

## CROSS CANADA BRIEFS

### New Brunswick government to sponsor national education conference

OTTAWA (CUP) — The New Brunswick provincial government will be dishing out close to \$100,000 to sponsor an upcoming national education symposium, according to student leaders.

Pat FitzPatrick, member of the board of directors of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) and co-organizer of the conference, said that the government's sponsorship would lend the event credibility.

The national symposium, which CASA is organizing, will be held Feb. 7-11 in Fredericton, and will provide a forum for all stakeholders in post-secondary education to discuss their concerns, said FitzPatrick.

The main issues on the agenda include the orientation and structure of Canada's education system as well as the funding formula for post-secondary institutions.

Matt Ravingat, co-founder of the Political Action Committee (PAC), said that the symposium will not accomplish anything positive for students.

"CASA's proposals are veiled...they're encouraging a corporate agenda on education," said Ravingat. "The [symposium] is not going to help the student movement."

"A great way to douse the fire of the student movement is to have CASA's proposals accepted by the government because students believe that they have won [something] when nothing has been achieved."

Bill Smith, the assistant deputy minister of education and labour for the New Brunswick government, claimed that hosting the symposium will benefit his government, and will allow them to put their point of view across on the various discussions, arguments and suggestions.

However, Louise Wildman, a member of PAC, thinks the \$100,000 could be better spent by funding universities instead of the symposium.

Samer Muscati

### Ontario minister wants to create education crisis

TORONTO (CUP) — Members of Ontario's education community are outraged over remarks made by the Minister of Education and Training that he intends to "invent a crisis" in the public schools in order to justify an overhaul of the system.

John Snobelen's remarks were caught on video during his first consultation with senior ministry staff on July 6.

The minister was attempting to garner support for his plan to portray the state of Ontario's public school system in worse shape than it is. "Creating a useful crisis is part of what this will be about," said the minister on video. "The first bunch of communications that the public might hear might be more negative than I would be inclined to talk about."

Earl Manners, president of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, says the incident demonstrates this government is not above lying. "We are fearful of the lengths [the government] will go to implement their corporate agenda."

Snobelen, a Grade 10 drop-out and multi-millionaire, issued an apology to the education community on Sept. 14, several days after the media got a hold of the video. In it, he said, "[my] remarks were interpreted as to suggest that I was encouraging the ministry to fabricate a problem. I believe this requires some clarification and an explanation of context," and stated the remarks were not made specifically in reference to education.

He also wrote in his apology that his "choice of words was inappropriate and unhelpful," and that he meant to use the word "expose," not "invent."

Stacey Young

### Ontario government cuts funding to UN University

TORONTO (CUP) — Canada's first United Nations University may be axed due to provincial budget cuts in Ontario.

"We were very disappointed to hear of the provincial government's decision not to come through for funding with this venture," said Ron Childs, a vice-president at Hamilton's McMaster University, the proposed site of the institution.

"There are tremendous opportunities there for the benefit of this province, so we regret this very much indeed," he added.

The institution had plans to target research on the environment, health issues, and the global water supply, says Martin Taylor, director of the Institute of the Environment and Health at McMaster.

All Ontario university students would be eligible to participate in research and overseas projects, even if not attending McMaster.

The UN University is designed to function as a consortium, drawing resources from other post-secondary institutions, public agencies, and the private sector.

On Sept. 6, Mike Harris' cabinet decided against doling out the \$5.25 million pledged to the university by Bob Rae's NDP government. Instead, the government will investigate alternative sources of funding, specifically within the private sector.

"Ideally, funds would later come from UN agencies like the World Health Organization and the World Bank."

Aphrodite Sahlas

# SUNS elects new president

Students' Union of Nova Scotia fighting complications

BY MILTON HOWE

Christopher Webb, Director of External Affairs for the Saint Mary's University Students' Association, was elected President of the Students' Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS) in August. His election followed a complicated and controversial summer, which saw three other people at the helm, a second office relocation, and the resignation of long-time Executive Officer Sue Drapeau.

Webb replaced interim President Sandy Ross, who was elected following the annulment of the election of Boris Mirtchev, who was elected following the resignation of Chair Hal MacLean.

The SUNS office used to be in the Dalhousie Student Union Building (SUB), but last year the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) asked SUNS to pay market value rent for its space. Until then, SUNS had not been paying rent for their office on the third floor.

According to DSU Treasurer Bret Leech, the DSU negotiated with SUNS over a rental agreement but the two sides could not come to an agreement.

"Dal students were paying more than their share," said Leech, pointing out that the space SUNS was occupying could be used by the DSU for greater revenue-generating activities.

So after a brief period on the fourth floor of the SUB, SUNS found a new home late in the spring at 958 Barrington St., by Inglis St. and near SMU.

Drapeau, who was with SUNS since its formation almost ten years ago, left SUNS this summer after numerous rough moments with the former chair, Hal MacLean.

MacLean explained his falling out with Drapeau in an interview this week. "I've known Sue as long as I've been at Dal. We've had our ups and downs, and this summer was a down."

At one of the meetings of the executive council this summer,

the job of executive officer was scaled back to part-time and the salary was cut. Drapeau, with her job description having been virtually gutted, resigned from the position.

Since then, Geoff Wilson has been hired as Executive Officer.

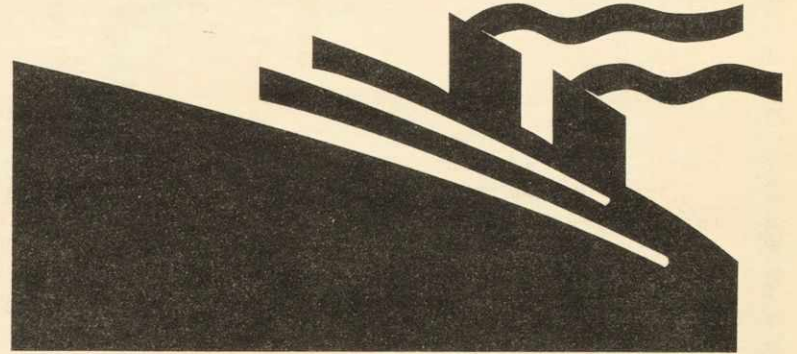
Perhaps owing somewhat to the controversy, Webb looks to the upcoming year as a vital one for SUNS. One of his main goals is to spread information about SUNS across the province.

"There's still a lot of people

within the post-secondary school system that don't know what SUNS is," said Webb. "I want to find out what students are thinking, what they're feeling about issues. We're looking to do a lot more P.R. on campuses."

Tops on his list is Halifax university rationalization. SUNS is currently drafting a policy on rationalization, which should be released within the next few weeks.

Webb added, "We've got a lot of new ideas. One of my roles as president is to facilitate ideas."



## Maine ferry rescued

BY MILTON HOWE

It was a close call last week, but the ferry service between Yarmouth and Bar Harbor, Maine, has been given at least one reprieve.

Marine Atlantic, the crown corporation which operates the ferry, had originally decided to cancel service for the winter, effective October 10.

At present, Marine Atlantic is awaiting a report from the South West Short Development Agency, detailing the importance of the ferry service on the local economy. The report is due by the end of September.

Marine Atlantic and representatives from the Federal and Nova Scotia governments will review the report to determine the extent of the economic impact the service interruption will have on the region.

Ted Bartlett, a spokesperson for Marine Atlantic, said that last year was the first time in almost forty years of operation that the route was shut down in the off-season for "low revenue reasons." The route is currently serviced by MV Bluenose.

"It has operated in the winter for just about its whole history," Bartlett said.

Although the service may or may not run past October 10, any operation beyond that day is over and above that which was budgeted in Marine Atlantic's corporate plan, and would have to be made up somehow by the corporation. That will undoubtedly prove to be no easy task as they, like all government agencies and crown corporations, strive to meet the constraints placed upon them by ever-lowering federal subsidies.

## Student Union proposes improvement fund, cans fancy photocopier

BY LAURA D. QUINZIO

The Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) meets every second Sunday, making decisions affecting us, the students.

Here are the highlights of the Sept. 24 meeting:

- Rationalization is still a hot topic among all university students, professors and administration. If it goes through, we will be part of "The University of Nova Scotia." As Dave Cox, president of the DSU said, "both the O.J. verdict and rationalization are going to be the focus of everyone's life at Dal."

- A new Banking and Financial Service MBA Program is in place for those in the Distance Education Program who wish to upgrade their banking skills. This means an increase in tuition fees for all Distance Education (DE) students. The DSU looked at cutting some of their own fees because those students who don't attend courses on campus don't use the facilities or join societies. However, the argument was that DE students are paying to be politically represented by the DSU. Council agreed to take a second look at the services offered once the \$132 fee is paid, and decide which services apply to DE students.

- The implementation of the Xerox Docutech Publishing System at Dal looks bleak following the release of the report from Coburg Consultants. Docutech is a high quality and high speed digital photo-

copying system. The consultants were hired by the DSU to do a feasibility test on the program's potential success. Coburg Consultants surveyed 250 students.

- The Course Evaluation nightmare — the chance for students to evaluate their professors and their classes — begins again. Previously, professors have complained that students aren't qualified to rate them. And, as Chris Lydon, DSU Vice President Academic, observed during the meeting, "the other problem — other than the fact that some profs are just pricks — is just that there are so many courses."

- Not too much more on the Student Union Building (SUB) general manager's dismissal. Another *in camera* session was held and students will not hear much more unless the Union's lawyer approves for release the behind closed doors discussion. The staff are said to be standing behind the Executive's decision to dismiss Steve Gaetz.

- The DSU will introduce the concept of "The Capital Campaign" during the October referendum period. This would mean an increase of \$20 to part time and \$25 to full time tuition fees. The extra money would go directly to upgrading the computer lab and library facilities, as well as implementing The Blue Light Security program on campus.

- You know the lovely white face painted on the statue in front of the SUB? Well, it has been determined as DSU property, and 'someone' is going to finally clean it up.