

Political actors square off on education

by Paul Clark

Some of the province's chief actors in the field of higher education squared off in a debate in the Green Room last Tuesday, but it soon became apparent that neither side was prepared to change its stand on the issue.

MLA Ronald Giffin, chairman of the provincial government's Management Board, played the role of the prudent accountant, explaining that the government would like to provide greater funding for higher education but, given other budgetary priorities, more money is simply not available.

Dalhousie president Andrew MacKay played the moderate, pointing to several areas where universities needed significant funding increases, but arguing that the funding recommendations of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) are "realistic" given the government's current financial situation.

(The MPHEC has recommended that funding post-secondary education in the Maritimes be increased 10.3% this year. Out of this overall figure it is recommended that Nova Scotia receive a funding increase of slightly over 12%.)

Dr. Robert Rodger, a former president of the Dalhousie Faculty Association, cast himself in a far more critical role, calling for Dalhousie representation on the MPHEC which he labelled a "political football designed to divert kicks at the government". He censured the government for decreasing the percentage of the provincial budget allotted to higher education since 1973 and noted that this contradicts the fact that increased higher education enhances economic development.

"If a poor province gives poor funding to higher education, then it remains poor", he said.

By Rodger's calculations funding increases of 13%, not the MPHEC's recommended 10.3%, are needed just for Maritime universities to maintain their present level of services.

It was harder to tell where Dalhousie Student Union president Gord Owen stood. While he said there is a need to act energetically to open the channels to equality in higher education, he did not address himself to specific failures in this area. Instead, he concentrated on discussing the relative merits of a provincial versus a federal financ-



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ing system for higher education, an issue on which he did not ultimately take a stand.

In the question period which followed presentations by the four speakers, the MLA Giffin was asked several questions concerning the province's use of federal funds earmarked for higher education through

Established Program Financing (EPF).

Don Perry of the National Union of Students said that while the provincial government received \$108.5 million through EPF for higher education last year, only \$103 million was actually spent in this area. He then asked what

happened to the extra funds. Giffin replied that the province spends money on higher education not included under that heading, for example, in the form of student-aid bursaries and through its support of the Nova Scotia Technical College and the Nova Scotia Agricultural College.

A peek at the past Memories of WW1

by John Cairns

Most students probably prefer attending university to attending a war. Yet when major wars do occur, they drain the halls of learning along with the factories of industry.

The World War of 1914 is one example, and if *The Dalhousie Gazette* is to be believed, Canadian gladiators abroad fondly remembered this campus. The issue of February 20, 1917 sports a letter to the editor written in

England by a former Dalhousie student preparing to confront the Germans in France. His words appear below:

"Witley Camp
January 11, 1917
Dear _____

Through the thoughtfulness of some kind friends, I have before me a copy of *The Dalhousie Gazette*, dated December 1, 1916.

I might say that I have read this copy from cover to cover (advertisements and all) and I must congratulate you upon

its high standard of excellence. We all know that *The Gazette* never depended upon numbers for its existence. It has always been the Faithful Few who have given their time and labor to keep up its high standard. But no doubt a great many did think that the success of Dalhousie's societies depended upon the number of students attending. However, I think that Dalhousie has proved that even this contention is wrong. (That is, if one can judge the

success of the societies from the reports given in *The Gazette*.) I think that the success of Dal's societies speaks well for those who are left to 'Keep the Home Fires Burning'. It all goes to show the possibilities of human energy.

If we were told three years ago that England could raise, equip and supply, by 1917, the army she has in the field today, we would have doubted it. And yet she has done it merely by the unfailing energy of a few of her leading men (not to mention her women). So I feel that the College Spirit which lay dormant after the first shock of war has, on being concentrated into individuals, sprung up into a patriotism for Old Dal which finds expression in energy put into her societies. It reminds me of what one of the professors said . . . in 1914. He did not put it into so many words, but the idea is the same: 'Come what may, Dalhousie goes on forever'.

The Highland Brigade has been slightly broken up since coming to England. However, I think two battalions, the 85th and the 185th, will get to the front as units. I have been transferred to the 85th. We hope to leave for France in a week or two. A number of cases of mumps have broken out causing over a company to be in quarantine, but whenever we get rid of that classical disease, we hope to leave for France.

I have enjoyed my stay in

England very much. Spent six days in London in which I saw, I think, as much as could be seen in six days.

But, you know, a soldier can never settle down and be absolutely contented; he must always be on the move. And so we are all longing to get to France, where I have no doubt, it will be quite lively enough for the most of us.

There have been quite a number of Dalhousie boys here at Witley Camp. We were talking of having a Dalhousie reunion at Christmas time, but for several reasons it never materialized. The chief reason was that a number of the boys were taken away before Christmas. Had we known that, we might have had it early in December, but one never knows in the army what is going to happen. . . .

Well, I'm afraid I will have to cut this short for this time, since they are closing up for the night. (I'm writing this in Canada Hall.)

Would be glad to hear from you any time you feel inclined to write.

Yours sincerely,
PERELEY C. LEWIS
No 282095 Pte. P.C. Lewis,
"C" Coy, 85th Bttn, C.E.F.,
c-o Army Post Office,
London, England"

The eventual fate of Perley C. Lewis is more than *The Gazette* readily reveals. Having met him by letter, though, one has to hope that he did manage to dodge the countless German bullets he must have faced.

National group gets name

Ottawa (CUP) — Canadian students' new national organization has been christened the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS).

Delegates from colleges and universities across Canada, excluding Quebec, met recently to plan the merging of the National Union of Students (NUS), the national political organization, the Association of Student Councils (AOSC), the service organization, and the various provincial bodies.

"What is important for students to recognize is that they will now be members of one umbrella organization instead of three," said Eleanor MacDonald, a Carleton University Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) representative

at the conference.

She said in the past students were often unsure who was defending their rights in issues such as student aid.

MacDonald said provincial organizations will still exist. "Students from across Canada are facing the same problems — more cutbacks," she said. But each province faces a different situation so you must have a provincial level to work on that.

"But provincial levels can be co-ordinated into one organization so that they are more powerful."

Rob Sutherland, another Carleton OFS representative, said the basic goal of this restructuring process is to make student organizations more efficient and cohesive. He said there is currently an

overlapping of services and a shortage of resources between the two organizations.

He said one organization would mean less waste. "If students are going to be served effectively, politics and services must be united."

Referenda will be held on most Canadian college and university campuses over the next two to three years, according to John Doherty, executive officer for NUS. He said about 90 schools will have the chance to join CFS.

The first two referenda will be held at Carleton and Saint Mary's Universities in late February. Doherty says there is a good chance of success because most of the organizing has been conducted on a local basis and both councils are behind the new organization.