

Student leaders represent students?

As the result of a campus-wide student referendum Tuesday at Mount Allison University in Sackville, the Atlantic Federation of Students has increased its strength in New Brunswick.

However, in Fredericton on Saturday a meeting took place where New Brunswick student leaders decided to go their own way and form the New Brunswick Coalition of Students.

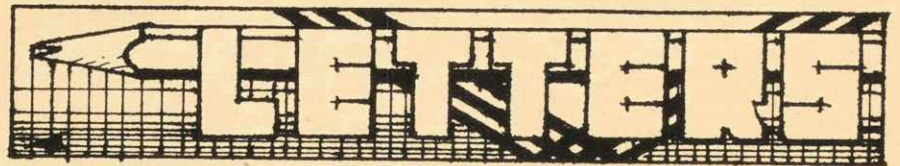
A paradox?—not really—just another example of the constant problem of student leaders making decisions contrary to the wishes of the students.

UNB Fredericton, UNB Saint John, and Mount A were in attendance at Saturday's meeting. At the time, none of them were AFS members although it was generally assumed the referendum at Mount A would go in favour of AFS. St. Thomas University in Fredericton, a member of AFS, was not at the meeting.

A similar thing happened here at Dal this year, when the student council ignored the results of last February's referendum and decided to withhold money from AFS, thus attributing to the problems of that organization to get a stable financial base to enable them to work constructively this year.

Due to the structure of post-secondary education decision making in this area, a regional organization to represent the students to the government makes sense. Obviously, the students at Mount Allison agree. Yet, their leaders voted in favour of forming a separate group to work "alongside" of AFS but not within the organization.

Student Council elections are approaching. Up to March 15 we will hear promises and more promises from eager candidates telling us they will "represent the wishes of the students". Let's hope they will mean it. When the speeches are being made and the door-to-door visits in residences are happening, put the candidates on the spot. Assure yourself that they will genuinely represent your wishes. Keep up with what happens during the year, so if in fact decisions are made contrary to what students previously have decided, and if you feel these decisions are not fair to you, you can let them know. A responsible student government for Dalhousie next year will only happen if students show some concern.



Council meeting most disgusting

To the Gazette:

It was with a deep sense of shame that I attended a meeting last Sunday at Howe Hall of the Student Council travelling circus. I wonder why the two meetings held outside the council chambers turned into such fiascos.

Here are just a few highlights of the meeting which will show my disgust. The first was when Sandy Ball, in the continuing expert handling of the chair, refused to allow the Grants Committee, during their report, to ask council for some guidance in the face of a dwindling budget. It was to be left until question period, and council, in their infinite wisdom, upheld the decision. If they were looking for efficiency, it would have been better to deal totally with grants at one place on the agenda.

Then, the prescription drug plan came up. In order to meet administration deadlines for fee increases, council had to make a decision on one plan. We had previously decided to hold a referendum with four alternatives to choose from, and we had to pick one, pending approval. Sandy MacNeill, in a continuing display of how he managed to screw-up the elections last year, and getting totally off point, moved to reconsider the plan to have four referendum alternatives. After much debate, this was defeated. Some of the councillors thought one alternative would be easier to handle with a yes/no vote. May I remind councillors that they use that method in the Soviet Union. Some felt students would not have enough background to deal with four alternatives—to answer, I have more faith in most students than I do in some of the people who sit around the council chamber.

Then, council had to decide what to tell the administration. Sandy MacNeill and a few other "bright" spots on council couldn't under-

stand that it didn't matter if we had a thousand choices on the referendum—we still had to tell the administration something. Sandy left the room and council decided to consider a motion to recommend one alternative to the administration, but to make it constitutional it would have to be made pending a referendum approval. Council seemed to accept the constitutionality of this. Sandy returned, and engaging his tongue without also engaging his brain, began to question the constitutionality—a question on which the chair had already decided. In the meantime, many council members had left, and Rosalie Starzmosky, in typical confusion, challenged the quorum. The meeting was adjourned. This meant that we had nothing to tell the administration, and that a proposed committee to look into all aspects of the present drug plan was not dealt with. We now have to wait three weeks for a new meeting when it will be too late for a decision on either matter to be of use. These people then have the nerve to say they are there to represent student interests.

It was at that point that I tendered my resignation to council. Vice-President Peter Mancini refused to accept a hastily drafted letter and asked me to reconsider. I thought that it wasn't worth wasting time to attend more meetings. Several others have since asked me to reconsider and I am still doing so. If I decide to stay it will be for two reasons—one of which is not that I'm attached to the idea of being part of the student government. The major reason is that I have accepted two committee responsibilities—the largest being grants and with three weeks left in the operation of that committee it may be better if I finished that job first. The second reason is that I hope when the meetings return to council chambers, some members will pick up the brains they left in their mailboxes.

**Keith Evans,
Law Rep; Grants Committee
Chairperson**

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the dalhousie gazette

The Dalhousie Gazette is the weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student Union. The views expressed in the paper are not necessarily those of the Student Union, the editor or staff. We reserve the right to edit material submitted for space or legal reasons, or if considered offensive to our readers.

The deadline for advertising is the Friday noon preceding publication. Articles and letters are due Monday noon. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity, if necessary, will be granted. Letters should not exceed 600 words, and must be typed if more than 100 words.

The Dalhousie Gazette, Canada's Oldest College Newspaper, is a founding member of Canadian University Press. Our office is on the third floor of the Student Union Building. Our mailing address is The Dalhousie Gazette, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S., B3H 4J2. Telephone 424-2507. The subscription price is \$7 per year (28 issues). ISSN 0011-5819

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