

Council votes rink closure

Student Government History # 41

By the end of October 1927 it was clear that the regular business of the Students' Council had developed along new lines. Instead of spending hours on discipline cases referred by Dean Murray, the time was spent scheduling dances and athletic events. The heavy demand for use of the gymnasium was the major cause, with this demand being a result of the mid 20's enrollment surge.

In fiscal matters the Dalhousie Amateur Athletic Club (D.A.A.C.) still received the lion's share, followed by GAZETTE. Preparations for Armistice Day illustrated once again the gap between student and university government. In 1920 controversy raged among students on the war memorial issue. Some said that Dalhousie would never bother to build one while others defended the university's intentions and honour.

By the time of the ninth Armistice Day students had completely forgotten the controversy. They were making a large contribution to the Halifax War Memorial fund on a voluntary basis. The university was saying exactly what it had seven years earlier - that plans were afoot for a memorial Gymnasium. While GAZETTE praised students' community consciousness it only expressed a mild preference for the wooden gymnasium that was to replace the wooden temporary gym then in use.

The newspaper's letters columns came alive that fall after an alumni wrote in to disagree with students' spending their money on war memorials. Both students and alumni kept the discussion going for months.

A great deal of attention was focused on plans for the football team to meet U.B.C. in Vancouver during the Christmas holidays. The alumni had

assumed primary responsibility to raise funds, with the Council pledged to make up the difference. The former GAZETTE Editor and future University Grants chairman, Arthur L. Murphy, was chosen to be the second yearbook editor. He had also become the leading director in the Glee and Dramatic Society.

Problems with the rink came into the open in a November 17 editorial. It reviewed the capital and operating costs of \$2000 in the first two years, compared to an expected \$1300. Failure to establish a satisfactory cleaning method meant that on most days the rink was snow-covered. This interfered seriously with hockey team practices, leading to a slump in standings. The editorial writer saw construction of a closed-in rink as the only solution.

Eight days after the editorial appeared the Council voted to close the rink and sell the equipment. The previous method of renting several evenings a year at local arenas was approved. Immediately after abandoning what had been the great project of the decade Council voted to join the National Federation of Canadian University Students (NFCUS). The reason was that this would guarantee Dalhousie a place on the Maritime Intercollegiate Debating Team.

Responding to an invitation from Tech the Council appointed a Dalhousie member to the group that was forming an aviation club for the city. The year book ran into criticism for its vague request for funds. Only half of the request was granted, but reconsideration was promised for when the request was improved. D.A.A.C. was severely criticized for not pushing enough to raise funds for team trips.

Late in November Dalhousie mourned the death of its second great Chairman of the Board of

Governors, George S. Campbell. He had presided over the purchase and initial development of the Studley campus, serving as Chairman from 1908 to his death. Campbell was a Nova Scotian shipping magnate, President of the Bank of Nova Scotia and a long-time community and provincial leader, especially during the war. The Board's long-time Vice-Chairman and chief fund-raiser, Fred Pearson, succeeded Campbell.

Just before the Christmas holidays the Council took its first step into off-campus housing in a strange way. It secretly heard and settled a dispute between a student and a boarding house mistress. An apology was the ultimate recommendation. The Council welcomed news that NFCUS was already proving its worth.

Spaulding had agreed to give a one third student discount on all of their products sold in Canada. Council immediately decided to send its President, J. Gerald Godsoe, to the second national meeting of the organization.

That decision led to the first big news of 1928 - Godsoe had been chosen as the first regular Vice-President of NFCUS. Another cause for celebration was the success of Hugh MacLennan in national competition for a Rhodes Scholarship. As we all know he has gone on to become one of Canada's leading novelists.

Late in January Council heard the welcome report that St. Patrick's Home would buy the open air rink for \$150.00. In the King's fee controversy last year was that the Dalhousie Board was trying to get the King's Board of Governors to act on the dispute. After eight months of delay the members decided that the fee should be increased from \$7.00 to \$10.00, and that their constituents should be consulted about their feelings on the increase.

Finances barrier to higher Education

More and more students are unable to attend Atlantic colleges and universities because of financial barriers. That was a conclusion of the founding conference of the Atlantic Federation of Students held in Truro, Nova Scotia, January 24

and 25.

The assembled delegates decided that there will be an Atlantic student aid campaign held simultaneously with that of the National Union of Students.

The immediate cause is concern that growing a-

wardness of the high debts incurred and inadequate aid levels are forcing many young people away from post-secondary education. There is evidence that the high debts are a considerable deterrent to low income students.

Students in the Atlantic region have the largest student loans of all Canadian students. This seems quite unjust in the country's most disadvantaged region, a region that probably needs trained people more than any other.

Both the new Atlantic Federation of Students and the National Union of Students favor an equalization formula which will mean that place or origin is not a significant factor affecting the accessibility of post-secondary education.

The Truro conference

delegates were disappointed with their four provincial government's lack of interest in student aid, and the low priority that it appears to receive from these governments. Federal attitudes are not much better.

The Atlantic student representatives agreed that in all four provinces students should not have to borrow more than \$900 dollars a year. The maximum aid levels desired are \$3300 for a married student and \$2800 for a single student. It is thought that these maximums would meet the minimum requirements of the neediest students.

Development of the student aid stance adopted at Truro will take place throughout the region during the next few months. Much of the effort will be

directed at informing and involving students.

The failure of attempts at persuasion and meetings with government officials has led to the belief that publicity and petitions should be used in attempts to move the provincial and federal governments towards a more realistic student aid policy.

It is likely that for at least two years attempts to improve government policies towards post-secondary education will have a high priority in the Dalhousie Student Union and in its equivalents throughout the Atlantic region and the rest of Canada. The CEGEP strike in Quebec might be a taste of things to come if governments do not realize how serious the situation is becoming.

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Dal First to Approve Union

by Roger Metcalf

The Dalhousie Student Union appears to be the first student government to officially join the newly established Atlantic Federation of Students.

The approval came at the Sunday, January 25 meeting of the Students' Council.

Three of the Dal delegates to the founding conference, Dan O'Connor, Lorne Richardson and Ron McCabe were present to report on the conference and the reasons for creation of the federation.

O'Connor read the proposed Federation constitution, which was then

ratified by the Council. Dalhousie's \$200 membership fee was also approved.

The 1969 Federation of Atlantic Student Councils failed after several months, due largely to a cold shoulder from Dalhousie and New Brunswick.

The chairman of the new federation is from U.N.B., so his election and the quick Dalhousie ratification are omens that the Atlantic Federation of Students will be more successful than its predecessors.

All of the Dalhousie delegates commented on the good prospects of the organization, and the high quality of its founding

conference. Reportedly the meeting was workmanlike and productive, rather than a frustrating series of speeches and unfounded debate.

The A.F.S. membership and continued participation in the National Union of Students are two signs that in the 70's the Dalhousie Student Union is playing a strong role in regional and national affairs.

This is a real contrast with the late 60's when D.S.U. President Bruce Gillis gained national publicity in his attempts to wreck the Canadian Union

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