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More solidarity sought

Dal to host N.U.S. Conference

by Dan O'Connor

Since a disastrous founding conference in Ottawa last fall, the National Union of Students has been struggling to become a national union. The Ottawa conference was marred by Atlantic and Quebec walkouts over the issue of how members would be represented in the union. The draft constitution proposed giving equal power to each institution. Western delegates wanted voting to be based upon the number of members each union had. The Atlantic and Quebec schools presented three proposals for representation and voting to be on a provincial or regional basis.

NUS presently has five full members, with at least ten others who have completed all the requirements for joining and are held back only by formalities. So far, no campus referendum (a prerequisite for membership) has rejected NUS membership. However, there are 27 potential members in the Atlantic area alone.

NUS, to avoid the leader-identification that plagued the old Canadian Union of Students, is run by a central committee. There is a member from each province, plus two members elected at large and the treasurer. At the present time, only the Manitoba, Alberta and British Columbia reps and the Treasurer have been chosen. The issue of how the union will be financed remains unresolved, and there is still a great deal of controversy over representation.

At the Ottawa conference, after the walkouts, the remaining delegates decided to have voting based on the

number of students at each institution. This would give the Atlantic region a maximum of 30 votes compared to at least 60 from Ontario alone. This system hurts this region the most, because it has smaller institutions than any other part of the country.

NUS hopes that many of these issues will be solved at a national conference to be held at Dalhousie on May 4-6. There will be 150 delegates from over 60 institutions attending. The programmes and invitations are being handled by NUS but all other aspects are to be done by the Dal Union. Most delegates will arrive on Thursday the 4th on a charter flight from Montreal.

The conference will be closed to all but voting delegates. This is in response to problems in Ottawa where several grades of delegates were allowed in. The speaking delegates monopolized the time, leaving the voting delegates in the cold. A high registration fee and the travel expenses will discourage most unions from sending more delegates than they have votes. Dalhousie, for example, has two votes, University of Toronto four votes and University of Prince Edward Island one vote.

Several institutions were notably absent from the Ottawa conference and it is expected that they will attend the one in Halifax. These include the University of Toronto, University of Western Ontario, Queen's, U.P.E.I., and U.N.B. There is the potential for Canadian students to come out of the conference more united than they have been for at least five years. There is also considerable danger that the



This was Sept. '66, the scene of a CUS conference at Dal.

delegates will never get past the dangerous preliminaries of financial support and methods

of representation.

The plans and problems of the Atlantic schools relating to

national student solidarity and lobbying power are looked at elsewhere in this issue.

Staff choice selected

The Picaro gets justice

by Stephen R. Mills

Dalhousie is not the only Maritime university to be plagued with student newspaper controversy. The PICARO, undergraduate bi-weekly at Mt. St. Vincent, confronted and survived council action against its editor last week.

The editor of the PICARO is chosen by a joint vote of the old and new student's councils each spring. Applications are open to

anyone, reviewed by the council, and an appointment made by an "in camera" vote.

Laura Purdy, last year's editor and the staff choice for the new term, was the only applicant this term. Her application was reviewed at an in camera meeting Saturday, March 24. Heading the old council was outgoing president Margaret During. President-elect Lois Harnett lead the new council. After a review of The PICARO over the last year, and an apparent character assassination of Purdy by several old council members, Purdy was rejected with a 9-4 vote.

The PICARO immediately circulated handbills demanding that reasons be given for the action. Council considered the matter at a meeting Monday, March 26, attended by the PICARO staff and a large number of concerned students. It was decided that reasons could not be given because of the "in camera" status of the previous meeting. However, a letter of explanation was sent to Purdy.

This meeting also proved less than satisfactory to many people, including members of council. Applications were

reopened from March 27 to March 30. A third meeting was set for Saturday morning March 31. Purdy was again the only applicant and was screened once more at this session. She outlined her experience and her plans for the new term which included improvement of all aspects of the newspaper's production. She also offered a recruitment program and a defence of the present paper policy.

The meeting then moved "in camera" for the vote. Apparently, Purdy made more of an impression this time around as the vote was 14-2-1 in her favour.

Those who regularly read the PICARO have noticed, a definite improvement over the last year and, with this mandate, can expect this to continue.

However, considering some of the implications of this particular affair, the students of the Mount might take it upon themselves to analyze student council policy and procedure.

"In camera" meetings and back-room character slurs have no place in a democratic student government, and these practices should be changed immediately.

Kraft products banned

Council goes community

Last Sunday in one of the most constructive Council meetings in a long time, Council members voted to establish several committees of potentially great significance.

An Ad Hoc Committee on Housing was set up to examine the current housing crisis with a view to making recommendations in the Fall. An addition was made to the Constitution, creating a Community Affairs Secretariat. The purpose of this new position

is to act as "a liaison between the Student Union and various community organizations, volunteer groups and government bodies that are concerned with the development of a better social community in Halifax."

Dissatisfaction with the current vending services in the SUB was expressed in the formation of a committee to study alternatives, with perhaps the possibility of a student-run vending service.

Kraft products were ef-

fectively banned from the SUB with a motion stating that any further contract for food catering service in the SUB shall specify that no Kraft products be used. This decision will be also communicated to the National Farmers Union, the Kraftco Corporation and other universities. Council's move follows similar banning in many other universities across the country.

A large part of the meeting
(cont'd p. 4)