

# Discussion but no decisions

by Ellen Reynolds

**A** National Forum on Post-Secondary Education costing \$2.5 million took place last week in Saskatchewan. There was widespread agreement, but results are yet to be seen.

The approximately 600 people attending included people from the business sector, students, faculty, administrators, and government representatives. Royden Trainor, Chair of the Students' Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS), attended the forum. "The degree of whether or not the Forum was a success, I have to suspend judgement on until we actually see some results," said Trainor.

There were three themes: Accessibility, Financing, and Challenges & Opportunities. Sub-groups of approximately 20, representative of all attending groups, were formed to discuss each of the themes, and at the final plenary presented reports which are now in the hands of the government.

"There was a lot of discussion of broad education," said Caroline Zayid, President of the Dal-

housie Student's Union, "but the more specific it got, the less agreement there was." Trainor said there were significant debates when it came down to the specifics of who is responsible for paying for PSE.

"Secretary of State David Crombie gave a press conference saying he wasn't prepared to give more money for PSE. It's entirely up to the government now," said Trainor.

The two main recommendations made by the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) were to make sure all monies designated through the federal government is put into PSE and to set up a national organization to coordinate the interprovincial and federal/provincial priorities with respect to PSE.

The forum was set up for discussion, not decisions. Zayid explained that since the attendants were invited and not elected, it wasn't a representative body and therefore shouldn't be making decisions. "If it leads the government to do something, it's useful. The important thing now is to keep up the pressure," said Zayid.

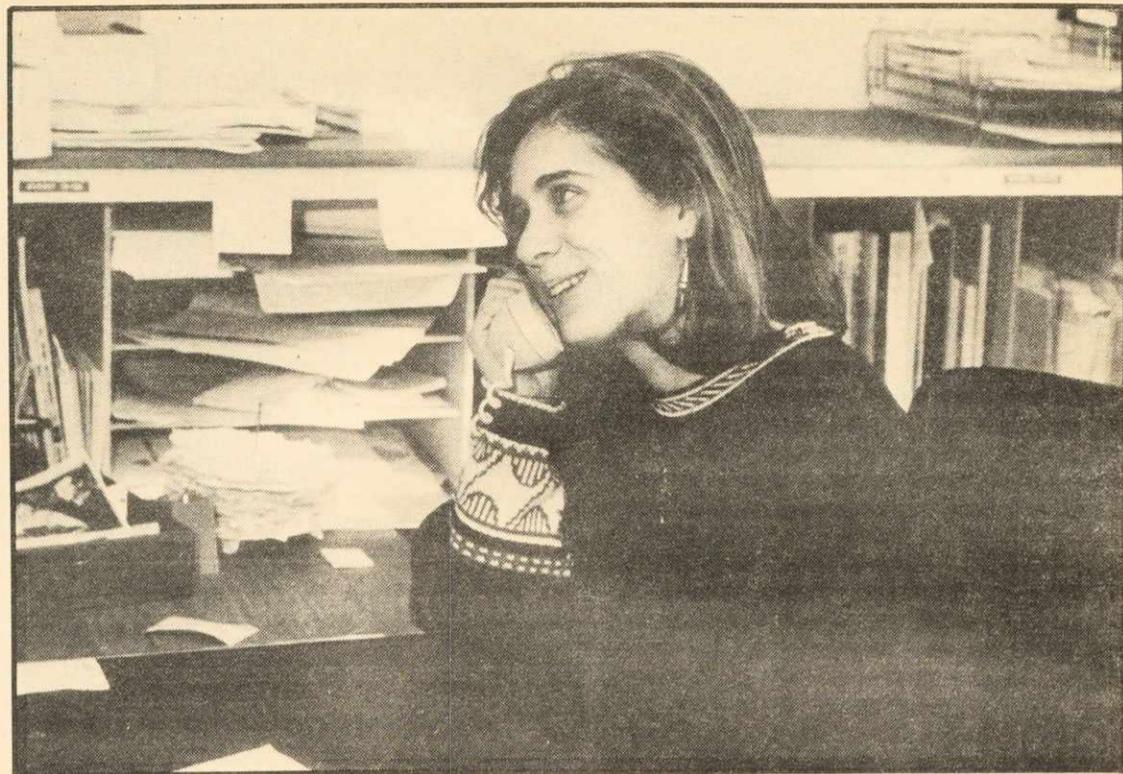


PHOTO: IAN MARDON

All talk, no action, according to Caroline Zayid.

# Students fall through the cracks

by Paul Creelman

**A** ccording to native student Theresa Meuse, there is a period of seven weeks every year during which she receives no funding assistance at all.

Meuse is a returning mature native student with children. In order to attend university, she receives student funding, which covers the time spent enrolled at Dalhousie.

Meuse applied for provincial social assistance for the seven weeks each year that she has off in between classes, but was told she should go to the Indian band for assistance. The band told her she could not receive assistance through them because she had left the reservation.

"I can't help it if the university is off the reservation," said Meuse.

Meuse then went to the municipal assistance programs,

but was again refused because she would be receiving the education funding in the fall. The municipality suggested she go to the churches for aid, and to food banks.

The same situation exists for many other native students who fall through the cracks. The native student assistance program will fund students for their time in classes. But since many native students take summer classes, there is a seven-week period when they cannot receive any monies.

Meuse is not happy with going to charities for support when the system doesn't work.

In addition to problems in funding, a new priority system for native student funds has been introduced by the federal government.

The first priority goes to returning students who are continuing studies for a bachelor degree, and those who were

denied funding last year. Second priority goes to high school grads and mature students, and post-graduate students.

Third and lowest priority goes to those who have previously dropped out of college. Although the total funding for native students has been increased about 14 per cent from last year, this may only be an apparent since the new budget will not be extended by further allocations as has been done in previous years.

Joyce Nelson of Indian Affairs says in 1986-87, 258 students were enrolled in regular programs with funding of \$1,793,600, as well as 21 students in a C-31 program with funding of \$163,600. In 1987-88 205 students were enrolled in regular programs with funding of \$1,806,800, and 26 students were enrolled in a C-31 program with funding of \$195,500.

# Proposal in progress

by Geoff Stone

**A** proposal on affirmative action is underway at Dalhousie from the advisory council on the hiring of women, disabled, and minorities.

The committee, set up in 1981, is in the final stages of presenting its report to Dalhousie president Howard Clark.

Phyllis Stern, chair of the committee, said the committee has gotten favourable comments from all groups that submitted reports. "There hasn't been any negative response," she said.

Stern said the task of the University in affirmative action should not only be to hire women, disabled, and minorities, but to actively seek these target groups. "I don't think we (Dalhousie) have had any dramatic searches," she said.

The committee will also look at career paths and employment equity. According to Dal Faculty Association executive member Bridgitte Schotch, the union has 735 members, with 210 women.

Schotch said the proportion of women has stayed relatively constant over the years. She said compared to the number of full professors, there are very few women.

Schotch agreed that in the School of Nursing, there are perhaps as few as three women full professors of the over 30 department members. "And that is a department that is all women" she added.

Stern said the present situation at Dalhousie "does give one pause. It's time we had some affirmative action on this campus."

# Council bugged

**MONTREAL (CUP)** — The discovery of a hidden microphone in the offices of the student council has raised fears of illegal police surveillance at Concordia University.

The microphone — a small

metal receiver — had already been disconnected when it was found in the ceiling of a student executive office. An electronics expert on the university faculty confirmed that the object was an illegal listening device.

The discovery came less than six weeks after two Concordia students were questioned by agents claiming they were from the RCMP. The students were asked about their political activities with different campus groups.

One of the students said an aggressive man, claiming he worked for the RCMP, called her at work one week after she attended a peace march.

"This fellow said, 'Hello, this is Corporal Duchesne from the

RCMP. We're doing an investigation and I'd like to meet you,'" she said.

She said he knew internal details of a Concordia group she was working with and proceeded to mention facts that only had been exchanged by word of mouth within the group.

She told the caller she wanted to find out what her rights were before being interviewed by the RCMP.

"He said, 'Oh! You don't want to cooperate with me . . . This is non-cooperation and it's going in your file.' I said, 'OK, if you want to play this game, why don't you call me back later, then.' He said, 'I'm coming to pick you up right now'.

"I left immediately. I was terrified," she said.

# Sexism at the Mount

**HALIFAX (CUP)** — A male candidate in a recent student council election at Mount Saint Vincent University says women don't run for council positions because they like being led.

"Girls, really, are more complacent. They look to the men for some strange reason. Generally speaking, women seem more likely to accept being led than to

accept leadership," said Rod Benteau, who tried for — and lost — a seat on senate.

Ten student council positions were up for grabs in the October 13th and 14th elections, in which only eight per cent of the student body voted. Seven spots were uncontested, and six were won by men. The results mean that men make up about one-

third of the council.

Over eighty per cent of the University's 4100 students are female.

Benteau based his comments on an observed lack of female participation in classrooms. He said that historical institutionalized sexism is hard to shake.

Said Benteau, "Let's blame society."