic conference may decide anything from having all the institutions go to NUS to sending only one person to speak for the entire region. This last possibility seems counter-productive, but who knows? It is

apparent that Halifax was chosen as the site for the NUS conference as a peace-offering to the Atlantic region.

If the SMU conference results in an Atlantic Association of Students, the new organization will have a hard fight for survival. The history of regional and provincial unions in the Atlantic provinces is a history of collapse after collapse. In 1968 and 1969 provincial unions such as the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Unions of Students folded. This was simultaneous with the disintegration of CUS, which had been vaguely affiliated with the provincial unions.

A successor was officially formed one month before CUS folded. It was the Federation of Atlantic Student Councils. FASC was hurt at the start by the refusal of Dalhousie and U.N.B. to join. FASC depended on 4 provincial vice-presidents who were also officials of their respective unions. This led directly to a complete absence of activity, except for executive meetings, an unproductive conference and several lobbying letters written by the President. FASC lasted five months.

After two years of inactivity throughout the Atlantic

provinces the NSASU was formed as a student lobby. Several futile attempts were made recently to re-establish the N.B. Union of Students.

The interest and activity put into the provincial, regional or national organization of its member unions has always been the make or break aspect of these organizations. The local union leadership is the group that has continual contact with the students. It has the financial and organizational reserves to make students aware of national issues and to convey the students' reactions to the national or other organization.

It is obviously impossible for a national or even a provincial organization to elect its officers or otherwise be run from the local student bodies. Fieldworkers have made the only attempt at solving this problem. They travel around their specific region, encouraging interest in the national organization, seeing that its message gets through to the students. Experienced advice to union leaders is also offered.

These are some of the problems that will face the Atlantic region's student leaders on April 28. With luck, they will make the first steps towards a practical solution.

**. . . and more words**

To the GAZETTE:

Institutional victimization by those who daily judge existence with a subjective criteria must stop. It is they who must now be questioned.

On November 30, 1972 my employment was ended due to lack of funds. On that date I applied for work through Manpower, an institution which creates work for the individuals employed in it by trying to find work for you. I made fifteen appearances at the Manpower centre on Barrington Street and checked out personally every job which was offered to me, most of which I was not qualified for. I also tried to create my own employment through LIP Grants and Manpower Grants. I have spent my days pursuing these grants and asking every employer in this city which I thought could employ me and not for any specific type of work. (sic)

Failing to get work, I applied for UIC Benefits on January 23. I have never applied for UIC Benefits before. I did not want to. It was my last effort. The days passed on — my soul grew afraid of what I saw. For three weeks, I have been without a place to stay. The days have been long, cold and salted with the bitterness of those who pass judgement on existence from their faded covered chairs paid for by those who work for their money. I am tired — tired of being questioned, tired of asking, tired of explaining.

I have worked all through my life. Thus far I have put myself through seven years of university, working part-time while I was doing so. Many of the faces whose financial worries were carried by their fathers are now the faces I see.

The reasons for my rejection by the UIC and by the Board of Appeal referees were that I had not proved that I was available for work since December 15 and that I was employed. What exactly am I supposed to do? I have applied for various jobs — I have knocked on many doors, I did not apply for UIC until I was financially forced to. On my last job, I received \$100 per week. It was January 23 when I applied for UIC. Does it seem reasonable that I would frustrate myself by looking for work and not applying directly for my UIC benefits which I had never before in my life applied for? I have done everything in my power to find employment and stand by to supply details to anybody who is interested or inquisitive. I stand ready to face those who are clothed in fur coats and pass judgement on one's legal human rights.

As a kid, I worked with my hands in the soil to help feed myself as one of 13 children. Today, I want to do the same but am prevented from doing so. I have spent much time, hard work and money gaining what little experience I have but I will not be victimized by institutional insanity and a code of contradictory credentials of the individuals who have

reached their point of incompetency and insist on their self-righteousness. I leave my case to you. I do have seven years university and have done the following:

1. Assistant Physical Director at the Halifax Y.M.C.A.
2. International World Service Worker for 8 months in Uganda, East Africa.
3. Substitute teacher in the Halifax Schools.
4. Aquatic Director at Liverpool, Queens Co. Summer 70-71.
5. CIT director for Big Cove Camp.
6. Programme Director for the Shelburne School for Boys.
7. Detach Youth Worker for the City of Halifax.
8. Various jobs in factories in Montreal and construction in Halifax.

UIC has got to be brought into question, especially those individuals who are in a responsible position for which they are most qualified not to hold. It is they who should be looking for work and be insulted as they have insulted me in the past three months.

Facing it until your conscience rapes your soul.

Ed LaPierre

P.S. Some important questions: Can one look for work after having slept on the floor and not eaten properly? How does one do a day's work if he is nutritionally deficient? I have done this and still am told by the UIC doormats that I have not proven myself available for work. I will accept less money than a person who has a wife and kids.

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