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Meeting in Antigonish

by Dan O'Connor

Nova Scotia's Student Union president met with the Minister of Education for the first time in ten months last Saturday, November 30. The meeting took place in Antigonish, which is the area represented by the minister, Dr. William Gillis.

Discussion was wide-ranging and informal. As is usual at these meetings, student aid received most of the attention. Dr. Gillis was given a copy of the student aid resolutions passed at the September conference of Atlantic student unions. He was told once again that an increase in the level of indebtedness facing graduates would be unfortunate, and that increased aid to cover higher costs should come in the form of bursaries.

The minister stressed the government's reluctance to spend more on student aid.

He felt that maintaining the present levels of assistance is the best that can be hoped for, and that any additional support will have to be from Ottawa. Federal increases are likely to be loans, and not bursaries.

Although stating that he was not sympathetic to tuition increases in 1975-76, Dr. Gillis made it clear that the initiative here lies with the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, and to some extent with the universities. He gave no indication of the provincial government's commitment to keeping tuitions at their present level. Nova Scotia students are still paying one of the highest proportions of the cost of education, compared to other provinces.

Since he kept the November 30 meeting informal, Dr. Gillis was able to deflect most comments and questions into a suggestion that individual unions, or all of them collectively, present briefs and submissions to the ministers and commissions that are directly responsible

for various aspects of government policy.

These suggestions included a submission to and meeting with the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission; a submission to A. Garnet Brown regarding improvement of the Residential Tenancies system; a presentation to the select committee that is studying the Graham Report; and a brief on student aid.

The union presidents made it clear that they were not happy with most of the Graham Report's suggestions about post-secondary education. It was stressed that anything done by the provincial government to increase the quantity, quality and price of housing would help the many students who are caught in a financial squeeze. The presidents expressed their concern that low income students are suffering the most from the provincial government's inadequate student aid and university financing.

The meeting closed with general comments on im-

provement of the Department of Education, the national review of post-secondary education which has been started by the federal government, and the quality and availability of secondary education in Nova Scotia.

Following a pattern established by Dr. Gillis, there will probably be another meeting with him in two months to discuss in detail the student aid situation for 1975-76.

The meeting in Antigonish was attended by the presidents of six out of the eleven university and college student unions. Those represented were Acadia, Dalhousie, King's, N.S. Agricultural College, St. Francis Xavier and St. Mary's. Several of the other presidents were unable to attend on November 30, but are participating in the collective attempt of Nova Scotia and Atlantic student unions to press for better government programmes in student aid and other areas.



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This Watergate Has Reversing Falls

FREDERICTON (CUP) - Political patronage and cover-ups flourish in New Brunswick according to a recent article by Philip Mathias in the Financial Post.

The article says a picture of "widespread political hank-panky" was shown by Financial Post investigations which turned up about 20 fresh examples of political impropriety.

Most of the cases cited by the paper concerned kick-back schemes and numbered bank accounts.

The article quoted reliable sources as saying that kick-backs of between two and five per cent of sales were made to party funds by companies doing business with the government.

One automobile dealer who had sold cars to the government in the late '60s, said he had a relative deliver the kickback money in a briefcase after a call from

Senator Nelson Rattenbury, now deceased.

A French language newspaper in New Brunswick claimed it had documents proving that the Hatfield government had forced a furniture supplier to pay a special commission to an ex-conservative member of the legislature. As part of the agreement the man was appointed the company's agent in New Brunswick. To cover the cost of the extra commission the company allegedly increased the price quoted to the government.

The government investigated the last incident without speaking to the company or asking the newspaper to show its documents. The result was a statement in the legislature saying the investigating committee felt the government "was getting fair value for the money spent and that it is where it terminated," Mathias said.

Another incident cited mentioned pressure from the government on school builders to use a plastic-foam material for roof insulation. The company making the material, until recently had close ties with the Minister of Supply and Services Carl Mooers and a conservative MLA, Reg Mabey.

Earlier this year Mooers sold his interest in the firm and announced he would not stand for re-election. Before this however, an architect had written the government warning that the foam might constitute a fire hazard.

The FP article mentioned only one instance when a member of the government had been charged with mispractices. That case involved Tourism Minister C. Van Horne who was charged with accepting "rewards" for using his influence.

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Nobody Digging It At All

by Lila Donovan

Mr. Stephen Davis of the Anthropology Department of St. Mary's University has proposed to the provincial government the hiring of a provincial archaeologist for Nova Scotia.

His proposal outlines the duties, work and qualifications involved in such a position. Specifically, the proposal says, "The person filling this post would be responsible for professional research, administration and co-ordinating all field work in the area of Nova Scotia archaeology and historical sites."

Mr. Davis said the people of Nova Scotia are not aware of the need for archaeology. Nova Scotia is one of the few provinces in Canada that

does not have a provincial archaeologist, he said.

"As a scientist and a Nova Scotian, I am concerned with the past and prehistory of the province," said Mr. Davis. "Nova Scotia has numerous sites to be excavated and researched, but many of these sites are being destroyed by natural causes (flooding and erosion) and by man."

"Construction projects are going ahead without any consideration for archaeological study, and it's possible that many valuable sites are being destroyed forever," he said. "The province needs a 'cultural watchdog' to prevent these sites from being destroyed."

Mr. Davis said the need for a provincial archaeologist is more acute than ever

because the Archaeological Survey on Canada (ASC) has stopped granting money to archaeological groups due to budgetary cutbacks by the federal government.

"At present, when artifacts are discovered in Nova Scotia, archaeologists from outside the province come in and do the work," said Mr. Davis. "With a provincial archaeologist, the province would have someone on hand at all times to research archaeological sites."

Another advantage of the proposal, said Mr. Davis, is that archaeology students in Nova Scotia would be given more of a chance to gain experience and apply skills they have learned in their own province.