

Proficiency tests for Dalhousie?

Dalhousie University may be joining many post-secondary institutions across the country which have entrance exams in language proficiency.

A committee has been formed by the Faculty of Arts and Science to evaluate the extent of the literacy problem at Dal. "Canadian university students are becoming illiterate", according to Dr. Tom Sinclair-Faulkner, chairperson of the committee. He told the *Gazette* his group will be conducting a survey of the faculty to determine its attitude to this "crisis of literacy". He hopes to discover what, if any, standards of literacy are in force and "whether a physicist, for example, makes the same demands of literacy on his students as a historian."

A survey at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario showed that 70% of frosh and 30% of graduates were reading, writing, and reasoning at less than university level.

Several Canadian institutions have introduced written examinations in literacy. Without successfully completing these, a student cannot receive a degree. However, many of the same universities have eliminated remedial reading courses, which may cost up to \$300 per student, on the grounds that basic language training is not

the responsibility of the university. This leaves the burden of such training with elementary and secondary schools, which in many cases are simply not providing their students with adequate instruction in the basic use of English.

Sinclair-Faulkner said that, "From the student's point of view there is much to be gained from raising school and university standards. The declining level of competence of university students means that a university education tends to become less valuable. Increased confidence of employers in the university degree, inspired by high academic standards, would improve the position of graduates on the job market."

"What is needed is an upgrading of standards across the board. It is unnecessary and inefficient to have universities undertake elementary language training and it is inexcusable to allow students to graduate without knowing how to read and write at university level," Sinclair-Faulkner concluded.

The results of the survey, together with the committee's recommendations, will be released sometime in March. Sinclair-Faulkner's group welcomes suggestions and feedback, which can be directed to Room 324, Dunn Bldg.

Metro Coalition discusses demands

by Eric Lawson

The Metro Coalition of Support for the Unemployed has undergone some serious introspection and internal revision in the past month, triggered by a debate raised within the Coalition concerning the organization and function of their January 16 public meeting.

AFS representatives felt that the Coalition had designed a poor agenda for the meeting, one which did not represent all of the varying opinions of persons both within and without the organization. As a result, student representatives supported the intervention of such groups as the communist In Struggle, and publicly voiced some opinions of their own, against Coalition policy.

The students are further dissatisfied with the participation of some labour leaders in the Coalition. AFS Secretary-Coordinator Tony Kelly feels that labour, specifically the leadership of the Halifax/Dartmouth Trades and Labour Council, does not participate in the actual working of the Coalition, and appears only at situations it considered politically advantageous.

Leo MacKay, a labour representative in the Coalition, plays down the importance of the disagreements between labour and students. He said that he would "stack his record for attending meetings up against Kelly's any day, but would prefer that things simply were not done that way." MacKay feels that only by ignoring ideological differences and working towards actually helping the unemployed can the Coalition function effectively, and that controversy "puts nothing in the pockets of the unemployed, and only scares them away from our organization."

AFS supports the general concept of the Coalition, and wishes to continue in full participation and support, but feels that a more rigid set of policy guidelines is required. AFS has drawn up a constitution

consisting of a list of demands for the Coalition to present to the government, an outline of purposes for the Coalition in general, a presentation of the tactics to be used to secure the demands, and an outline of the structure of the Coalition.

At a meeting designated to discuss the AFS proposal, held Monday, only the demands were reached on the agenda. They were discussed, revised, and accepted in principle, with the tactics and structure to be ratified at a meeting to be held next Monday, Feb. 6. The demands decided upon are as follows:

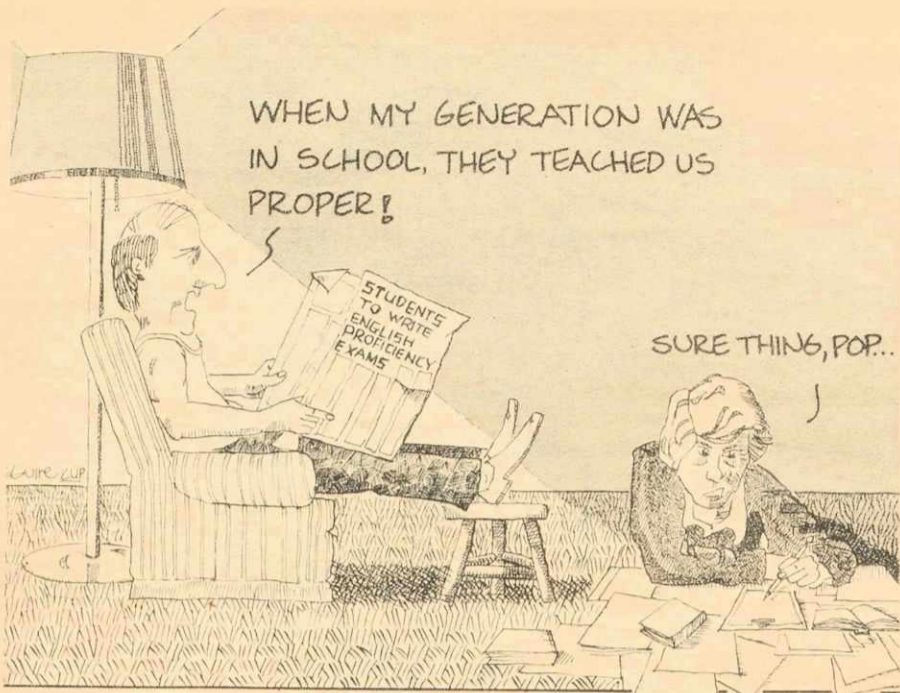
We call for the right to work at meaningful wages, and to that end we demand:

93.5% vote yes

CUPE accepts offer - After nearly five months of negotiating CUPE Local 1392 workers finally have a contract. At a general membership meeting yesterday CUPE accepted the Dal administration's latest contract offer.



Dal Photo/Morris



U of T requires tests

TORONTO (CUP)—The University of Toronto will require all arts and science students entering the university to pass an English proficiency test, beginning in 1980.

Students who fail will be able to remain on campus for a year, but if they fail a second test they will not be permitted to continue at the university.

The regulation, adopted by the faculty of arts and science general committee Jan. 23, must be approved by the university's governing council before it is implemented.

After some people attending the committee meeting objected to a

multiple choice proficiency test, the committee agreed to form a special committee to decide what type of English test students will be required to write.

The Carleton University senate considered similar measures two years ago. It agreed that all students should be given proficiency tests, with a passing grade required for graduation and remedial instruction available for students who did poorly on the test. However, according to an English department spokesperson, the program was never put into effect because of its \$100,000 estimated cost.

Centre to regain staff?

by Denise Roberge

It appears that the Dalhousie Counselling and Psychological Services Centre will be successful in its efforts to attain a complete staff. Spokespeople for the University Administration have said that they realized the attempt to cut down on the Centre's staff may have been an unwise move.

The counselling centre is presently operating with only two fulltime and two part-time counsellor/psychologists, whereas in the past there were five fulltime and three part-time staffpeople. As a result, this year the Centre has had to cut back its services drastically. The staff at the Centre is greatly overworked under the present circumstances and cannot provide the required quality service to the student body.

The Dalhousie Student Council has supported the Centre in its attempt to regain an adequate number of counsellors. Robert Sampson, president of the Dal

Council, will present a motion at next Monday's Senate Council meeting asking that they too approach the University administration for the necessary permission and funds to hire additional staff.

E.T. Marriott, dean of student services, explained that the administration is now aware of the concern over the Centre's plight. "I am encouraged to believe that the Centre will be given careful consideration and full treatment by the University when next year's budget is being drawn up," he said.

Vice-president Guy MacLean said that a number of people have been talking to him about the situation and have presented a "strong and compelling case". Although final decisions will not be forthcoming for several weeks, MacLean said the counselling centre was one of the top priorities at a budget meeting last week. "Students have demonstrated conclusively that the service needs to be improved," he said.

Council election March 15

It's election time again! March 15th is the date of this year's Dalhousie Student Union elections. Vice-President Peter Mancini is confident that the controversy which he and Union President Robert Sampson have raised will increase this year's turnout at the polls.

Asked about the possibility of his running for office again, Mancini would not concede to a yes or a no but added that, "All things are possible." However, in a recent letter to Del Atwood of the Xaverian Weekly, Sampson said "... no one likes us—no one but the people. And who knows, maybe come

February and the student elections, the people just may have a chance to re-affirm their faith." Sampson had no further comments as of yesterday.

President / Vice - Presidential teams have until Feb. 27 to announce their candidacy. A \$10 fee must be included with applications, but it will be refunded one week after elections if all campaign regulations have been met. Nomination papers are now available in council offices and signs are posted throughout campus. Anyone interested should contact Chief Electoral Officer Pat Dix in the Council office.