

In New Brunswick

Students form coalition

FREDERICTON (CUP)—Responding to a lack of organization, students at New Brunswick post-secondary institutions decided to form a provincial student coalition at a meeting here February 11.

Representatives from Mount Allison, the University of New Brunswick at Saint John, and UNB at Fredericton said they felt one of the reasons New Brunswick institutions will receive less government support next year than those in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island could be because New Brunswick students are not as well organized.

The New Brunswick government plans to increase funding levels at provincial institutions next year by 6.7 per cent, while institutions in Nova Scotia and P.E.I. will have a slight extra boost from their governments.

Delegates at the meeting, which began as a provincial caucus meeting of the Atlantic Federation of Students, recognized the need for New Brunswick students to approach and be recognized as a group by government agencies.

Although the organization, titled

the New Brunswick Coalition of Students (NBCS), does not want to be seen as an arm of AFS, delegates recognized the value of using AFS resources. NBCS agreed to use an AFS-produced questionnaire on cutbacks for their own purposes and to pass the results on to the federation.

The immediate concern of NBCS will be to stress the importance of equal accessibility to education and examine the larger implications of funding shortfalls, particularly in light of the more severe situation in New Brunswick.

Coalition chairperson, Susan Shalala, from UNB at Fredericton, was mandated to prepare a statement outlining why NBCS was formed to be distributed to the press and students. Shalala will also coordinate the results of the cutbacks survey, which will be used to demonstrate the need for the coalition to students.

The coalition will meet again in Sackville March 18, where they hope to have representatives from the Université de Moncton and St. Thomas University in Fredericton attending as well.

Mt. A. joins AFS

SACKVILLE (CUP)—Students at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick decided Tuesday by a vote of 285-213 to join the Atlantic Federation of Students.

AFS staffperson, LouAnne Meloche, said the victory at Mount Allison is very important to the organization. "New Brunswick stu-

dents will now have a stronger involvement in AFS. I am pleased Mount Allison students have recognized the need to work with others in the region.

The Mount Allison student administrative council took no stand on the referendum but issued both pro and con information.

EAC revamped

by Michael Clow

An intense debate over which direction the organization should take in the future dominates the agenda at the annual meeting of the Ecology Action Centre held on Saturday, February 11th. The debate centred around the questions of funding, tasks / issues to be undertaken and the role of "professionalism" in the operation of the Centre.

Like many other citizens groups, the EAC has been severely strapped for operating funds, a situation brought on by inflation and the end of the Trudeau government's policy of encouraging citizens' participation in major government's decisions. The Centre faced and met a severe and immediate crisis just before Christmas. As a result, four funding / operating strategies were presented to the membership for consideration: all volunteer; volunteer plus part time staff person; volunteer plus full time director; and part time energy co-ordinator; and a more intensely "professional" operation. The first two would have involved a substantial reduction in the activities of the Centre in both scope and volume. The fourth arose from the recommendation that the EAC had to develop into a research organization with enough funds and staff to mount major research efforts to deal with corporations and developers now used to the intervention of environmental

groups in decision making. This was noted especially in regard to such coming battles as that over tidal power.

The consensus of the meeting was that no reductions in the Centre staff or activities were possible, that a full time director was needed, that volunteer effort could be more efficiently utilized, and that it was desirable for new sources of funds to be found to run special research groups that could repeat the kind of highly expert intervention made by the Centre at the N.S. Public Utilities Board hearings last year. That the EAC was the only environmental group capable of tackling the larger ecological issues in the Maritimes was recognized, and with it the critical role the Centre will play in supporting environmental action in the region.

Reports describing the role played by the Centre in the planning for a Conserver (as opposed to a consumer) Society being undertaken by the Science Council of Canada, and the Centre's part in the struggle over responsible Waterfront Development in Metro were made by Susan Holtz and Dr. Don Higgins, while Lloyd Hawbolt, former Assistant Deputy Minister of the N.S. Department of Lands and Forests, presented an address on a proper program of forest management to combat the spruce budworm epidemic.

Morin supports free tuition for Quebec

QUEBEC CITY (PEN)—Quebec Education Minister Jacques-Yvan Morin says he will do "everything in his power" to convince his cabinet colleagues of the need for free university tuition before the next election.

In a meeting Jan. 26 with representatives of the Association nationale des étudiants du Québec (ANEQ), Morin said the policy of free tuition could not be introduced for at least a year, because of the P.Q. government's priorities which include an "energetic" anti-unemployment program.

Free tuition would cost the Quebec government about \$50 million, Morin said.

Student aid

For the past six months, ANEQ has been pressing for improvements in student aid, ANEQ wants

student aid to be a non-repayable grant. ANEQ also wants all post-secondary students to be considered independent, and feels that students should be recognized as non-resident as soon as they leave their parents' home.

Morin said that he was in favour of making students go into debt to finance their education if it was "realistic", bearing in mind the current economic situation.

The education minister says the proposed changes would cost more than \$100 million. Officials in the minister's office feel that the present Quebec student aid plan is "within acceptable limits" because many student people repay their student loans after graduation in one lump sum. The Quebec student aid plan is generally considered better than the Canada Student



Dal Photo / Grandy

Students to attend Fellowship retreat

Are you interested in finding an atmosphere of christian fellowship and sharing? On March 10-12 we are planning to create such an atmosphere while having fun at Camp Kidston. There will be singing, discussions, and stories of personal faith. Bring your skis, snow shoes,

skates, and crazy carpets along, and if the weather permits there will be time to go outdoors for some recreation. Anyone who is interested is asked to contact the Chaplain's Office for further information about transportation and cost, or phone 424-2287.

**Attention
Gazette staff
meeting
Sunday at 2**

Loans Plan, offered in the rest of Canada.

In July, ANEQ asked the Quebec government for a \$35,000 subsidy. Although the government agreed to give ANEQ \$15,000, the minister will not give ANEQ a definite answer about the rest of the money until the end of this month.

ANEQ has been in financial difficulties for the past year.

ANEQ officials were bitter about the meeting. Secretary-treasurer François Desbiens said that the minister was unprepared and poorly informed. "He hadn't understood the situation."

Morin said that he was much more satisfied on the exchange of viewpoints. Officials in his office hope to set up further meetings dealing with more technical problems.

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