

# Confrontation within coalition

by Eric Lawson

The Metro Coalition of Support for the Unemployed held a policy meeting Monday evening, which turned into a forum for the political grievances of some of its members, and indicated a rift in what was termed "the false solidarity" of the Coalition.

The heated discussion of policy and politics centered initially around the representative for the National Union of Students (NUS), Don Soucy. At a January 16 general meeting of the Coalition, attended by 200 members, Soucy supported the intervention of the Marxist-Leninist organization In Struggle as a democratic expression of dissent. Coalition member Francis Coady felt that the intervention, followed by several denunciations of the Coalition by Soucy, AFS secretary-co-ordinator, Tony Kelly, and staff-person Lou-Ann Meloche, was counter-productive, flying in the face of Coalition solidarity commitments, and "siphoning off the efforts of others." She subsequently proposed a motion calling for the removal of Soucy as an individual from the Coalition, so that NUS could then decide whether to replace him as their representative or withdraw their support altogether.

Kelly argued in support of Soucy by saying that the Coalition was insensitive to criticism from its members, the public and other pressure groups like In Struggle. Kelly also noted that Soucy represented NUS, an organization whose

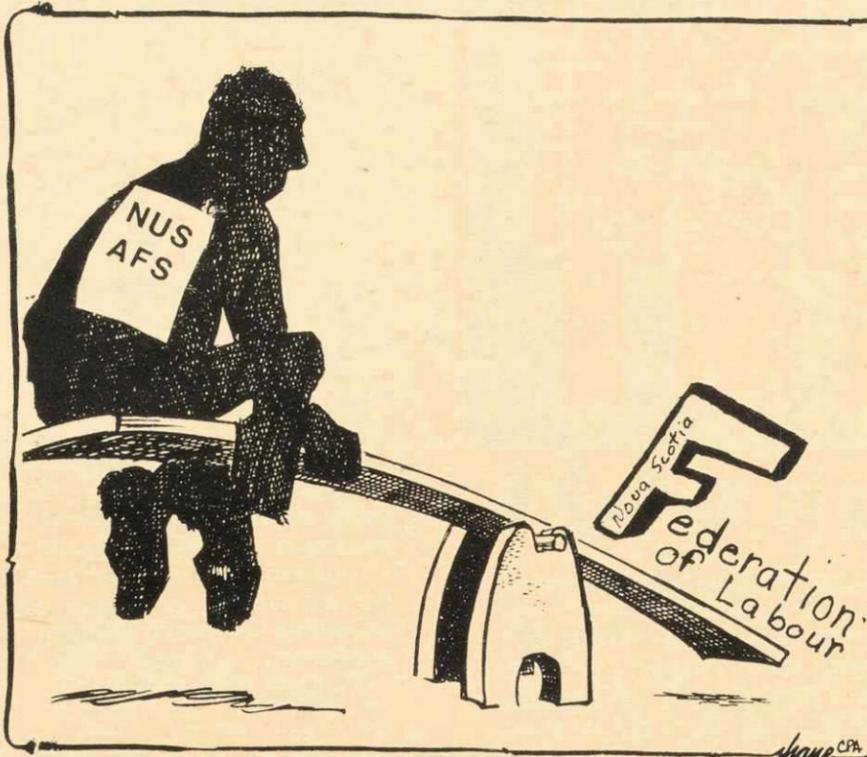
## Decision expected

## Insurance for overseas students?

by Jeff Round

For overseas students who have been ineligible for MSI coverage under the organization's 'resident eligibility clause', a resolution to the problem is imminent.

A recommendation on the matter of foreign students and medical insurance has been sent by the Health Services and Insurance Commission to Maynard MacAskill, N.S. Minister of Health and Welfare. According to Mr. Hare, executive director of HSIC, the recommendation is confidential, "but its contents should be made public when MacAskill sees it sometime this week." According to Robert Sampson, president of Dalhousie Student Council, Hare assured him the report is favourable



UPS AND DOWNS OF THE COALITION

views on the coalition are closely associated with AFS, so that by rejecting Soucy the Coalition would be in effect rejecting the entire student movement.

Sharon Reilly, Coalition spokesperson, replied that due to a lack of co-operation from and communication with Coalition members and

the co-sponsor Labour Council, most of the organizational work was done by a small group, so that the work load was simply too heavy for them to operate efficiently. She felt the meeting was perhaps not organized as effectively as it might have been.

Reilly also pointed out that the meeting was an organizational meeting, to organize a union of the unemployed, recruit new members, and plan some new directions for the Coalition. Its object was not public criticism, to what she and many others felt was the detriment of the Coalition.

Soucy, Kelly, and supporters re-iterated their position that a distinct political dichotomy was emerging in the organization, and that criticism of the Coalition's political affiliations and apparent inaction would have to be dealt with in a more democratic fashion.

## Education commission

## Students to become Reps

by Jeff Round

Atlantic students have been pushing for a student representative position on the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC). According to Robert Sampson, President of Dalhousie Student Union, the next representative appointed to MPHEC from Nova Scotia will be a student.

"I've forwarded a list of membership names on MPHEC and whose terms are up this March 31st to the Premier and am still awaiting a response," Sampson said. Sampson said he intends to speak with Premier Gerald Regan in the coming week and recommend Regan make a motion on this issue to the Council of Maritime Premiers (CMP) at their March 2nd meeting. "The motion will be to have three additional positions opened on MPHEC allotted to one student from each Atlantic province for terms of three years," Sampson said.

"Complications would arise in finding an individual who would be willing to make commitments for three consecutive years. These problems could be dealt with either through individual student

The general opinion of the twenty-odd Coalition members present was that Soucy, while violating a confidence by publicly berating the Coalition, was a valuable member of the Coalition and that removing him "would not remove the problems," and only create further sectarianism. The motion, after much discussion along these lines, was subsequently withdrawn, and a later motion to re-introduce it was defeated.

Reilly felt that the motion had produced a great deal of fruitful discussion, and thanked those present for their well-considered opinions. However, she also felt disappointed that strict political doctrines had to define the limits of participation by Coalition members, rather than a simple desire to work in a common direction.

A second motion was proposed by Ken Martin that a new steering committee involving two members of the Policy Committee and all of the Programming Committee be designated. After a slight shuffling of the membership of the two committees, the motion was passed. The Committee is to deal specifically with organizing further activities, such as pamphleting, demonstrations, etc., and is solely responsible for the execution of these activities. It is hoped that with increased organization and delegation of responsibility for specific action the Coalition can overcome some of its difficulties in initiating effective policies.

NUS / AFS dissatisfaction with the Coalition and their policies, politics and tactics has become increasingly vehement. Tony Kelly has claimed that the Coalition "allows itself to be dominated by a certain political perspective, to the exclusion of all others, i.e. the political positions of the leaders of the Trade Union movement . . ." Kelly feels that this movement is contemptuous of the student movement, and the question of continuing AFS participation is to be dealt with at a meeting to be held Monday, January 30, at 7:30 p.m. in the SUB.

councils, the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS) or the government," Sampson said.

Sampson said that, although AFS was dealing with the matter, they were not representative of all Atlantic students. "We must remember that not all higher education institutions in the Atlantic provinces are members of AFS." Sampson believes all institutions in the Atlantic provinces should have a voice in choosing the representative. "This issue should be open to everyone. The student in this position will be representative not only of AFS but of every student in the Atlantic region."

While the N.S. caucus of AFS is planning a major campaign against pending tuition increases and fiscal cutbacks to Maritime post-secondary institutions, the matter of a student representative on MPHEC is not seen as a major priority. According to Tony Kelly, Secretary-Coordinator of AFS, student representation on MPHEC would be primarily for information purposes as it would not guarantee any effective input.

## Publisher sets book prices

Irving Kirk, manager of the Dal bookstore, said Tuesday that the books bought in the bookstore are priced at the manufacturers' suggested retail prices. Kirk, obviously annoyed by the complaints he is receiving, denied emphatically that the bookstore is getting anything but a marginal gross profit.

The conviction that the campus bookstore is taking students for a ride seems to be wide-spread. Some campus bookstores in Southern California have begun to add freight rates to the price of the books available on the campuses. The practice of net pricing has also been adopted to help defer costs. The bookstore managers feel that the convenience of the campus bookstores far outweigh the extra cost. The Dal bookstore, although it has not adopted any of these

controversial methods, is still not alone as a campus retailer under fire.

Kirk refused to answer any direct questions pertaining to specific examples of price discrepancies. He said that in order to generalize about the bookstore one must not use specific examples. He would comment, however, that the foreign language department, and in particular, French 2020A / 2021B, is difficult to satisfy because the bookstore must often go through a distributor in New York to obtain books printed in foreign countries. Thus the foreign language books often have differences in prices according to the whims of both the publisher and the "middle-man" instead of just the publisher as is the case with most of the books bought for other courses.