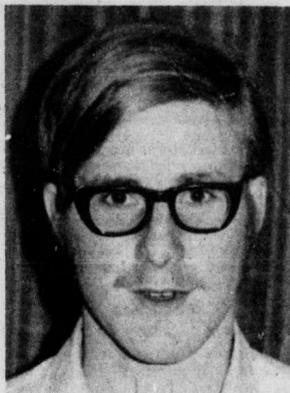


Students emerges as a controversy

Some say...leave it!

By PETER KRAUTLE

Rick Fisher is a graduate of UNB and presently a member of the university alumni. During his five years at UNB, Rick was on the SRC and also a member of the Brunswickan.



Rick Fisher

Fisher says he is opposed to UNB joining NUS mainly for financial reasons. Fisher feels that the SRC just cannot afford to spend \$6500 dollars as well as other expenses that will be incurred for communications and travel if UNB joins the Union. "The SRC money surpluses in the past five years have not been great," states Fisher, "and if the university had been a member of NUS for the past five years, the SRC would be running at a deficit now." He feels that the student budget is already tight and that the added membership fees would put quite a strain on it.

Fisher also believes that UNB will have no voice in the Union. He notes that Ontario universities have the most number of votes in NUS and it will be these universities who will have the largest voice and benefit most from the organization.

"AFS concerns itself with university problems in the Atlantic region, and that is where UNB's priorities lie, not in a national organization," according to Fisher.

Fisher feels that "NUS won't be able to deal effectively with the Maritime Higher Education Commission but that the AFS can." He feels that "if the SRC wants to use its students' money to support a student federation then it should back the AFS."

By CHRIS HUNT

Gary Stairs, vice-president of the SRC, is against UNB joining NUS. Stairs is not impressed by the NUS organization and feels it has been poorly organized up until this year. One example of this, he states, took place at the spring conference at York University which he attended. Half way through the conference, states Stairs, NUS found that it was financially bankrupt. This was due to the fact that the comptroller of Dalhousie happened to be looking through NUS' financial statements and discovered that NUS would have to raise 20,000 dollars to stay alive. NUS immediately went on a fund raising campaign soliciting from both member and non-member organizations. One reason for this financial bankruptcy, says Stairs, was that a number of member universities had failed to pay their dues.



Gary Stairs

NUS was initially created to replace the Canadian Union of Students (CUS) which collapsed in 1969 due to financial and political problems that it couldn't cope with. As for NUS, Stairs says, "I predict the same thing." Stairs feels that in Dan O'Connor, a law graduate from Dalhousie University, NUS has a capable and reliable secretary but he says "I don't think he can set up a system and pull things together cohesively as is needed for this type of organization."

Stairs feels that NUS has five basic problems. The first problem says Stairs is that most students are only in term for one or perhaps two years and "that it's very rare that you'll find a successor to a student president who will subscribe to the same type of thinking as his predecessor."

The second problem, developing because of the very diverse regions involved, is the difficulty in reaching a concensus which would be "representative of Maritime thinking and pertinent to the problems of the New Brunswick student."

Thirdly, as the majority of member institutions are located in Ontario, British Columbia and the Prairies, Stairs says, "It would require a very determined Atlantic representation to offset this political reality. With varying sensibilities from president to president, it is doubtful that UNB would continue to profit from NUS after the exodus of Warren McKenzie from student politics."

The fourth problem is the problem of funding and financial resources, says Stairs. "When member organizations discover that NUS is not tending to reinforce their own individual objectives they have a tendency to renege their financial obligations to the union. With 65 percent of their budget (NUS' that is being) allocated to travel and salaries, unpaid memberships could have a very limiting effect on the activities of the executive."

Stairs concluded by saying, "As in the case of most political organizations a small power-bloc can be quite capable of directing the utility of the group towards their own personal objectives. This is a potentially dangerous situation and difficult to offset because of the sprawling nature of NUS."

Remember!

Make your decision

and vote in the

referendum on N.U.S.

on October 22

EDITOR'S NOTE: We are providing you, the students of UNB, with both pro and con arguments for joining or not joining NUS. It is up to you, the students to find out all you can about NUS - the conference runs from the 17th of October until the 20th.

N.U.S. backgrounder

Should UNB join NUS, it would be the fifth Atlantic University to join. Present Atlantic members include Dalhousie, St. Mary's, King's College, and Memorial University.

The National Union of Students was formed in the fall of 1972 when the amendments to a Student Federal Aid Bill were being made. At the time, student unions across the country were attempting to concern themselves with the bill proceedings and provide input. However, student governments found themselves very disorganized and with little power when they approached the federal government.

In November of that year NUS was formed. Its beginnings were shaky, and the Union was constantly plagued with financial instability. In the spring of this year, NUS was again in financial trouble and consequently put out an appeal to post-secondary student unions for money. With the raising of membership fees from \$.33 to \$1.00 per student their financial situation has eased.

NUS' goals are threefold: 1) to provide a concrete forum through which ideas may be exchanged; 2) to provide a means for students to work collectively towards implementing policies in areas of common interest; 3) to provide lobbying, research, and information services.