

Your Executive in Action

by M.P. MacKenzie

Interview with Bruce Russell,
President of the Student Union

Gazette: What has the Executive worked on over the summer?

Russell: The executive has not met very regularly because some of the members of the executive have been out of the city and out of the country. One big general field of endeavour that the Student Union has been involved in has been the Student Aid Campaign, which, as you know, culminated in late August with the additional granting of \$3 million to the Provincial Student Loan Program.

In addition to that we've been negotiating with the University Administration to restructure the tuition fee increase considerations in future years. That is, proscribe a procedure whereby the Student Union is informed and is given an opportunity to represent itself in the consideration of fee increases at the Board of Governors.

Other than these, various miscellaneous items such as gearing up the individual departments for the coming year have been worked on. We've also been generally orienting ourselves to the processes of the Student Union.

Gazette: Has the Union done anything to ease the Housing problem at Dalhousie? What is the Union's long term policy on the Housing shortage?

Russell: We're not happy with what's been done so far with housing. We are running a housing office on the 3rd floor of the SUB, staffed jointly by the Student Union and the University Administration personnel. The housing office has been quite successful this summer in locating houses. We intend to keep this Housing Office open all year round. This is the first year this will be done and we're hoping that this will help ease the situation but it does not meet the full demand.

In particular, as far as a policy goes, we strongly advocate the construction of the Howe Hall addition that has been on the planning boards for the past year or so. This need is certainly heightened by the doubling and tripling of rooms in Howe Hall.

Dalhousie University has purchased several houses in the area and has purchased Studley Apartments. So actually there is more housing available than the University owns this year than in previous years, but still it is not meeting the full demands of students.

Gazette: Do you think the housing problem at Dalhousie could eventually threaten future enrollment increases?

Russell: This is the approach that we're taking with the University and basically the problem is that the University would rather build academic buildings than University residences. Of course it is a threat, but the main point is to represent this adequately to the administration.

Gazette: If the Law School were to expand would the Student Union make a greater effort to get Law students involved in Student Union Activities? Exactly what stand will the Union take on Law School Expansion?

Russell: The Student Union has not taken an official stand on Law School expansion yet, although personally I feel that it is a misguided priority. That is, if there is enough money to expand all professional schools to meet enrollment demands our Law School should certainly be expanded. But as long as there is the serious shortage of doctors and dentists

that presently exists in the Maritimes the money should go into a dentistry or medical school before a law school.

I think it's inevitable, as it has been in past years, that societies will question the function of the Student Union and I think it's a healthy thing. This fall we are doing a comprehensive survey, which we hope to have completed by the middle or end of November, of just what the Student Union does offer to societies and what the societies offer to their members, and what the Student Union should offer to societies and societies to their members. Hopefully an evaluation of this type will result in a more equitable arrangement of say fiscal finances and just plain benefits to the student.

There's been an argument that decentralization is needed and this is an example of what we will be looking at in the early fall.



Gazette: Will the Carleton Campus task force be operating again this year?

Russell: The Carleton Campus Task Force will be operating in a slightly modified form because it is no longer a fact finding mission. It's more of a committee to build the Carleton Campus facility or to make recommendations on it. That is, almost a board of directors of the future facility. Warren Meek is the chairperson of the Task Force and I'm confident that he is sincerely motivated to getting something comprehensive accomplished on this facility.

Gazette: Do you have any particular advice for incoming freshmen?

Russell: One point that was made to me when I started

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KILLAM LIBRARY HOURS

Monday-Friday 8 am - 12 midnight
Saturday 9 am - 6 pm
Sunday 1 pm - 12 midnight

INFORMATION DESK HOURS

Monday-Thursday 9 am - 5 pm
6 pm - 10 pm
Friday 9 am - 5 pm
Saturday 2 pm - 5 pm
Sunday 2 pm - 5 pm
7 pm - 10 pm

University was not to be afraid to ask questions if you have questions to ask. I would say simply do not let the University overwhelm you. It's a big university but students should remember that they are paying for a lot of it. They certainly have a right to know from the faculty just what is available to them and if they are having problems just what is the best way to handle these problems. Lack of this sort of thing is possibly the main cause for students at Dalhousie getting off on the wrong foot and either being forced to leave the University at Christmas or just not enjoying their stay at university.

Of course the Student Union is also available to meet any problems of this nature. I hope students will feel free to call on myself, any other member of the executive, council or our staff members here to discuss any problems they might have, or any ideas or suggestions they might have regarding the Student Union or the University.

Gazette: What changes have been made in the Orientation format from previous years?

Russell: We're trying to make Orientation this year a little less geared to entertainment and put more priority on orientation itself, that is, getting to know the campus and the faculty. To this end we have planned a faculty reception in the middle of Orientation Week for undergraduate students in the Student Union Building to meet with invited faculty members and this is jointly sponsored by the University. We are also providing

student advisors to sit with the faculty advisors at the various faculty desks during actual registration. These students will be able to answer questions such as the demands of specific courses and the demands of specific members of faculty that perhaps faculty members could not as easily, or as objectively, answer. As well, we are providing students to lead tours of the campus, which of course this has been done in previous years, to point out the various facilities that are available for students.

We are also involved in putting up club displays and society displays in the SUB to let people know, to as obvious an extent as possible, what the extra-curricular activities of the Student Union entail.

Gazette: What big political issues do you think will come up next year? Will the Carleton Campus problem surface again or do you foresee any groups other than the lower campus threatening secession from the Union?

Russell: That's a loaded question! We're progressing, unfortunately slowly, on the Carleton Campus issue. We are finding it hard to find available space to build a facility but we are assured that this is what is wanted by Carleton Campus and we have preliminary plans to that end. We do have a specific site in mind but actually the onus is on the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission to come across with the funds to renovate this particular building.

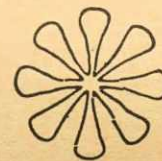
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1975

A videotape symposium on Transcendental Meditation (T.M.) featuring educators, scientists, businessmen, and artists.

Student Union Bldg.
Room 410-412
12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

also

A & A Building, Room 212
8:00 p.m.



Transcendental meditation is a simple, effortless mental technique which brings profoundly deep rest to mind and body, thereby releasing stress and tension, promoting clearer thinking.