

REPORT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

to the

NUS/UNE SIXTH CONFERENCE

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Ian Boothe - B.C. Representative  
Errol Hedin - Alta. Representative  
Karen Hackl - Sask. Representative  
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## CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The NUS/UNE constitution describes the responsibilities of the Central Committee under section XIII.

### a) General Duties:

- 1) To carry out policy and implement strategy developed at general meetings.
- 2) To oversee office procedures, disburse funds and "liaise with the staff".
- 3) To examine developing circumstances, adjust tactics and distribute information to institutions.

### b) Structure:

- 1) A maximum of thirteen members may serve on the Central Committee, one elected from each province and three elected at large by all the delegates.

Most student unions have received detailed packages of information concerning the actions and programmes of NUS/UNE. The purpose of this report is to review the work of the past six months and make recommendations for this conference to consider.

## ACTIVITIES

Delegates of the NUS/UNE Annual General meeting at Glendon College, recommended policy and strategy for six major issues.

Motions from the employment workshop called for the release of federal/provincial information on summer employment, surveys, the structuring of appropriate regional and federal representative review committees with student representation, the formation of alliances with regional/national groups and the co-ordination of a media campaign.

In the past five months, attempts, particularly at the national level have been made to examine federal policies re: student summer employment. In addition efforts were made to obtain government data on projected unemployment figures for 1974-75. These efforts have not been completely successful and are continuing to obtain information for our 1976 campaign.

Information exchange and educational material on the necessity to increase pressure, beginning immediately, will begin in the near future and will be discussed at the conference.

Informal discussions have taken place with labour and in light of the recent economic policies of the government should be increased.

An exchange of information with regional organizations and initiations of discussions with provincial officials must continue and is crucial considering the peculiarities and disparities of provincial employment schemes. This work will supplement data already accumulated for research and strategy for May of 1976.

Similar contacts and procedures were followed by the staff and Central Committee members as a response to the Fall housing crisis. A pamphlet outlining short and long term strategy, posters and general background information was forwarded to provincial/regional unions and institutions. This information was designed to supplement and clarify data already gathered and encourage NUS/UNE campus committees. Alliances with national groups like the Community Planning Association of Canada and a number of provincial/municipal tenant associations and community groups extended the lobby and developed considerable public support. The staff contacted CMHC, and was responsible for the clarification of federal government policy and exchange of information. All of which provide enough preliminary information for the research paper on housing drafted for this meeting.

Delegates to the Womens Workshop called for active NUS/UNE involvement in the Women in Universities and Colleges Conference (Toronto, Nov., 1975). NUS/UNE is co-sponsoring this conference and a number of mail-outs to institutions has clarified most questions. Another motion called for the publication of a woman's survival guide and as much as there has been some co-ordination of data for the guide, by women at Carleton and UBC, a substantial amount of work remains to be done.

Preliminary debate on the Fiscal Arrangements Act at the workshop on the financing of post-secondary education produced a number of strategy motions. Again, the staff approached CAUT and AUCC, two organizations also interested in FAA negotiations. Further analysis of the act and its implications have produced a document for the October conference. The theme of the conference "Financing of Post-Secondary Education -- Who Will Pay?" reflects the urgency of FAA negotiations and the corresponding commitment of NUS/UNE to negotiate on behalf of post-secondary students.

A considerable amount of work has been done on the issue of foreign students. Students at the University of Waterloo and the NUS/UNE staff made a number of presentations to the Senate hearings on the federal government "Green Paper on Immigration". A brief was presented and debated. A transcript of these hearings was distributed and seems to have activated a number of campus foreign student groups. Another brief is being drafted as a response to questions raised at the hearings and will be distributed when completed. Organization of a national speaking tour on the Green Paper is proceeding but much still depends on institutional support.

The student aid workshop, produced both research recommendations and strategy recommendations. Research of CSLP has continued and a supplementary paper to the original brief has been prepared for the October conference. The implementation of the student aid campaign and reactions to revised criteria, etc. has continued on three levels. Presentations of the NUS/UNE

position on student aid were made before the CSLP Plenary Group and the NUS/UNE brief on student aid was distributed to a number of education groups. Repeated attempts to formally discuss the brief with the Council of Ministers of Education were made, but the staff were frustrated in these attempts. Attempts at the provincial level to approach ministers of Education for representation at the CME meetings, general discussion of the NUS/UNE brief and review of the CME documentation were also made. Generally these attempts were unsuccessful although some provincial education officials have responded in token ways to student representation demands. The NUS/UNE student aid petition, leaflets and posters have provided campus committees with organizing data and opportunities to expose the failures of the CSLP.

Progress of these campus NUS/UNE committees and the success/failure of negotiations will be assessed and further research articulated at the October meeting.

Attempts to raise the \$30,000 needed to fund the organization over the summer were successful. Explanations and documentation of the procedures and general financing information will be covered by the Treasurer's Report.

The Central Committee met once over the summer, in Ottawa. A review of the May conference and preparation/discussion of the October meeting were the main agenda items. The OECD brief was analyzed and relations with AOSC and AUCC discussed. A general debate of the relationships, both structural and ideological, between regional/provincial and the NUS/UNE prompted suggestions for a formal meeting. This meeting has been scheduled for the end of October, 1975 and each organization is expected to present a position paper. The office was re-located over the summer and now shares space in a building with the Canadian University Press. Two new staff persons were hired, Dan O'Connor as executive secretary and Miguel Figueroa as general secretary.

In the past three weeks, three institutions, Memorial University of Newfoundland, the University of Calgary and the University of Winnipeg have successfully held referenda to join NUS/UNE. The University of Alberta referenda failed. The University of Saskatchewan and St. Thomas More College referenda, to remain in NUS/UNE at \$1.00, was successful.

## SUMMARY

We find ourselves in a period of growth and the prospects for the future of our organization are indeed bright. Despite this encouraging situation we must nonetheless keep in mind that the financial benefits derived from our increased membership will not be reaped until the next fiscal year. We must therefore remain cautious when evaluating what actions we can undertake and how these will be financed.

The Central Committee still feels that "student aid" should remain as our first priority. We have already done a great deal of work on this issue, but there is still much to be accomplished. We feel the organization should continue to pressure government on this question.

Another point very much related to the question of student aid is future nature of the "Federal/Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act". It must be understood that future student aid policy in this country is dependent on the results of these Federal/Provincial negotiations. Seeing that the very quality of our education is at stake, we must do all in our power to respond to the challenge.

## APPENDIX

As an appendix to the Central Committee report, members of the staff and the Central Committee have compiled brief historical resumes of each of the regional/provincial student federations.

- A) Atlantic Federation of Students - AFS
- B) L'Association Nationale des Etudiants du Quebec - ANEQ
- C) Ontario Federation of Students - OFS
- D) Western Student Services - WSS
- E) Federation of Alberta Students - FAS
- F) British Columbia Student Federation - BCSF

### A) AFS

In Truro, Nova Scotia (January, 1975) the Atlantic Federation of Students held its founding conference. At the meeting, delegates drafted a constitution and fee structure proposal. The membership includes the majority of post-secondary institutions in the Atlantic provinces. An institution pays yearly according to its size:

1 - 500 students	\$50.00
500-1000 students	\$100.00
1000 and above	\$150.00

Each member institution has equal voting power.

The AFS holds two conferences a year, in October and May. A provincial caucus chairman and federation chairman are elected at these meetings. The AFS offices are at the University of New Brunswick.

Most organizing has been around student aid. The impact of AFS is being felt in the new Nova Scotia 1975-76 student aid bursary budget, and in New Brunswick where students are becoming concerned, and have begun negotiations.

The last conference held in Halifax, Oct. 3-5, 1975 centered around discussions of tuition fee increases (most of the Atlantic universities have had a 1975-76 fee raise), the housing and residence situation and the entertainment, women and media workshops.

The Atlantic members discussed NUS/UNE, its aims and policies, as well as AFS/NUS relations. The members present at the last meeting were favourable towards NUS/UNE and decided that as many institutions as possible would send observers to the Fredericton conference. The only restriction on this is purely financial, since the majority of Atlantic institutions are extremely small and travel and conference costs remain a large expenditure.

## B) ANEQ

L'Association Nationale des Etudiants du Quebec was officially created on March 22, 1975 at its founding conference held at Universite de Laval. The fifty two (52) student unions present recognized the urgent need to establish a united student association to articulate and defend the collective interests of all Quebec students (both francophone and anglophone) in the face of impositions and retrogressive measures by the Quebec Ministry of Education in the past several years.

Two events, in particular, contributed greatly to the growing awareness among students for the need for an organized voice of the Quebec student movement. The first crisis arose when the Ministry introduced TEAU (university entrance aptitude tests in the fall of 1974 to be used as a screening mechanism for CEGEP graduate students wishing to attend university. Students overwhelmingly rejected the implementation of these tests, as this screening system was seen by students as an arbitrary tool in order to justify massive cutbacks in enrollment (hence financing) to universities in the province, and as a big step backward in the movement towards universal accessibility to post-secondary education. Growing dissatisfaction among CEGEP students eventually surfaced in the form of mass rallies, demonstrations and strike action. The use of TEAU tests was subsequently discontinued.

Shortly thereafter, the alarming situation in the government student aid programmes began to surface, and students spontaneously started to organize around this issue as well. Not only were government aid cutbacks becoming more and more visible in the actual number and size of grants, but as well, the processing of student loans and bursaries was delayed by more than six to seven weeks in most instances. Meanwhile the students starved and organized. Once again, local mobilizations of students led to strike action, but on a more massive scale than was the case with T.E.A.U. More than 125,000 walked out of classes throughout the province, often for as long as three full weeks. Impromptu conferences were hastily convened and communications between student unions increased substantially.

The government, under pressure from both students and other supporting groups, finally responded positively, if begrudgingly. A joint committee, including student parity, was established to bring about reforms for implementation in 1976-77 and the processing of applications was accelerated for the interim period. These concessions were viewed as explorations, not as victories, but as they appeared reasonable under the circumstances, mobilizations subsided. By this point, even the government was asking for a united voice of Quebec students with which to negotiate!

In late February, a planning conference was held and in late March ANEQ was born. The work had just begun.

Since then, much organizational work has been accomplished. A large majority of student unions in post-secondary institutions are non-members, with several more membership referenda scheduled. A lot of energy has been invested in consolidating the Regional Councils (seven in all) and in helping to organize students at the local level. An ANEQ newspaper, *Le Journal de la Majorite*, has been created, and during the summer, an extensive survey was conducted on student summer employment, revealing the deplorable employment picture for Quebec students, both regionally and provincially. During this time as well, ANEQ representatives have continued negotiations with the Ministry on student aid and other questions relating to the general financing system for post-secondary education have been researched.

At the Third National Congress, held on Sept. 27-28, at CEGEP Limouilou, the students confronted other issues relating to the Ministry's, *Le Papport Madeau*, *le rapport C.L.E.C.E.C.* and the situation in student services throughout the province. Discussions at the Congress National also centered around the relationship between ANEQ and other student associations in Canada, encouraging discussions with these other organizations (both provincial and national) concerning the Canadian student movement on the whole. It was agreed that these discussions should "take the road of unity, and not the road of division". (translated)

#### C) OFS

The Ontario Federation of Students was created in the spring of 1972 to replace the loosely-structured Ontario Union of Students (1968-71). From its inception, OFS levied a fee of 40¢ per student and employed a full-time staff. After initial experiences with the Wright Commission Report on post-secondary education in Ontario and an ensuing province-wide fee increase, OFS concentrated on restructuring (a fee of \$1.50 per student was levied by referenda at every campus) and on developing a stronger base of campus support. Currently, OFS has an income of \$150,000.00.

At its conference of September, 1975, OFS decided to prioritize its student aid campaign. There are plans for Regional student rallies following the course of a travelling Ontario government committee on student aid culminating in a large rally in Toronto at the end of the semester. Other areas of concern were educational financing aid cutbacks; the support of common fronts to unite the members of the post-secondary community; and issue-oriented organizing stressing the needs of specific constituencies, e.g. part-time students; community college students, etc.

Recently the Ontario government has been encouraging its students to apply for student aid under CSLP rather than OSAP (i.e. a straight federal loan rather than a loan-grant programme). This and other developments will hopefully increase co-operation between NUS and OFS and awareness in Ontario of the national component in crucial issues like student aid, financing, housing and employment.



D) W.S.S.

Western Students Services started in the fall of 1974 at a conference held in Edmonton, Alberta. The initial objective was to provide a forum for exchanging information between the Western Student Unions, focusing on the services issues. The student union leaders felt the need for comparing notes on different services to help improve their own services.

The second conference held at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan in March 1975, centred around the same objective. However, those institutions in attendance were represented by both the old and newly elected executives. The reason for this was twofold:

- i) to enable the new executives to meet one another and establish a rapport to provide for improved communication;
- ii) and to enable the new executives to learn, from the old, more about the internal structure and services of their own student union and others.

The third conference was held in September 1975 in Regina, Saskatchewan. There, discussion centred around more political issues, i.e. foreign students, housing, student aid and course unions. The only discussion on services centred around programming and there may be more possibilities for block booking in the West.

Each student union provides its own transportation and accommodation costs with the hosting student union providing the meal costs. This system seems to be working well since the W.S.S. itself is fairly loose.

The tone of the W.S.S. seems to have changed if one can judge from the last conference. It will be interesting to see the proposed agenda for the spring conference which is to be held in Calgary, Alberta.

E) Federation of Alberta Students (FAS)

An organizational meeting was held August 22, 23 and 24 at the University of Alberta. Nine Alberta institutions were present: Grant McEwan, Lethbridge Community College, Mount Royal College, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Olds Agricultural College, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, University of Calgary, and University of Lethbridge. These nine institutions represent less than one-half the post-secondary institutions in Alberta, however, they represent over three-fourths the student population. University of Alberta

A draft of the proposed constitution was presented along with general discussion on priorities and fees.

An interim executive was appointed and commissioned to make preliminary reports on: housing, employment (specifically the hire-a-student programme), the Alberta Student Loan Plan, the Alberta Adult Education draft, and day care, as well as a final draft of the constitution, by laws and a fee structure.

These items are to be prepared and presented to the founding conference of the Federation of Alberta Students scheduled for October 24, 25 and 26 at Mount Royal College, Calgary.

F) British Columbia Federation of Students (BCSF)

The BCSF has been actively organizing, especially at the institutional level, since April of 1975.

Three issues, the cutbacks in post-secondary education financing, the failure

of C.S.L.P. policies, and the housing crisis have directly affected the quality and accessibility of education.

The formation of the federation has therefore encouraged, participation from students and their unions in every sector of p.s. education. The B.C.S.F. although financially insecure, has an office and one staff person. Funds to support these services have come from the grants/loans of individual institutions. It is hoped that a fee levy proposal will be ratified at the next general meeting.

NUS supporters have organized very effectively around the Vancouver - lower mainland housing crisis, have begun some petitioning on student aid, and were directly involved in the formation of the provinial federation. Therefore the relationship between the present B.C.S.F. executive/staff and NUS is positive and co-operative.

At the November general meeting of the B.C.S.F. a workshop on NUS has been scheduled. This meeting will compliment the efforts of NUS and B.C.S.F. supporters to build more effective liason.