

## Hicks reluctant to raise fees

## Students' fate undecided

by Valerie Mansour

Provincial Government support will be the deciding factor in a possible tuition hike.

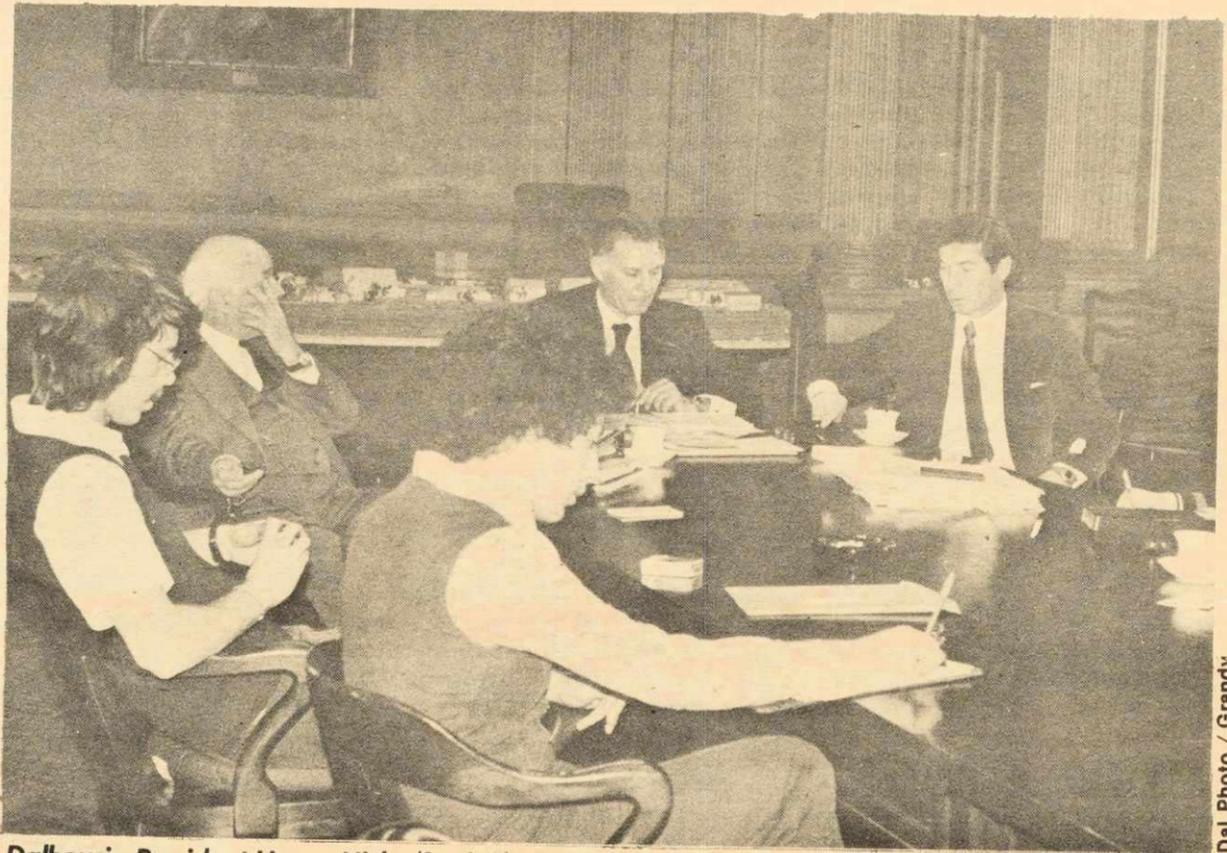
The Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU) held a press conference, Friday, following a two-day meeting, to voice reassurance that they are doing as much as possible to keep university costs down.

Dalhousie President Henry Hicks again voiced his reluctance to raise tuition fees for next fall. He refuses to forecast an increase but commented that he was "still hopeful that the level of support from government is sufficient. There's no point in a guessing game."

President of the University of Prince Edward Island and chairperson of the AAU, Ronald Baker, said that a co-operative study of university financing is in progress, including a study of the values of joint purchasing, conserving energy, and a library computerized catalogue system.

The extreme increases in electricity costs is a main factor in the possible tuition hike. Baker said that at a New Brunswick university, power had gone up 9% in 1974, 56% in 1975, and 24% in 1976. Books and laboratory equipment have also increased immensely.

While discussing differential fees for foreign students, both Hicks, Baker, and University of New Brunswick President John Ander-



Dalhousie President, Henry Hicks, (far left), Ron Baker, President of UPEI, and UNB President John Anderson, answering reporters at the AAU conference.

son agreed that it would be "scandalous" to say that they can't afford such a small number of students. Hicks felt that assistance must be given to students from

developing nations, and that differential fees are "very unpopular with the Dalhousie Medical Alumni in New York."

The fate of Atlantic University

students should be decided in February, and until then the Association of Atlantic Universities plans to "do our damndest to stop tuition from going up."

## AFS/FEA opposes increase

Student leaders at a 22 January meeting of the Nova Scotia caucus of the Atlantic Federation of Students/Federations des Etudiants Atlantiques (AFS/FEA) decided that the organization should begin a program of action to oppose the expected province-wide tuition fee increase.

At the caucus meeting held in Antigonish last Saturday, student leaders were reminded that in the 22 January issue of the Halifax Chronicle-Herald several University presidents were predicting tuition

fee increases.

The recent change in the Fiscal Arrangements Act (FAA) which determines the rate of federal/provincial funding of Post Secondary Education, places the burden of policy decisions at the provincial level.

AFS/FEA Treasurer Ronny MacNeil advised delegates that the organization had not been able to raise the expected \$7,500D in emergency funding. Delegates decided to continue fund raising although no vote was taken.

MacNeil announced that \$3,550 was raised, 200 of which was from U of Toronto (SAC).

The imminent fee referenda were discussed, and delegates decided (pending the hiring of a staff person) to have most of the work done by the individual campuses although Halifax will have a co-ordinating committee for the five metro campuses.

In response to the advertisements for an AFS/FEA staff person, two applications were received, although more were expected.

Delegates reaffirmed vocally their earlier decision to make bilingualism mandatory for the staff person.

Representatives from St. Francis Xavier University produced a position paper on financial controls for AFS/FEA which was accepted in general by the membership. As well, Xavier delegate Mike MacInnis prepared a list of proposals for revisions to the Student Aid program.

Delegates discussed strategy for both student aid and financing post secondary education questions.

The Nova Scotia Caucus will have at least one more meeting before the AFS/FEA conference in May.

## Beaver food 'rip-off'

Mark Lee, President of the Federation of High School Students (FHSS) told delegates at a meeting of the Nova Scotia Caucus of the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS/FEA) last weekend, that present activities are in three areas: textbooks, libraries and cafeterias.

FHSS is a union of the High School students in Halifax and Dartmouth. Presently FHSS is the only organized group of high school students in the Atlantic.

Cafeteria food, Lee told the delegates, was a way that "most of the students were getting ripped off." He explained that Beaver Foods, an institutional caterer, has not fulfilled the nutritional promises it made to obtain the contracts. Lee, and FHSS member Helen MacDonell, told delegates that at one of the high schools an excess of \$10,000 was made in profit from the sale of cafeteria food. The money was given to the school administration. Lee said that he didn't understand why the "money made couldn't be returned to the cafeteria to lower the prices."

FHSS members also found that at a second high school, the food listed on the menu was seldom offered.

A complaint to the Board of Health closed the cafeteria at one school for several days.

In the choosing of textbooks and library books, the students found that they had little influence in the selection, although they were able to have some books added to course lists. They plan to determine why particular books are picked and offer advice on the selection of them.

FHSS will soon be presenting a brief to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission on "The present and future direction of Higher Education in the Maritimes."

On a motion of AFS/FEA secretary Don Soucy, delegates unanimously approved recognition of FHSS. Soucy, Vice-President External of NSCAD, together with Dalhousie Arts representative Bernie MacDonell provided the impetus for the formation of FHSS, as MEEOC (Metro Equal Education Opportunity Committee). The organization's name was changed when the organization decided to expand outside Halifax-Dartmouth.

Soucy and MacDonell ushered the organization through its formative stages although Soucy told delegates that FHSS quickly "start-

ed to make its own decision which was to ignore a lot of what we said."

As proof of the maturity of the organization, Soucy commented

that FHSS was doing work on cafeterias, and course and library books that all student unions should be doing.

## CAAU requests increase

The Council of the Association of Atlantic Universities has asked the Maritime Premiers to increase the 1977-8 operating grants provided to Maritime universities. A news release issued by the CAAU Tuesday January 25 requested an increase of at least 12.5 percent above the 1976-7 levels.

Only an increase in provincial funding can forestall a tuition increase the CAAU suggested at a news conference Friday, January 21.

CAAU spokespersons would not rule-out the possibility of tuition increases even if provincial funding is increased by 12.5 percent.

The Government Treasury Board has already made their decisions on the budgetary proposals of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Council (MPHEC).

Tuesday evening in a telephone conversation with Sydney Wile, Secretary to the Board, the Dalhousie Gazette was informed that the proposals are not public,

but following a meeting of the Council of Maritime Premiers in the near future the decisions will be released.

## but at SMU ...

by Matt Adamson

"There is a preliminary indication that government grants could be lower this year," said Saint Mary's President Owen Carrigan, guest speaker at the SMU Council Meeting last Sunday.

"Universities have three choices if this happens; raise tuition, operate at a deficit, or cut back services."

"I don't think students in this part of the country can stand another increase. The highest tuitions are in the Atlantic Provinces all ready."

When asked by AFS/FEA secretary Don Soucy, if students meeting with Education Minister, George Mitchell, would help, Carrigan replied, "Yes, any way possible. You people have done this before."