

# The candidates vie for Halifax Cornwallis

by Gretchen Pohlkamp and Glenn Walton

In a forum at the Dalhousie Student Union building held on Tuesday, students and student leaders were able to question the three candidates running in the Halifax Cornwallis riding, a riding that includes Dalhousie University.

Present were Michael Coyle (NDP), Terry Donahoe (PC), and the present Minister of Education and Dean Salsman (Liberal).

Representing the students were Dalhousie Student Union president John Logan, Student Council representative, Caroline Zayid, and Michael McNeil, Saint Mary's University student council president and chairperson of the National Union of Students.

Each candidate began by giving a prepared 10 minute address. Coyle stressed what he saw as the difference between the NDP and the 'old

line parties' and read off a list of business contributions to the Liberal and PC campaigns which showed, in his opinion, that they were committed to a 'business approach'. He expressed concern about rising tuition fees and said that the present party in power sees liberal arts education as a low priority.

Donahoe said the PC's were trying their best at good government and cited several statistics that he thought supported the verdict that they had performed well in power: Sysco steel's improved financial prospects, job creation programs and increased agricultural loans. He said it was 'fanciful and illusory' that the P.C.'s had their hands in big business, and rejected allegations that they were deferring federal monies meant for post-secondary education to other areas. He voiced his support for the march students are

undertaking on Wednesday to protest the cutbacks, and reminded the audience that two Nova Scotian Liberals, Allan MacEachen and Gerald Regan, were involved in federal decision making, and hoped that student's voices would get through to them.

Liberal candidate Dean Salsman said he was speaking as a businessman, stating that people like a 'business approach' to government. He said the election had been called because the present Conservative government has been spending way beyond its budget and said that students will be victims of their overspending. Education has two objectives, he said, for living and making a living. He added the government couldn't create money, just administer it.

John Logan, Dalhousie student union president, began the questioning mentioning that students living in Halifax

Cornwallis would have enough votes to elect the candidates of their choice if they had all been enumerated in the riding.

"We could elect Donald Duck, if we wanted to," he said.

Enumeration was just one of the issues faced by the three candidates in the riding, although it has become one of the more contentious ones since NDP candidate Michael Coyle took the riding returning officer to court last week.

"Last year you gave a commitment not to introduce dif-

ferential fees for foreign students, but the government went ahead and did it anyway," Caroline Zayid, said to Donahoe. "So if you make comments on all the issues but you get no support (in cabinet) I say you are ineffective."

Donahoe pointed out that student aid had been increased since he became Minister of Education in 1978. "You must look at my record as a whole" he said.

Mike MacNeil asked the candidates how they proposed to resolve the dilemma pre-

sented by diminishing funds and a growing provincial deficit.

"I say it is legitimate for a government to borrow for the purposes outlined" said Donahoe. "It is valid for the government to borrow on the speculation of EPF cutbacks to ensure that the integrity of the system is maintained." The federal government should wait two to three years before it implements any cutbacks, he said. This would allow the province enough time to find

the money elsewhere in the coffers.

Salsman said overall federal funding of the province amounts to about 47 per cent of the budget. With a federal Liberal government, the province would have a better chance at more funds if the Nova Scotia government were also Liberal.

"You don't want to fight with the person who gives out the money," he said.

When asked where the Liberals propose to get the

continued on page 14



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## Dean Salsman, Liberal

by Gregory Hamara

Dean Salsman, Liberal standard-bearer in Halifax-Cornwallis, is one person with an unshakeable belief in the virtues of free enterprise. From his modest beginnings in the Halifax construction industry following World War II, to his retirement as Chief Executive Officer from Industrial Estates Limited in 1979, Salsman has been a symbol of entrepreneurial success to the Maritime business community.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, to discover that Salsman holds some very strong views on the manner in which the financially beleaguered universities of Nova Scotia should be operated.

"We have an abundance of universities in Nova Scotia," Salsman stated in a recent interview. He suggested that, if elected, "I would use the same approach to universities as I would to a business plan."

Salsman said that it is time

to re-examine the university system, "to see if there is duplication, and whether there is a more efficient way to provide an education."

"I think that it is important for the dollars available for universities, we get the best value for the money spent," he said.

While advocating a more cost-efficient approach to post secondary education, Salsman conceded that he is short on specific proposals to counter the Buchanan government's current education policies.

"The people who approached me to run in Cornwallis were anxious to have someone in government with business experience. In relation to education, I'm just not in a position, or experienced enough, to really tell you what I would do to the present education system."

In line with his strong business-oriented approach to solving the fiscal problems of universities, Salsman suggested

that more students should direct their studies to the technical and vocational disciplines, especially in the burgeoning areas of off-shore resource development.

"There is too much emphasis upon university training in the younger (student) years," said Salsman, adding, "many people are finding it difficult to find meaningful jobs. They don't realize that there are good opportunities in technical areas."

Salsman, a non-resident of Halifax Cornwallis, claims the greatest criticism he has heard on the campaign hustings concerns voters anger with the untimely calling of the October 6 election. He rejected the argument that the election provides opposition parties an opportunity to test the voters with policies of their own by saying, "the Conservatives' decision was motivated by political opportunism, regardless of

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In a recent interview, the Conservative candidate in Halifax Cornwallis singled out these three federal ministers as representing the stumbling blocks in his efforts to renegotiate a revised Established Programs Financing (EPF) agreement with the province in the field of education.

Claiming that "over 50 per cent of Nova Scotia's graduates annually leave the province to take up residence and employment in other parts of the country," Donahoe described the federal government's proposals to redirect educational financing into manpower and technical training as a "slap in the face to

academic and educational contribution this province has made to the entire country."

Donahoe described Ottawa's increase in student aid funds in terms of "drips and drabs," but conceded that there was little the province could do to reverse this tendency.

"They get us in, they get us rolling, they fund us at what is at the time a reasonable amount and they get us to the point where the provincial requirements are almost overpowering," said Donahoe, adding pessimistically, "if they back out to the extent they're talking about, then we are in very serious trouble."

While admitting the province is "very dependant" upon federal transfer payments for education, Donahoe said his department is preparing means by which a reduction in federal funds can be absorbed by the education budget. He did not divulge specific recommenda-

cost and inconvenience."

His strongest salvos, however, are directed at what he believes to be the Conservatives' mismanagement of the provincial economy. He argues that the Tory administration is "running the province completely contrary to good business principles."

"Buchanan says the province has a surplus of \$494,000. The Auditor-General says the figure is really a \$52 million deficit. By my analysis, this province is running a debt of over \$170 million," Salsman said.

The Liberal candidate attributed Nova Scotia's inflation rate, in part, to "the tendency of the government to get itself in greater and greater debt." He attacked the indexing of pensions and other social expenditures to prevailing rates as a practise which, in his opinion, "only encourages inflation."

On the issue of potential benefits to Nova Scotians from

recent Sable Island oil and gas discoveries, Salsman enthusiastically reflected on a recent journey to Great Britain where he was "impressed with the tremendous benefits" to Britons of North Sea oil development. However, he stopped well short of encouraging government intervention in the resource industry - a cornerstone of British energy policy.

"I think that the major oil corporations have a definite role to play in off-shore development and I am confident that with the correct environment and correct incentive they should continue to play a major role," he said.

Though this is Salsman's first campaign as a candidate, he is not an outsider to the political arena. Describing himself as a "background Liberal for many, many years," he was, most recently, the party's chief fundraiser in Nova Scotia, a position he gave up prior to entering the campaign race.

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On the issue of increasing tuition fees as a means of replacing lost federal funds, the minister cautiously remarked that he could not foresee hikes in tuition "more than something approximating the national or provincial rates of inflation." Anything else, he said, would be "foolhardy and offensive."

The son of former Attorney General Richard Donahoe, and a runner-up in the 1974 Halifax mayoralty election, Donahoe, 37, dismissed opposition criticism of the Conservative decision to call an early provincial election as "opposition opportunism."

"Those guys (the Liberals and NDP) tore up the province for the last year and a half saying Buchanan and his colleagues were the most incompetent fools they had ever encountered, and his government should be disposed of. When he does call an election, the reaction is, 'what the hell is he calling an election for?' That, I say, is opportunism," said Donahoe.

In justifying the election, Donahoe returned to his favorite theme - dealing with the "games" being played by the Trudeau government," against the best interest of the province.

"Trudeau is a master politician. We need a strong, forceful majority to combat him," he said.

When asked if he thought "justice" as opposed to "legal technicalities" had been upheld in the recent decision of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court denying the appointment of revising agents to conduct a thorough enumeration of Halifax Cornwallis, Donahoe pondered at length and replied that "students are the more knowledgeable and intelligent sector of the community, and as such, they

continued on page 14

## Terrence Donahoe, PC

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continued on page 14

## Michael Coyle, NDP

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When asked to speculate on the NDP's chances of upsetting Conservative incumbent and Minister of Education Terrence Donahoe in Halifax Cornwallis, the normally sombre Michael Coyle flashed a quick smile and remarked, "Well, it would have been a lot easier with the student vote."

A Nova Scotia Supreme Court decision last Friday dashed Coyle's final attempt to force the riding's returning officer, Arthur Hare, to appoint revising agents to enumerate the estimated 1,900 eligible student voters who reside on the riding's four university campuses.

In a recent interview, Coyle did not hesitate to point an accusing finger at the Conservative party for what, he believes was their role in sparking a showdown between the candidate and returning officer.

"Had the government wanted students to vote they would have simply ordered Arthur Hare to appoint revising agents in the first place," said Coyle, adding, "the Tories were especially fearful of students voting against Terry Donahoe in this riding."

Coyle was similarly critical of the leak of independent initiative displayed by Mr. Hare. "Hare made it very clear to me from the beginning that he thought the action on my part was a political issue. He was very nervous about it," Coyle said.

Despite the court's ruling, Coyle remains optimistic that the NDP is in a position to play a David-to-Goliath role in Cornwallis.

"In the last election we managed to pull in 22 per cent of the vote. Once a party reaches the mid-20 per cent range in a three-party system, the chances of victory certainly increase," he commented.

Coyle pins much of his optimism upon what he perceives to be voter disgust with the "vicious cycle of Conservative and Liberal governments."

"People are beginning to realize that their lot in life does not improve under either of these parties," he added.

A graduate of Dalhousie Law School, and currently a staff member of Dalhousie Legal Aid, Coyle charged that under the present government,

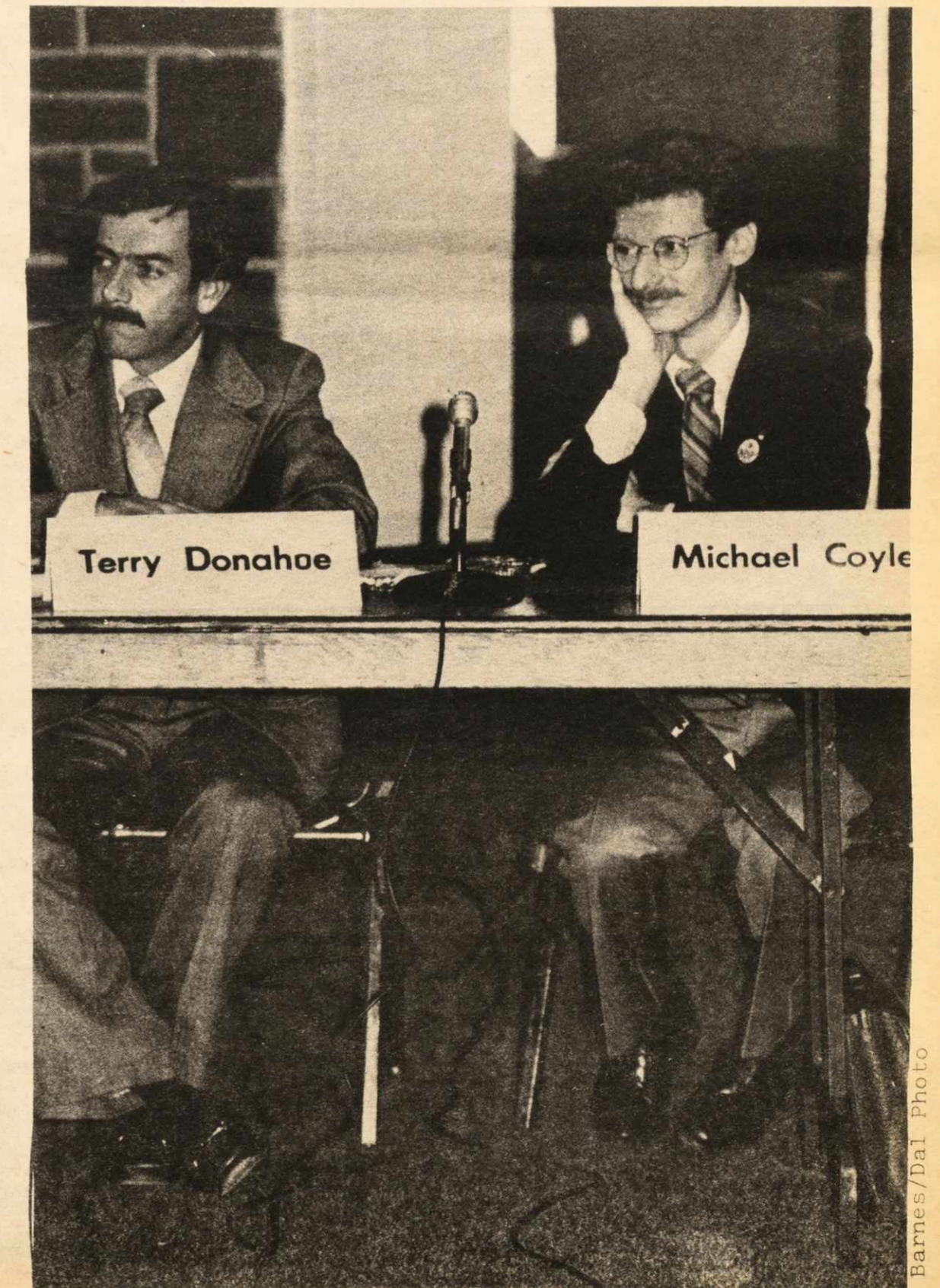
education has increasingly become "a luxury and preserve of the well-to-do."

"Under the terms of the Established Program Financing (EPF) agreement signed with the federal government in 1977, the province promised to

match federal funds dollar-for-dollar. What's happening is that the Conservatives are contributing less and less, and consequently the total available funds are decreasing — to the detriment of the education system," he said.

While he does not deny that tuitions will increase under any government, Mr. Coyle claims an NDP government would, "ensure that provincial (EPF) contributions return to levels agreed upon in 1977 —

continued on page 14



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