

FASC Loses On Four Campuses

FREDERICTON — The nascent Federation of Atlantic Student Councils appears crippled and dying before it ever really got started. Student councils at both universities here Sunday (January 18) turned down membership in the new Maritimes student union.

The votes at St. Thomas University and the University of New Brunswick brought to four the number of Atlantic campuses hedging on FASC membership.

Memorial University (Newfoundland) turned down membership earlier and the Dalhousie delegation left the second founding conference, in

Fredericton, December 29 to January 4, on the second day.

The UNB council voted 8 to 4 against membership over the recommendation of student president Mike Start. Councillors said it would be inadvisable to put out the UNB's \$600 membership fee while the "feasibility of FASC and its success were remote."

At both UNB and STU, where the anti-FASC vote was unanimous, councillors were upset by the system of priorities, set up at the Fredericton conference.

The priorities system divides the dozen Maritimes campuses into 'A' and 'B' categories — according to size and the "level

of emergence" of student organizations.

UNB was placed as low priority because of its more developed organizational structures, while STU councillors felt they would be a low priority because STU is a small campus — and FASC would operate to help the largest number of students.

FASC is the third attempt by Maritimes students to establish some form of regional union. It was preceded by the Atlantic Student Association and the Atlantic Association of Students.

Both ASA and AAS failed because they did little to help

member campuses.

The FASC concept was raised in May, 1969, as the national Canadian Union of Students showed signs of falling apart in the face of membership withdrawals. The proposal was made by then-CUS fieldworker, Barry McPeake, now a student at Dalhousie.

Greatest opposition came from McPeake's own campus where Dalhousie student president Bruce Gillis, one of

four student executives who have been working to set up a national 'non-political' federation, led his delegation out of the Christmas conference on the second day.

Gillis and two other members of the Dalhousie student council executive attended the conference in contravention of a council motion which would have sent FASC liaison committee members from the campus, instead of the executive.

... And Folds

CHARLOTTETOWN (CUP) — The third attempt at a regional union among maritime universities — the Federation of Atlantic Student Councils — ended here Sunday (January 25).

The executive of the FASC decided to disband the organization in a weekend meeting after student councils at four campuses turned down membership in the regional federation.

"We just couldn't keep going if we didn't get support from the student council" said FASC president Dennis MacKay. If we were going to carry out the programs outlined at the Fredericton conference, then we had to have the money."

The councils at Memorial University, Dalhousie University, the University of New Brunswick and St. Thomas University withdrew their support of the federation following a week-long directional conference in Fredericton over the Christmas

holidays. They cited dissatisfaction at the priorities system for fieldwork established at the conference — in which campuses would receive help based on their student population and the degree of organizational development already in existence.

But experience with two other attempts in the last four years to establish regional student associations was also a factor. The UNB councillors said it would be inadvisable to put out UNB's \$600 membership fees while "the feasibility of FASC and its success were remote."

MacKay said it was personally disappointing that the federation didn't get a chance to implement its programs.

"I think we had a program and a method of implementation that could have worked," he said.

Other executive members felt the same, and spent most of the weekend trying to work

out ways to keep the organization going. In the end, they decided to keep FASC field workers employed until the end of January, working at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and St. Anne's College.

Money remaining in FASC accounts at the beginning of February will be returned to fee-paying member campuses.

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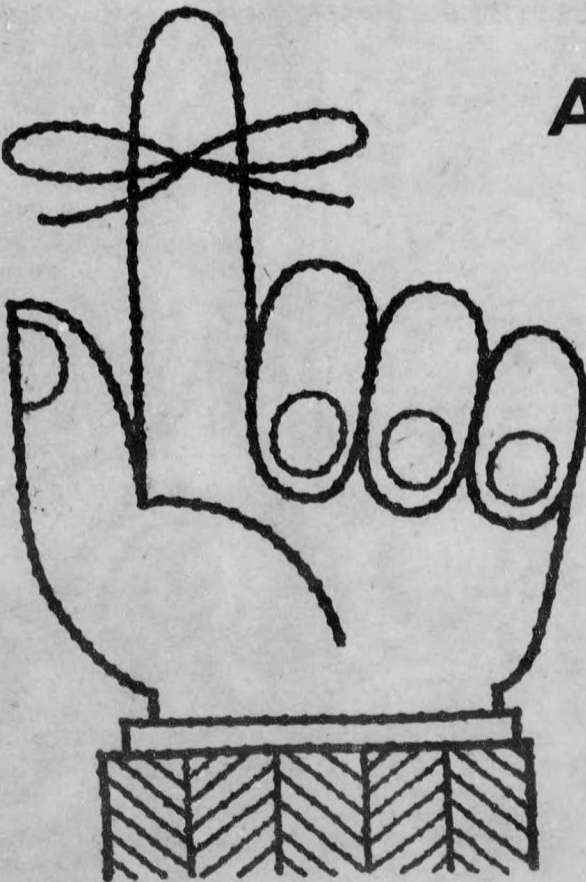
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