

## National Union of Students

# Aid lobby hopeful

by Dan O'Connor

The National Union of Students (NUS) is continuing to press the federal and provincial governments for student participation in government decisions that affect post-secondary education, particularly in the student aid area.

The first priority is still admittance to the federal/provincial task force on student aid. While meeting in Halifax, Nova Scotia, members of the NUS Central Committee expressed anger at the run around given the attempts to gain representation.

The matter is being referred back and forth between the student aid task force, the Council of Education Ministers, the Council's staff and the provincial governments. The Central Committee continues to urge local unions to contact the provincial ministers on this question.

At the Halifax meeting it was stated that at

each level the governments should be pressured to take a position on student representation instead of side-stepping the issue.

Plans call for provincial ministers to be asked to implement student representation on the groups under the Council of Ministers while Secretary of State Hugh Faulkner is asked to push the Federal Department of Finance for student representation in the Canada Student Loans Plenary.

A written submission for the Council of Education Minister is being prepared by NUS. It is still too early to see what the federal government's attitude will be on the question of student representation in student aid organizations under federal control. The federal/provincial groups have been those displaying confusion as a response to the requests from NUS, and allied organizations such as the Atlantic Federation of Students.

Despite the delays and frustration the

student representation lobbying has already produced some hopeful signs. Bud Cowan, president of the student union at Memorial University of Newfoundland, has stated that the Newfoundland government will publicly support the attempt to gain student representation. The Nova Scotia government has a policy of encouraging student participation in the student aid decisions, and it may find it difficult to change the policy now.

As exams, papers and summer jobs take up more and more student attention the various approaches in favour of student representation will be the focus of the NUS student aid campaign. After the summer and further developments the emphasis will probably return to local campaigning.

It is expected by the NUS Central Committee that the organization's conference at Glendon College in May will consolidate the past year's efforts on student aid and provide further direction for the national union's effort.

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## Call for solidarity with technicians

by Chris Nielsen

Last Tuesday night, March 11, the striking Halifax technicians held a meeting at the Anglican Diocesan Center. Close to seven hundred people turned out to listen to the speakers and to show their support for the technicians.

The crowd was in a lively mood, ready to applaud and cheer the statements of support made by the speakers. Ron Stockton, one of the "instigators" the government talks about, opened the meeting with a call for unity of the technicians against the government which has tried by various means to split the technicians' association and break the strike. They offered the techs a wage settlement that gave the highest percentage wage increase to the highest paid techs and the lower paid ones a lower percentage increase. The latest offer was to rehire all the technicians except the so-called ringleaders, which were simply the elected representatives of the technicians' association.

The labour leaders who made statements of solidarity with the techs at the meeting were unanimous in denouncing the way the N.S. government was handling the strike. They said that the government was just using the techs as an example to all other civil service groups and to "the labour movement in gener-

al" as John Puchyr said, that the N.S. government will not tolerate demands for better wages.

Pamela Martin gave a short statement of support on behalf of the Coalition for Better Day Care. She said that the Coalition and the technicians were fighting for the same cause and that it was necessary for workers to stand together to achieve their demands.

The only government representative attending was Jeremy Akerman provincial leader for the N.D.P. Calls were made to the audience for spokesmen from the other parties but as none came forth, Mr. Akerman spoke. He said that we should look at the "broader issues" which to him was the difference

between the rights given to workers in the private sector and those in the public sector, such as the right to strike and the right of political freedom. He laid the blame for this not on the N.S. government, but on the populace of N.S., which, according to Akerman thinks that civil service workers should not have the right to strike but at the same time should have better wages. He described the present state of negotiations as an impasse and a deadlock. He said what was needed were concessions on both sides.

Gerald Yetman, of the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, gave the most militant talk. He said that the N.F.L.D. would stand "shoulder to shoulder"

with the technicians and said that when it came to the trade union movement "a wrong done to one of us is a wrong done to all of us". He also issued a warning to the NS. government that they had better recall what happened to other provincial governments which "took on the labour movements" (e.g. Bennett's Scred's in B.C.). His remarks were greeted with shouts and stamps of approval, applause, cheers and whistles. He was given two standing ovations.

At this point, Mr. Stockton opened the meeting to questions from the audience. A resolution to support the technicians and request the government to "bargain in good faith" with the technicians was

presented and passed unanimously.

Someone brought up the fact that the local branch of CPC (M-L) had been passing out leaflets at the V.G. (these leaflets contained an article on the strike reprinted from PCDN) and asked Mr. Stockton if the techs had any affiliation with the "Communists". This question brought loud groans from the audience who obviously thought it irrelevant. Mr. Stockton answered no.

Several people then got up to demand that the labour leaders who had made statements of support make even stronger statements and pledge that their unions would strike in support of the technicians. The effect of these questions was to change the cheerful buoyant mood of solidarity to one of tension and doubt. One of the technicians said afterward that she could feel the tension in the room and that she was afraid that people would just get up and go home.

The mood was recovered somewhat by the singing of two songs, one a song made up by the techs themselves and the other an old union song called "Solidarity Forever".

Extensive discussion went on amongst the many groups attending the rally for almost an hour after the meeting ended.

## DAVE MCCURDY

by Mary Pat MacKenzie

Dave McCurdy, the ARCUP fieldworker, was killed in a car accident on Saturday, March 15, outside of Sussex, New Brunswick. Dave was on his way from the University of New Brunswick to Mount Allison University at the time of the accident. The weather conditions in Sussex were extremely poor on Saturday, according to the R.C.M.P. Dave had been

having car problems lately so was hitchhiking. The driver of the car he was in sustained only minor injuries.

Dave's parents reside in Edmonton Alberta where the funeral will be held later this week. Dave grew up in Newfoundland and attended Memorial University in St. John's. He was an active member of the Muse staff until he became the ARCUP fieldworker in September 1974.

ARCUP is the Atlantic

Regional branch of Canadian University Press. The fieldworker is responsible for helping out member papers when they are having problems, and for visiting and working with the staff of each paper at least once per term. Dave had been in Halifax two weeks ago visiting the Halifax university papers. He made many friends on the papers in the Maritimes but he will be especially missed by his friends at the Muse in Newfoundland.