



Owen Carrigan, President of St. Mary's University

Political split in student organization

by Mark King

There is an apparent rift developing in the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS) following a meeting of student union presidents from eight universities in Halifax last weekend.

According to Robert Sampson, Dalhousie student union president, the meeting was originally intended to deal with matters of concern to student councils including AFS. However, when the group met on Saturday, AFS turned out to be the only topic of discussion. Sampson said the presidents reviewed a proposed AFS constitution and made some changes which they hope to bring to the next plenary session of the organization.

The Secretary Coordinator of AFS, Don Soucy, who was not invited to the meeting, said Saturday's gathering was part of a political attack on the organization by a group of people who want to change the political direction of AFS. He said the meeting was an example of what AFS was before last year's organizational thrust: "a group of presidents sitting down together making policy from the top."

Todd Davis, Secretary of the student union at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, said the meeting was closed to presidents and their representatives only, and as representative of the president of SUNSCAD he was not permitted to speak until late in the meeting, only then when one president requested his vice-president speak for him.

Davis said NSCAD was informed of the meeting just two days before it was scheduled to take place. Soucy, who is also a student at NSCAD, questioned why other campuses were made aware of the meeting two weeks in advance, while the Art College which is "just down the road," had such short notice.

This thing has been in the works all summer, Soucy said, they are trying to return it to the elite it was before. He said he was told the day before the meeting students were not invited to the meeting, and neither was the AFS executive. The chairperson of the Nova Scotia caucus, Mike McInnes, did, however, attend the meeting but was not allowed to speak.

Sampson admitted freely he believes there is a split in the organization. He feels as president he best represents the students by "reiterating the basic wishes of the student council."

Soucy, however, described the group that met Saturday as people interested in backrooming, meeting with government officials and accepting small concessions. "Anybody can send letters and hobnob with people in high places, they are trying to change the direction of AFS from a mass based, democratically run organization."

Student participation in the recent Halifax demonstration of support for the unemployed for example was initiated and organized through the efforts of students, he

St. Mary's faculty rejects president

by Scott Vaughan

The Saint Mary's Faculty Union has voted overwhelmingly for the removal of University President Owen Carrigan with 87 per cent of the 140 faculty members who voted supporting a non-confidence motion in a referendum Friday.

Victor Catano, President of the Faculty Union, said that the referendum was not a union device to pressure the administration into accepting demands put forth by the union during recent contract talks, but was the result of long felt tensions between the President and the faculty.

Catano did say that the final straw came this summer during contract talks when Carrigan interfered with the negotiations. "The administration's negotiating team, under Carrigan's supervision, bargained in bad faith, practicing a 'double standard' in the contract talks." The faculty will vote on the administration's latest contract offer some time this week.

Owen Carrigan said that he would not comment on the referendum pending further consideration of its results.

However, Carrigan said that the Labour Relations Board of Nova Scotia found that, after investigating charges put forward by the union, the administration did not bargain in bad faith.

The President pointed out that no professor has been fired during his seven years as university president, and also said that the decision for the hiring of new professors lies not with the administration but rather with the faculty union.

"If Dr. Carrigan is not satisfied with the hiring process," Carrigan said, "then he is criticising his own union."

According to Catano, Carrigan "did not meet the standards of a good university president." Al-

said, not through the backroom scheming of student careerist politicians.

Sampson said there is no question of support for the organization, "there is more need for AFS now than ever before." However, he sees the two factions in AFS realizing similar objectives, but working on different levels. He said he didn't think either side would give into the other but would rather reach a compromise through policies and priorities.

Soucy insisted, however, that as AFS is structured now, it is a democratic organization of students

though Carrigan may think himself a "good manager," Catano said that the most important function of a university President was not that of a competent fiscal manager, but rather his or her ability to provide "academic and intellectual leadership for the faculty."

Catano felt that a university president should provide stability among the various faculties within the university, a stability which can only be reached when the constant hiring and firing of professors is put to an end. He said that there existed among the faculty members a 'low morale' due to the frequent turn-overs, the hiring of some new professors who are "green," and the lack of both academic and personal leadership from the President. "A university can only function when there exists an atmosphere of co-operation between the President and the faculty," Catano said, an atmosphere which does not exist at the present time.

Student Representative Council President, Glen McInnes, said that the student council would remain neutral until they decide upon an official position later this week. McInnes said that the main concern was to avoid a faculty strike. He feels that if the dispute continues, the quality of education would be hampered. "Hopefully the conflict will be left out of the classrooms," he concluded.

The final decision about Owen Carrigan's future rests with the Board of Governors. Catano said that the results of the referendum would be forwarded to each member of the board and no further action could be taken until their decision is made.

Carrigan said that he would not comment until the Board of Governors had seen the results of the referendum.

organized and working at the local level, consolidating on issues at a regional level. As for compromises on policies and priorities, Soucy remarked, "that's why we have conferences, so students can democratically decide policies and priorities."

Student Union presidents from Acadia, the University of Prince Edward Island, St. Francis Xavier, University of New Brunswick at Fredericton, Mount St. Vincent, Mt. Allison, and Dalhousie attended the meeting. Sampson said they intend to meet again before the next AFS conference to review their position.

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