

AFS caucus meeting

Students to challenge MPHEC

The Nova Scotia caucus of the Atlantic Federation of Students decided Saturday to challenge the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission by demanding that they face students in public forums on campus. The MPHEC had invited AFS to meet with them informally while in Halifax on a speaking tour later in March.

An earlier motion to boycott the meetings was defeated. Student representatives felt that although the MPHEC had proven to be a "facade", more could be gained by questioning the commission in front of students.

Matt Adamson, Saint Mary's student council external vice-president said "by exposing the MPHEC to students, AFS can show everyone what a farce this supposedly 'neutral' body has become. This will be an education for students."

Last year the MPHEC asked the governments to increase subsidies to the institutions for 1977-78 by 11.5% but the government decreased this figure to 7%. This year's recommendation of 14% was cut almost in half.

Delegates to the meeting mapped out a campaign against educational cutbacks using students to research cutbacks in various university departments to discover the effects on the quality of education.

The research was called for at a November general meeting of AFS but had not gotten underway.

Gene Long, Atlantic fieldworker

for the National Union of Students, told delegates they must continually gather information and keep the cutbacks issue alive on

campus. "As well, we should pressure the administrations to take a stand on tuition hikes," he said.

The caucus voted to pay special attention to the situation at Universite de Ste Anne where there may be drastic cutbacks in the number of professors. Students there are attempting to gain representation on the university's budget committee. The small university, unique because of its bilingual nature, could greatly suffer if the administration's plans of cutting down the faculty of 30 are carried through.

Anne Soucy from Saint Mary's addressed the meeting about part-time students. Delegates agreed that work on student aid for the coming year should give priority to part-time students. Presently there is no aid for part-timers in Nova Scotia.

Chris Lavergne from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design was elected Central committee member for the province, replacing Don Soucy, also of NSCAD. Paula Wedge from Mount Saint Vincent was appointed to the student aid advisory committee, and Mary O'Donnell from Saint Mary's is the new student aid co-ordinator. Denise Roberge of Dalhousie replaces Marc Allain, also of Dal, as the new Nova Scotia caucus chair.



AFS caucus chairpersons, old and new.

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Drug plan referendum March 15

by Valerie Mansour

An emergency meeting of the Dalhousie Student Council was held last night because Sunday's regular meeting ended in an uproar at 10 p.m. without a decision regarding Dalhousie's prescription drug plan.

Although the results of Wednesday's meeting was unavailable at press time, it was expected that councillors would finally come to a consensus about the March 15 referendum.

Facing a deficit of almost \$17,000 the council had decided to call a referendum to put the plan back on a break-even basis.

The drug plan, operated by the

University Health Service in conjunction with M.K. O'Brien's Pharmacy, was instituted in September, 1970, as an insurance plan to cover the cost of prescription drugs for full-time Dal students. With the exception of birth control pills, all drugs prescribed by the Student Health Clinic are dispensed by O'Brien's free of charge to eligible students. The plan's latest feature was last year's inclusion of a dental plan to provide protection for students who sustain accidental damage to natural teeth.

Up until the current fiscal year, the plan broke even with the revenue from the \$5.00 per student fee taken out of the \$50 student

union dues paid at registration. A low participation rate during the early years of the plan resulted in a surplus of revenue which was carried over from year to year as a provision fund.

The provision fund is nearly exhausted and with the current trend of expenditures, council's deficit will be \$16,905 for the present fiscal year.

The four alternatives to solve the drug plan problem are: (1) increase fees by \$4.00 to make them \$9.00; (2) discontinue the Allergy Service, Dental Plan, and Summer Service (May 1-August 31 constitutes the summer service) and increase fees by \$1.00; (3) Increase fees by \$2.00

and withdraw summer service; (4) Begin a co-pay plan, with students paying \$1.00 per prescription they receive and increase fees by \$2.00.

Normally council elections and referenda are held by February 15. However, this year they have been delayed until March 15, which is too late a date to give the university's Board of Governors a student union fee increase.

The focus of Sunday's debate was whether to continue with plans of giving the students of this university four alternatives on the ballot, or to choose only one solution and ask for a yes-no vote.

"It wouldn't have made any difference if we had a thousand choices on the referendum, we still have to tell the administration something", said law rep, Keith Evans. "Let's give them a figure that might be too high, and then we can inform people of a reduction later."

Sandy McNeill, member-at-large, moved to reconsider the motion to have four choices on the ballot. Many members felt it would be simpler for students to make a choice if they only had to say yes or no to one possibility. After much debate this motion was defeated, but later members tried to present a motion calling for only one alternative on the ballot.

"This is clearly unconstitutional", shouted Evans. "Dumb people!", he added referring to McNeill and Peter Greene. "You're full of crap" was the reply in what proved to be the most uncontrolled meeting of the year. Threats of resignation and disgusted remarks as to the sobriety of members echoed in the Howe Hall cafeteria.

Council members were wandering off, the quorum was challenged, and amidst confusion and indecision the meeting ended.

More women attending Dal

by Cheryl Downton

According to recent statistics, more women are attending Dalhousie each year. In the 1975-76 academic year women accounted for 36% of the total enrollment, while this year's female enrollment is 42%. This gradual increase over the past three years is expected to continue, and the 1978-79 predictions show 45% of all students attending Dalhousie will be women.

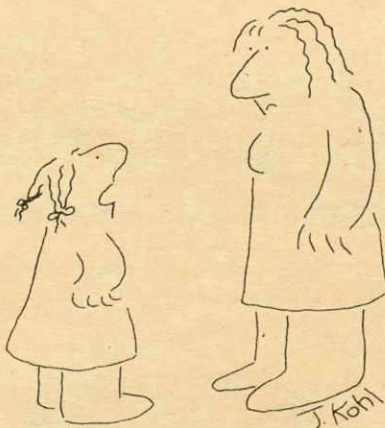
"There are probably lots of reasons for this increase", stated the University Registrar, A.J. Tingley. "I think more women are becoming interested in higher education."

John Graham, Director of Housing, agrees that more women are becoming interested in professional training. "There is an increase in the number of women enrolled in the professional schools, such as law, medicine, and dentistry", he said.

Dean of Women, Christine Irvine, feels much of this trend can be accredited to the women's liberation movement. She said there are probably many individual reasons why more women are seeking a university degree, and feels that women in general are becoming more career oriented. "More women are entering into the health professions", she said.

Available figures for general arts and science programmes show that for the 1977-78 academic session, only slightly fewer women than men are enrolled—1050 and 1088 respectively. In the 1975-76 school year, there were 908 women and 1121 men working in an arts and science degree programme.

Indications are that although there is a tendency toward an overall enrollment drop, more women are undertaking a college education.



"Big deal! So I DON'T want to be a doctor or a lawyer! Bodyguards make pretty good dough too, ya' know!"