

# **NATIONAL EXECUTIVE REPORT**

May 12 to November 23, 1999



**CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS**



# LETTER TO THE MEMBERS

Dear Members,

We are pleased to submit for your consideration the following report of our work over the past six months. Despite an unusually high level of turnover in the composition of the National Executive and a number of unpredicted staff vacancies in provincial and national offices, the Federation has been able to maintain a high public profile, and to prepare itself to launch the second phase of the Access 2000 campaign.

Even with its projected multi-billion-dollar federal budget surplus, the federal government has shown little desire to revitalise the social safety net. Meanwhile, some provincial governments have called for tax cuts and have enthusiastically embraced policies that will decrease access to higher education.

In this climate, the membership base of the Federation is growing and many non-member students' unions have joined the Access 2000 campaign. The campaign has inspired many students and social justice activists who recognise that building a movement requires far more than a single day of action. The ongoing work of the Federation will help to ensure that social reinvestment is a priority in the 2000 federal budget and beyond.

We look forward to continuing to work together toward a system of accessible, quality public education through this challenging period.

In solidarity,  
The National Executive



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# CAMPAIGNS & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

## Introduction

At the November 1998 national general meeting, the Federation reviewed its *1998-1999 Campaigns Strategy* that expressed the membership's short, medium, and long term objectives for legislative change. This document outlines the context and the goals of the Federation's campaigns and identifies the tactics required to achieve its objectives. These tactics include research, contact with government, membership involvement and coalition work.

## RESEARCH

Up to date, in-depth research by the Federation provides member locals, government officials and the media with timely information on, and analysis of, government policies and trends within post-secondary education.

Research is a fundamental tool for promoting the Federation's policy objectives. Since the last general meeting, the following research documents have been produced:

- Fact Sheet on Tuition Fees;
- Fact Sheet on Federal Funding;
- Fact Sheet on Tax Cuts;
- Fact Sheet on Millennium Scholarship Fund;
- Access 2000 Tabloid – Articles on the Access 2000 campaign and Aboriginal issues
- Organising Manual;
- Missing Pieces – a book produced in conjunction with the Canadian centre for Policy Alternatives;
- “The Betrayal of the Public Trust”, a paper delivered at the Canadian Association of University Teachers conference on Corporatisation;
- Fact Sheet on changes to the Canada Student Loan Program; and
- Submission to the Federal Standing Committee on Finance.

## CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT

Over the years, the Federation has become a strong presence on Parliament Hill and in provincial legislatures. By using well-respected research and by working alongside groups with common objectives, the Federation representatives bring the interests of the membership to government officials and other decision-makers.

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On a regular basis, the Federation holds meetings with elected officials, Senators, and bureaucrats. The Federation is also called upon to offer its perspective and information to governmental and departmental hearings and inquiries.

### MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT

As a grassroots organisation, the foundation of all the Federation's efforts is the involvement of individual members. Contact with government will have little impact unless the government believes that our message has widespread support. This demonstration of support is achieved through activities ranging from postcard campaigns and petition drives to mass mobilisations like the January 25, 1995, February 7, 1996, January 28, 1998, October 1998, and upcoming February 2000 days of strike and action. These tactics raise public and government awareness and result in positive action by governments.

### COALITION WORK

In order to achieve its goals, the Federation works in coalition with other groups and organisations that share the Federation's objectives.

Students' unions realise 'strength in numbers' by working with other students' unions through the Federation. When the Federation in turn works in coalition with other groups and organisations, the strength realised is even greater.

## Access 2000, The Campaign for Higher Education

### BUILDING FOR STUDENT STRIKE 2000

At the May 1999 national general meeting, the membership adopted *Campaigns Strategy 1999-2000*. In the document, the Federation has deliberately ranked campaign priorities and developed a strategy to augment public support for the Federation's call for increased transfer payments and for *Student Strike 2000*. The strategy adopted by the membership at the May 1999 general meeting also called for the development of materials to be used for *Access 2000* activities and for *Strike 2000* preparation.

*Access 2000* was launched in the fall of 1998 and set out a series of tactics and strategies. The main goal of *Access 2000* is to build a comprehensive foundation of support for the restoration of funding cuts to education. *Access 2000* will be capped by a day of strike and action February 2, 2000. The campaign has been guided by a series of themes that include challenging the discriminatory changes to the Canada Student Loan Program, exposing and resisting privatisation and corporatisation of public colleges and universities, and pushing the federal government to restore the \$3.7 billion cut for post-secondary education since 1993. This work is ongoing but the demands of the campaign have been distilled to the points below. The tactics of *Access 2000* are motivated by the need to build support on and off of our campuses. To that end, over 600 *Access 2000* campaign kits have been mailed across Canada. Numerous provincial and national endorsements have been received. The endorsements are as diverse as the Canadian Labour Congress and the Welland City Council.

The second portion of the *Access 2000* campaign, adopted in May 1999, is *Strike 2000*. The need to mobilise for a strike is prompted by recent eligibility changes to the Canada student loan Program and the current public debate about how the federal government budget surplus should be spent. Member locals are encouraged to organise strike action on their campuses. The goal is to shut as many campuses down as possible on February 2. Some locals have had strike votes and most campuses have set up mobilisation committees to organise for February 2, 2000.

The demands of campaign are as follows:

#### Funding

The federal government must restore \$3.7 billion in transfer payments to provinces in the 2000-2001 budget;

#### User Fees

The federal government must work with provinces to reduce tuition fees and bring about the eventual elimination of user fees for post-secondary education;

### National grants

The federal government must implement a comprehensive national grants program, available to all students on the basis of need; and,

### National Standards

The federal government must negotiate an agreement on post-secondary education with provinces that sets standards for quality, accessibility and portability, similar to the Canada Health Act.

The *Access 2000* campaign is divided into three periods:

#### February – May 1999

February was 'Education Month'. Member locals organised local actions, with national materials and support and *Access 2000* was launched nationally.

#### June 1999 – August 1999

Preparation of materials and preparatory campus organising work building up to mobilisation activities in fall. Research was undertaken on corporate rule in education. Coalition work at all levels was pursued.

#### September 1999 – February 2000

Build up to Student Strike 2000, including preparation for Federal Budget 2000. Preparation of *Access 2000* fact sheets, *Strike 2000* materials, and campus organising.

Activities since the May 1999 national general meeting include:

- Helping initiate and sign on to a sector-wide letter calling on the federal government to increase transfer payments to the provinces for education. Five other national organisations signed the letter: the Association of Universities and Colleges Canada, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, the Canadian Association of University Teachers, and the Canadian Consortium for Research.
- Providing materials to member locals, including the distribution of:
  - the Federation's submission to the Federal Standing Committee on Finance;
  - *Access 2000* fact sheets and a poster outlining the demands of *Access 2000* for distribution on

- campuses, in response to the federal budget;
- Petitions pads with printed backs outlining the context and goals of the campaign;
- *Access 2000* buttons; and
- *Strike 2000* petitions, supporting the Federation's call for a pan-Canadian student strike.
- Finishing production on an 8-page tabloid on *Access 2000* and other student issues.
- Regular updates on Federation listserves.
- Generating national media interest in recent changes to the Canada Student Loan program;
- Preparation for the 2000 federal budget.
- Encouraging member locals to set up organising committees for *Access 2000*.

To promote awareness of key issues and promote the *Access 2000* campaign, the Federation has met with over 20 Members of Parliament, policy advisors, and government and departmental committees since May 1999. At these meetings, Federation representatives outlined the goals of *Access 2000* and sought information of relevance to the Federation's demands.

The Federation's government relations efforts this summer and fall have focussed on the federal budget, transfer payments, research funding, the privatisation of student loans, and corporatisation generally. These meetings informed Members of Parliament about the continued impacts of the 1998 Federal Budget, including bankruptcy discrimination against student loan debt holders, restrictions on student loan eligibility, and concerns about the Canada Millennium Scholarship fund. In preparation for the 2000 federal budget, the meetings also built support among Members of Parliament, policy-makers and policy advisors for an increase in federal cash transfer payments to the provinces and territories.

An update on each of the specific components comprising *Access 2000*, is provided below.

### **BUDGET 2000 AND THE CAMPAIGN FOR INCREASED TRANSFER PAYMENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

One of the key demands of *Access 2000* is the demand that the federal government restore \$3.7 billion to post-secondary education. This amount

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represents what has been cut from federal transfers for education since the social policy review of 1994. Federal cuts have resulted in a decline of close to 20% in the operating budgets of colleges and universities. Though education is a provincial responsibility the vast majority of funding for public institutions comes from the federal government. *Access 2000* has been designed with the goal of holding the federal government responsible for the crisis in higher education.

### CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT

The focus of *Access 2000* is the 2000 federal budget. The Federation's government relations work on the budget reflects the demands of *Access 2000*. In conjunction with our coalition partners the Federation has been engaged in an intensive lobbying strategy to convince the federal government to reach an agreement with the provinces for targeted funding for post-secondary education. Members of the National Executive have been lobbying their respective provincial governments to work with the federal government on this campaign. In June of this year the Federation participated in a meeting with Finance Minister Paul Martin in which the post secondary sector presented a united front on the issue of increased transfer payments for post-secondary education. Though Martin refused to commit to increased transfer payments for post-secondary education, he did admit that high tuition fees were having a devastating effect on access to education. Martin also hinted that social spending would have to compete with tax cuts.

Also in June of this year the Federation was successful in securing a commitment from the western premiers to work with the federal government to increase transfer payments for post-secondary education. In their final communiqué, all four western premiers agreed that increased funding for post-secondary education in the 2000 budget was a priority. At the August 9-11 All Premiers Conference in Quebec City, the Federation contacted each premier and sent a letter to the Prime Minister. Unfortunately, the final communiqué was equivocal on the question of post-secondary education. The call for tax cuts was much more prominent.

As in previous years, the Federation prepared and submitted a brief to the Standing Committee on Finance. This year the Standing Committee set out a series of themes for the hearings:

- a) Tax Relief and Reform;
- b) Social Infrastructure;
- c) New Economy; and
- c) Productivity.

The Federation's brief responds to each of these themes in the context of the crisis in higher education. The brief contains two core recommendations: the restoration of federal transfer payments for post-secondary education in the amount of 3.7 billion dollars and the establishment of a national system of grants. The Federation also called upon the government to reverse recent discriminatory changes to the Canada Student Loan Act and return the administration of the program to the federal government. The Federation presented to the committee in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Halifax.

For a complete listing of national contact with government, see also Appendices.

### IMPACT OF THE CAMPAIGN

After close to a year of lobbying within the post-secondary education sector by the Federation and the Canadian Association of University Teachers, the opinion tacitly held by many groups—that the restoration of transfer payments to the provinces was an unrealistic goal—was reversed. Increased transfer payments are now considered to be the critical next step in sector-wide lobby and mobilisation efforts.

### MEDIA COVERAGE

The Federation prepared news releases for the Western Premiers Conference and the All Premiers Conference and received substantial coverage from both. In addition, the Federation was quoted in several stories related to Paul Martin's annual economic forecast in November.

### Access 2000 Campaign – Bankruptcy Charter Challenge

In fall 1998, the Federation announced its intention to launch a legal challenge under section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, with the goal of reversing changes to the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* that prohibit bankruptcy on student loans for ten years following graduation or leaving school. The Charter challenge will argue that the changes to bankruptcy rules constitute discrimination on the basis of age because a statistically significant portion of student loan debt holders are under the age of thirty years.

On March 9, 1999 the Federation announced the test case in its Charter challenge and presented the judicial and legislative fundamentals of the challenge. The appellant has filed for bankruptcy, and there will be a nine-month processing period during which the campaign around the challenge will be built. The launch generated 126 media interviews, including several spots on national television, and a lively public discussion. In the first week of December, 1999, the Federation will present arguments to the federal court in the first stage of our challenge to the law.

#### CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT

The Federation spoke out clearly in opposition to the amendments to the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* proposed in Bills C-5 and C-36. Most recently, the Federation presented to the Standing Committee on Finance during post-budget hearings on April 27, 1998 and during 1999 pre-budget hearings on November 25, 1999. In addition, the Federation's opposition to the legislation is noted whenever Federation representatives meet with government or opposition parties on any issue. Though the government has shown little interest in repealing the law, the Federation has received a sympathetic hearing from opposition members of parliament.

#### Private Member's Bill to Repeal Amendment to Bankruptcy Rules

Working in conjunction with the Federation,  
Member of Parliament and Post-Secondary

Education Critic Elizabeth Davies served a private member's bill calling for the repeal of the 1998 changes to the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act. Bloc Québécois Youth Critic Bernard Bigras committed the Bloc's support for Davies's private member's bill, during a September 22 meeting with Federation representatives.

Due to a recent procedural change in Parliament, private members' bills are tabled for debate unpredictably, by way of a lottery system. Davies' bill has not yet been debated in the House of Commons. Although this makes it difficult to prepare a public campaign around the issues, the Federation will continue to work closely with Davies to build support for the bill. The Federation will continue to oppose any bankruptcy restrictions that discriminate against students (including the original two-year ban).

#### TELEPHONE SURVEY

In response to a request from Human Resources Development Canada to compile evidence of hardship caused by changes to the Canada Student Loan Program and the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act, the Federation initiated a phone-in telephone survey. Beginning in September of 1998, individuals with student loan repayment problems were invited to call the Federation. The Federation co-operated with a variety of agencies to ensure wide publication of the 1-800 number. Upon calling the 1-800 line, the individuals would be asked a series of questions, the answers to which were then compiled.

Most callers said that little support was made available for them by the various agencies with which they were dealing. By the time they called the Federation many were thought that they might never find answers to their questions. Callers reported that when they were referred to "helpers" from government or financial institutions, those "helpers" would not act in the interests of the callers. Callers also said that it was difficult to get answers to basic questions such as the current rate of interest, the cut off points for interest relief, or the consequences of missing payments.

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Most callers did not consider bankruptcy as a first alternative, but rather as a last hope while trying to negotiate within a system that was not designed to help them. Individuals considering bankruptcy were from all educational backgrounds, but the ones most effected were those with children, those with disabilities or those having experienced long-term unemployment. One of the most frequent complaints was that of being harassed by collection agencies.

### WORK WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Primarily the Federation has worked with the Canadian Insolvency Practitioners Association and the Canadian Bar Association. However, the Federation has been successful in encouraging those organisations with whom the Federation regularly works, such as the Canadian Association of University Teachers, to mention their opposition to the Bankruptcy legislation changes during their own meetings with government and opposition parties. The Federation has also been asking for donations to offset the legal costs associated with the Charter challenge.

### MEDIA COVERAGE

Although media interest has subsided since the launch of the Charter challenge, it has stabilised at a fairly high level and the National Executive has been working closely with the Federation's counsel to develop a media strategy for our first court date during the first week of December, 1999.

### Student Financial Assistance

On November 4, 1999 the Federation participated in the National Advisory Group on Student Financial Aid (NAGSFA). Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) uses this forum to appraise post-secondary organisations on Canada Student Loan program administrative issues. NAGSFA meets twice per year for a full day.

During the most recent meeting, updates were provided on the following issues:

- i. de-designation;
- ii. risk sharing agreements;
- iii. credit checks;

- iv. harmonisation; and
- v. a review of needs assessment.

HRDC had received feedback on the de-designation policy. There was little consensus about whether it should apply to public institutions at all. It was reported that provincial governments would ultimately be charged with devising a policy on de-designation, and the feedback would be compiled and disseminated to the appropriate ministries.

Claude Proulx of HRDC reported that risk-sharing negotiations were close to completion but he refused to disclose the dollar amount or per cent that the banks were asking to renew the agreement. The current agreement calls for a 5% payment on all loans but some reports have suggested that the banks were asking for as much as 25% in this round of negotiations.

Proulx indicated that agreements on harmonisation were nearly completed for each of the Maritime Provinces. He said that negotiations were underway in Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. He also noted that several issues were outstanding in negotiations with BC – including British Columbia's refusal to administer credit checks. Thomas Townsend, Director General of HRDC, indicated that credit checks were a non-negotiable element of harmonisation and that the federal government would be willing to use its legislative power to force BC to run credit checks for the 2000/01 academic year.

Information was also provided on the implementation of credit checks. Based on the cost of processing the 30,000 students who were checked this year, it was reported that each credit check costs about \$1.50. Despite examples to the contrary provided by the Federation, HRDC is claiming a turn around of 48 hours on each application. HRDC agreed to look into examples cited by the Federation where students were denied funds fully three weeks after having applied for student assistance, and after having received loan certificates.

Finally, HRDC provided the Federation with a copy of a consultant's report on the current process of needs-assessment. The report concluded that

some measures are out of date and do not represent an appropriate assessment of student need for an academic year. Townsend said his department was studying the report and would welcome submissions from stakeholders on revising the current model of needs-assessment. Townsend also hinted that HRDC was studying 'income sensitive' repayment models. The Federation stated its opposition to any income contingent schemes and agreed to submit a brief on the need to revise the current needs-assessment model.

### Millennium Scholarship Foundation

The federal government established the publicly-funded but privately-administered Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation to begin handing out Scholarships to students in January, 2000. When the Fund was announced the legislation accompanying it declared that the money would be distributed to each province based on provincial population. The legislation also stipulated that the needs-based portion of the Funds would use the same assessment formula as the Canada Student Loan Program. All of the changes to the eligibility criteria including credit checks would apply to the Millennium Scholarship foundation. Those not qualifying for a Canada Student Loan will be denied a Millennium Scholarship. Millennium Scholarships are not available to part-time or graduate students.

A privately-controlled board determines those Scholarship eligibility criteria not set out in the legislation. Jean Monty, Chief Executive Officer of Bell Canada Enterprises, chairs this board. One of its greatest responsibilities was to decide the extent to which Scholarships would be allocated based on need, or based on merit. After vigorous lobbying by the Federation, the federal government agreed to guarantee that 95% of the funds would be allocated according to need. The remaining 5% would be allocated based on merit. The Board of the Millennium Scholarship Foundation would develop merit criteria. The Federation opposes merit-based scholarships because the criteria used to establish 'merit' tend to favour those students who already have access to the lion's share of awards.

During the summer months, Executive Director of the Foundation Norman Riddell, travelled across the country signing agreements with the provinces governing Millennium Fund disbursements. Most of the agreements signed to date abide by the federal legislation governing the funds. Most provinces have also agreed to redirect funds saved on programme implementation back into student aid programs. All provinces with the exception of Québec—which disagrees in principle with the Canadian state dictating its spending priorities—have signed agreements to this effect. However, Ontario is threatening to renege on the agreement and to direct \$60 million back into general revenue to balance the provincial budget.

### CONTACT WITH GOVERNMENT

The Federation attended the 'search conference' on exceptional merit, and registered its ongoing concern with the Fund. In particular, the Federation objected to the board decision devoting its legal maximum allocation to merit-based scholarships. Federation representatives presented evidence that demonstrates that funds already exist for merit-based scholarships and that such scholarships are more about public visibility than meeting the needs of students. After a recent public meeting, Norman Riddell confirmed that the merit-based portion of the scholarship was designed specifically to increase the public profile of the Foundation.

### IMPACT OF THE CAMPAIGN

Despite Federation opposition to the current formula, Norman Riddell has publicly stated that the Canadian Federation of Students played a key role in ensuring that 95% of the Fund will be used for needs-based grants. The Federation is continuing to work with the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Québécois to oppose the Foundation and to push the government to implement a system of needs-based grants for all students. The Council of Ministers of Education has also called on the federal government to direct the Funds toward a provincially administered program designed to satisfy unmet need in student aid and to alleviate the crisis of student debt.

### Campaign Against Corporate Rule in Education

#### EXPERT PANEL ON THE COMMERCIALISATION OF RESEARCH

In March of this year the Prime Minister's Advisory Council on Science and Technology tabled a report with a series of recommendations on the future of university research. The report is a stark and frank call for the government to turn university research over to for-profit enterprise. The report is highly critical of the fact that most university research is done in the public interest. The panel advocates a new funding formula for base level funding to universities rooted in the ability of the university to maximise the potential profit of research done at a particular campus. Universities that fail to meet certain 'performance' standards would see a cut in their base budget. In addition, the report explicitly calls for an end to university autonomy and a legislated role for corporate control of the research agenda.

The panel also lends its support to the call for tax cuts. The Federation is currently engaged in a campaign with the Canadian Association of University Teachers against these panel recommendations. On October 25, 1999 the Federation appeared before an Industry Canada panel on the report. In addition, the Federation was represented in a panel discussion of the report on October 15, 1999 at Queens University.

#### CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS (CAUT) CORPORATISATION CONFERENCE

On October 29-3, CAUT held a conference entitled *Universities and Colleges in the Public Interest – Stopping the Commercial take-over of Post-Secondary Education* in Ottawa, Ontario. The conference drew many prominent academic activists who have been at the forefront of defending public education in Canada. Keynote speakers included Ursula Franklin and Dr. Nancy Olivieri. The Federation presented a paper on the effect of corporately-controlled boards of governors on post-secondary education. The paper presented by the Federation has been selected to appear in a CAUT book that is currently in production.

### Launch of *Missing Pieces*

On November 17, 1999 the Canadian Federation of Students in conjunction with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives launched *Missing Pieces – An Alternative Guide to Canadian Post-secondary Education*.

*Missing Pieces* provides a comprehensive analysis of the state of higher education across the country in accordance with the principles of equity, quality, accountability and accessibility. The report offers a new method of judging post-secondary institutions, as well as a way to analyse the provincial governments' commitment to higher education. The report includes reports on higher learning by students, activists, educators, and researchers to reveal the motives behind the restructuring of post-secondary education across Canada—and its deleterious effects.

### Public Education Network

#### BACKGROUND

The Public Education Network (le Réseau pour l'éducation publique), formed in the late summer of 1998, is a loose coalition of national organisations representing all levels of public education in Canada and Quebec. Since its inception, PEN (REP) has mapped out as its most important objective to collaborate in support of public education in Canada through active campaigns and exchange of information.

After its first year in operation, PEN counts among its members the: Canadian Association of University Teachers, Canadian Federation of Students, Canadian Labour Congress, Canadian Teachers' Federation, Conseil de l'Enseignement du Québec, Fédération québécoise des professeurs et professeurs universitaires, Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec, Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec, and National Anti-Poverty Organisation (consultative member).

On October 6, 1998, PEN member organisations, their affiliates, and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives hosted a press conference to expose the Second Annual Education Industry Summit, a gathering of for-profit education industry

representatives. Then-Minister of International Trade Sergio Marchi attended the event, providing a keynote address in which he spoke glowingly of the potential for for-profit education. However, the press conference promoting education in the public interest dulled his message, leaving him in a visibly awkward position. Marchi vowed to meet with PEN representatives, and PEN members have been in more regular contact with the ministry since then.

### RECENT WORK

PEN is currently working in several areas:

#### Education in the Public Interest

To-date, the coalition has approved, in principle, the creation of a web-site that will serve as a clearinghouse and campaign hub for the defence of public education and training at all levels. Another significant initiative that has also been approved in principle: the "100 Faces of Corporate Rule in education" project, including the development of a poster and campaign kit. Both projects are expected to be launched in fall of 1999. Their success will require the allocation of funds—so far, the Canadian Teachers' Federation has allocated \$10,000 towards the initiation of the web-site project.

#### World Trade Organisation

PEN members are pooling materials and efforts to raise awareness about education and the World Trade Organisation. Work on the WTO will be interwoven with the campaign for education in the public interest. However special attention and stand-alone efforts are underway, and will be required to break the virtual media silence on the dangers free trade poses for education and other programmes and services.

#### Year 2000 Federal Budget

PEN's work on the year 2000 federal budget include concerted lobby efforts on several priority issues: increased transfer payments, a national child care strategy, and halting privatisation and commercialism in education.

As the coalition develops these projects, its loose structure is being tested—thus far with positive

results. Beyond these specific initiatives, a regular flow of information among member groups has greatly facilitated implementation of mobilisation, research, and lobbying strategies. A strategy around the year 2000 federal budget is also being coordinated through the coalition.

## "NO MEANS NO" CAMPAIGN AGAINST DATE RAPE

### BACKGROUND

At the May 1998 national general meeting, the membership passed a motion to continue the Date Rape: No Means No campaign, with a focus on date rape drugs such as Rohypnol.

In 1998-99, several cases were also reported on Canadian campuses and in communities such as the University of Regina, the University of Victoria, King's College, and Quebec and Newfoundland. Despite the concerns raised by organisations such as the Federation, in campus and mainstream media and in correspondence to federal and provincial officials, Canadian officials and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have refused to acknowledge the severity of the problem.

Only after police in Vancouver seized 3500 units of Rohypnol in late January 1999 has the RCMP begun to take the issue more seriously. The Federation's work to have date rape and date rape drugs recognised as a pressing, national issue is ongoing.

### RECENT WORK BY THE FEDERATION

At the May 1999 national general meeting, member locals received a *Date Rape: No Means No and Rohypnol* campaign kit. The kit included the following materials: drink coasters, posters, stickers, a fact sheet, a sample news release, news clippings, and a checklist to assist in organising a local campaign launch. Federation members in British Columbia are working with the provincial government's Department for Women's Equality to produce materials for distribution to high schools.

In June 1999, order forms for No Means No materials were produced, with separate price lists

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for member locals and other groups and individuals. Distribution of order forms and materials has been ongoing. The No Means No Fact Sheet has been produced in electronic (PowerPoint) format for presentation, and is available for distribution. A joint campaign with the National Action Committee on the Status of Women against date rape and violence against women is in the early stages of development.

On November 7, 1999, the Federation presented a keynote address at the Third Annual Canadian Student Conference on Campus Sexual Violence, hosted by the University of Calgary Women's Centre and organised by SpeakOut, the North American Student Coalition Against Sexual Violence

On November 22, 1999, the Federation sent a letter to Hedy Fry, the Secretary of State responsible for the Status of Women, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, calling for a national campaign to raise awareness about sexual assault and date rape drugs. No response has yet been received.

### Campaign Against Discrimination by Canadian Blood Services

#### BACKGROUND

At the May 1998 national general meeting, a motion was adopted to intensify the Federation's campaign against homophobic questions included in the blood donor-screening questionnaire of the Red Cross. Instead of basing questions on high-risk activities such as unprotected anal and vaginal sex, the questions implied that there was a link between being a gay man and higher risk for HIV/AIDS.

In 1998, the Canadian Red Cross was dissolved and replaced on September 28<sup>th</sup> by Canadian Blood Services. The new mandate of Canada's blood donation service is to place a priority on safe blood and compassionate service for those in need. Unfortunately, despite this renewed mandate, CBS has continued the Red Cross' homophobic screening practices and failed to acknowledge that

unprotected anal sex, not 'gay sex', constitutes a high risk activity for HIV/AIDS.

At the May 1999 Semi-annual General Meeting, the campaign was updated to focus on the new Canadian Blood Services—but the issues remained the same

#### RECENT WORK BY THE FEDERATION

As a result of repeated attempts by the Federation and coalition partners at the local, provincial, and national levels, in 1997, some changes were made to the questionnaire with respect to racist and sexist questions. However, no changes were made to the homophobic practices of Canada's national blood service.

At the May 1999 national general meeting, member locals received a kit for the campaign against the homophobic practices of the Canadian Blood Services', including background information and a sample of postcards and handbills for distribution on campus. Bulk quantities of postcards and handbills are available on request.

Throughout the fall, several student unions and transgendered, lesbian gay, and bisexual student groups have implemented the campaign by undertaking activities such as leafleting during blood donor clinics, sending letters to CBS Chief Executive Officer Lynda Cranston and to federal Health Minister Allan Rock.

On November 5, 1999, a letter was received from Graham Sher, national Vice-President, Medical, Scientific and Clinical Management of Canadian Blood Services. He raised concerns based on an article referring to the Federation's campaign, published in the *Martlet*, the student newspaper at the University of Victoria. Sher also requested copies of the Federation's campaign materials, writing that representative of CBS "would be pleased to [...] sit down and discuss the issues." A letter was issued to arrange a meeting; no further correspondence has yet been received.

At the May 1999 national general meeting, it was resolved that a campaign be "conducted, in conjunction with the current campaign against the Canadian Blood Services' discriminatory practices, highlighting the problem of Human Immuno-

deficiency Virus in Aboriginal communities.”

At the July 1999 meeting of the National Executive, this directive was discussed and assigned to National Aboriginal Students' representative Troy Sebastian. Although HIV/AIDS is more prominent in aboriginal communities than in the general population, the link between the campaign on the homophobic practices of the Canadian Blood Services and HIV/AIDS in aboriginal communities was not immediately obvious. Sebastian will consult with the National Aboriginal Caucus to seek further clarification.

### OTHER CAMPAIGNS

#### CAMPAIGN TO UPHOLD STUDENTS' RIGHT TO ORGANISE

In its book *Uncovering the Right on Campus*, the Center for Campus Organising, an American coalition partner of the Federation, tracks efforts of right-wing lobby groups and agitators to squash student organisations by challenging student unions' right to have fees and levies collected from their members. In Wisconsin, students are fighting a costly, lengthy battle to protect their right to effective student union fee collection. In Australia, the Federation's counterpart, the National Union of Students—Australia finally won its battle to defeat a federal bill that would have effectively destroyed local and national student unions.

In British Columbia, a case to outlaw mandatory student union dues was rejected by the courts, based on the argument that students have the right to choose their institution of higher education, and may freely take factors such as student union dues into account. Also in British Columbia, the Federation recently won legislation enshrining the rights of student organisations, including the right to have fees collected and forwarded.

In compliance with the May 1999 national general meeting directive to keep abreast of this issue, several articles providing updates on developments in Wisconsin, Australia, and British Columbia were distributed over the Federation's members' listserv. Copies of new legislation in British Columbia enshrining students' right to organise is

available from the Component.

#### CAMPAIGN TO OPPOSE CUTBACKS TO SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Vocational Rehabilitation Development Program (VRDP) was created 36 years ago to promote job training for students with disabilities by providing subsidies to ensure that their added educational costs for aids such as medication, equipment, and therapy were covered. The program was jointly funded by provincial and federal governments, and administered at the provincial level.

In 1998, after reductions in federal funding for VRS, the federal government announced that the program would be phased out and replaced by new funding mechanisms such as reduced grants and student loans. In some provinces, students have been cut off funding mid-way through their programme and forced onto student loans.

At the May 1998 national semi-annual general meeting, a motion was passed to study and report on the changes to VRDP and their effect on students.

Currently, Students with Disabilities Commissioner Chris Green is gathering information for the report. Also, the National Education Association of Disabled Students has produced a comprehensive, national report on the state of services for students with disabilities.

#### “SEXUALITY: NO ABSOLUTES” CAMPAIGN

At the May 1999 national general meeting, it was resolved to produce and distribute a “Sexuality: No Absolutes” poster before September, 1999.

The directive was discussed at the July 1999 National Executive meeting.

At the July 1999 meeting of the National Executive, National Deputy Chairperson Elizabeth Carlyle and Manitoba representative Rob Marriott were assigned responsibility for the directive. By August 1999, text for the poster was developed and approved by \*Transgendered, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Constituency Commissioners Elliot Fox-

Povey and Mike O'Toole. However, since that time, new debates have arisen within the constituency group, pertaining to divergent visions for the campaign. In light of these developments, the campaign is being referred to the November 1999 national general meeting for further development and clarification.

### **Status of Directives from the Membership**

#### **Promotion of Increased Awareness/Participation of International Students in Student Events**

The November 1997 national general meeting resolved to promote international students' awareness of and participation in student events.

As an initial step in implementing the campaign, a letter outlining suggestions on how member locals might encourage international students' involvement was included in the Organising Manual mail-out. The 1999-2000 Local Organising Manual includes a similar letter.

In addition, it was resolved at the October 1999 National Executive meeting to produce materials countering the intense racism and xenophobia surrounding the arrival of Chinese migrants on the West Coast. A poster challenging myths about immigrants and refugees is currently in production. The Federation and the Canadian Union of Public Employees jointly produced the poster.

#### **Promotion of the Awareness/Participation of Students of Colour in Student Events**

As an initial step in promoting the awareness and participation of students of colour in student events, a letter including suggestions for member locals as to how to encourage the involvement of students of colour was included in the Organising Manual mail-out in August 1998.

A letter outlining suggestions on how member locals might encourage the participation of students of colour in local events was also included in a cover letter to the 1999-2000 Local Organising Manual.

#### **Where's The Justice for Aboriginal People? Campaign**

The May 1999 national semi-annual general meeting resolved that an "awareness campaign be conducted in conjunction with the Access 2000 campaign, highlighting the effects of treaty negotiations in Aboriginal communities."

At the October 1999 meeting of the National Executive, it was resolved to implement a campaign countering the mainstream media's fomentation of racism and ignorance in response to the dispute over aboriginal fishing and other treaty rights. An awareness-raising poster highlighting injustices against aboriginal people and featuring a call for justice, is being produced.

In addition, an article has been included in the issue of Treaty negotiations in the Federation's tabloid that is currently in production.

#### **Motion Referred from Plenary**

The following motion was referred to the National Executive by the May 1999 national general meeting:

"Be it resolved that a full page advertisement be purchased in the Student Activist to promote Student Strike 2000." At the July 1999 meeting of the National Executive, the motion was discussed. It was resolved that no advertisement be purchased.

#### **Directive to Call for Fee Payment Options for International Students**

At the May 1999 national semi-annual general meeting, it was resolved that a "call be issued for a system by which international students can pay their tuition fees in instalments and without... timeline restrictions."

At the July 1999 meeting of the National Executive, the directive was discussed and responsibility was assigned. No further update is available at this time.

# SOLIDARITY WORK

## Coalition Roster

The Federation works in formal and informal coalition with a variety of organisations. Regular coalition partners include but are not limited to:

### POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Canadian Association of University Teachers, CAUT
- Canadian Consortium for Research, CCR (M)
- Public Education Network, PEN (M)

### FUNDING AND EMPLOYMENT

- Canadian Auto-Workers, CAW
- Canadian Labour Congress, CLC
- Canadian Labour Congress – Youth Committee
- Canadian Union of Public Employees, CUPE
- Canadian Union of Postal Workers, CUPW
- Communications, Energy, and Paperworkers' Union, CEP
- National Anti-Poverty Organisation, NAPO
- National Farmers' Union, NFU
- National Federation of Nurses' Unions, NFNU
- National Union of Public and General Employees, NUPGE
- Solidarity Network, formerly Action Canada Network (M, SC)
- United Food and Commercial Workers, UFCW
- United Steelworkers of America

### ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES

- Alternative Federal Budget, AFB (M, SC)
- Campaign for Press and Broadcast Freedom
- Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, CCPA
- Council of Canadians (M)
- Canadian Council on Social Development, CCSD
- Canadian Community Reinvestment Coalition, CCRC
- Roundtable on the World Trade Organisation (M)

# Solidarity Work

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## HEALTH CARE

- Canadian Health Coalition, CHC (M, SC)

## CHILD CARE

- Campaign 2000
- Canadian Campaign Against Child Poverty, CCACP
- Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada, CCAAC (M)

## ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

- Assembly of First Nations, AFN
- Coalition for an Inquiry into the Death of Dudley George (M)

## WOMEN'S RIGHTS

- National Action Committee on the Status of Women, NAC (M)

## GAY, LESBIAN, AND BISEXUAL RIGHTS

- Equality for Gays and Lesbians Everywhere, EGALE (M)

## PEACE

- Canadian Peace Alliance, CPA (M)

## CANADA-BASED INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS AND COALITIONS

- Citizen's Action: Social Watch (M, SC)
- East Timor Alert Network, ETAN (M)
- Maquila Solidarity Network, MSN (M)
- Amnesty International
- World March of Women 2000 (M, SC)
- Canadian Friends of Burma
- Intercede, for the Rights of Domestic, Caregivers, and Newcomers
- Oxfam

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Ad Hoc Student Coalition for Fair Trade (M, SC)
- All-Africa Students' Union, AASU
- Asian Students' Association, ASA
- Caribbean and Latin American Organisation of Students, OCLAE
- Centre for Campus Organising, CCO
- General Union of Arab Students, GUAS
- European Students' International Bureau, ESIB
- International Union of Students (M, SC)
- United Nations Education, Cultural and Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO  
(Federation is registered as a lobbyist on behalf of International Union of Students)
- United States' Student Association, USSA

(M) Memberships

(SC) Steering Committee Member

## New Coalition Memberships

### CAMPAIGN 2000

At the July 1999 National Executive meeting, it was resolved to endorse Campaign 2000, a national campaign against child poverty. However, a Campaign 2000 report card on the federal government's performance included praise for the Millennium Scholarship programme. The National Executive passed a directive to join the Campaign, provided that its position on Millennium Scholarships altered to recognise that the scheme does not improve access to post-secondary education.

On August 2, 1999, a letter was sent to Campaign 2000 expressing general support for the campaign and outlining concerns about the Millennium Scholarship Foundation. On September 30, 1999, a response was received from Campaign 2000 stating that it will try to integrate concerns about federal policy on higher education into the next Campaign 2000 report card. It was also requested that the Federation support Campaign 2000 events on November 23 and 24, 1999.

### CANADIAN CAMPAIGN AGAINST CHILD POVERTY (CCACP)

The Canadian Coalition Against Child Poverty, one of the new organisations focusing on children and the year 2000 federal budget, operates out of Toronto.

## Domestic Solidarity Work

### ALTERNATIVE FEDERAL BUDGET

Since May 1996, the Federation has been an active participant in the Alternative Federal Budget (AFB) project. The budget, first released in 1994, was developed by CHOICES, a coalition for social justice based in Winnipeg, and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. It is produced annually and provides a forum in which to strengthen Canadians' economic literacy skills and develop alternatives to the government's fiscal, monetary, and economic policies. It addresses priorities such as:

- debt reduction through a progressive taxation system;
- rebuilding Canada's social safety net and national standards;
- environmental protection; and
- full employment.

The AFB is both a process and a contained project. Its two main elements are budget schools and the Alternative Budget document. Budget schools are local workshops designed to increase economic literacy and to shape the recommendations included in the AFB budget document. The budget schools are coordinated by CHOICES.

The Alternative Budget document contains recommendations generated through budget schools and by organisations involved in the AFB. The document is used as a platform from which to generate media coverage, lobby governments, and present concrete alternatives to dominant socio-economic ideas.

The Federation continues to be active in all aspects of the AFB. There are currently two Federation representatives on the AFB Steering Committee. The Federation has been pushing to increase grassroots participation in the budget process and to improve local economic literacy.

The goal of the year 2000 AFB is to push the federal government to reinvest in:

- a national childcare programme;
- a housing strategy, the one per cent solution;
- national standards for social assistance; and
- investment in the public sector and in infrastructure.

This year, as a step towards having local economists' roundtables across the country and a coordinated communications strategy, the AFB is organising local launches in a handful of communities across the country. This year's national AFB Economists' Roundtable takes place on January 13, 2000.

### THE SOLIDARITY NETWORK

The Solidarity Network, formerly the Action Canada Network, is comprised of over fifty organisations. The Network has its roots in the 1987 struggle to oppose the Free Trade Agreement

## Solidarity Work

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(FTA) between Canada and the United States. Thereafter, the Network continued to fight free trade and organise opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The Network has evolved into a forum for action in which social justice groups, labour organisations, and regional and provincial coalitions devise common strategies against funding cutbacks to social programmes. The Network was an important vehicle for generating national support for the January 25, 1995 and January 28, 1998 Days of Strike and Action.

Last year, members of the Network underwent an extensive process to determine a clear purpose and role for the coalition. Member organisations agreed to the following parameters in establishing the renewed Solidarity Network:

- The Network will work to link activists from across the country to the various campaigns that member groups initiate;
- Two assemblies will take place annually, rotating around the country from time to time, to share campaign plans and successes, and to build skills and refine strategies;
- Between assemblies, the Network will serve as a clearinghouse of information about members' campaigns;
- The Network will place a high priority on ensuring that regional coalitions participate in the Network.

The Executive Committee of the Network, on which the Federation has a seat, will meet on December 9, 1999. The next assembly will take place in late February, 2000.

### CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS

The Federation works with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in the Public Education Network, the Solidarity Network, Citizen's Action Social Watch, the Alternative Federal Budget, the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, the East Timor Alert Network, the Canadian Roundtable on the World Trade Organisation, and several other coalitions.

On June 19, a letter was sent to thank former President Bob White and former Vice-President Dick Martin for their years of solidarity and to

request a meeting with the new President of the Canadian Labour Congress, Ken Georgetti. On September 16, Federation National Deputy Chairperson met briefly with Georgetti in Winnipeg, during Youth Committee events.

Recently, the federal government implemented a form of Income Contingent Loan Repayment scheme for those borrowing to fund Employment Insurance and other federal training programmes. Training under Unemployment Insurance programmes had been fully subsidised until the federal government cut back on benefits and imposed user fees on the courses. Workers seeking re-training turned to loans for financing and were soon facing large debt loads and excessive interest. The federal government addressed the situation by implementing the ICLR scheme. The Federation and the Canadian Auto Workers union are developing a plan of action within the CLC to force the government to abandon the scheme.

### Canadian Labour Congress Youth Committee

The Canadian Labour Congress provides a seat for the Federation on its Youth Committee. This year's priorities for the committee are educating youth about the labour movement and organising workplaces dominated by young workers. As part of this outreach work, the CLC is creating a new youth-oriented web page, and a newsletter called *Next in Line*. The Federation contributed a story on Access 2000 and a review of the book *Enter At Your Own Risk* to the first issue.

The Committee also hopes to coordinate Canadian participation in a new campaign of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), entitled 'The Future Starts Now -Join a Union!'

### NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The Federation is a member of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC). As a result of federal funding cuts and changes to the grant application process, NAC is currently suffering through a very severe financial crisis. Although NAC was able to recall laid-off staff in 1998-1999, the organisation continues to require more stable, long-term sources of funding.

The Federation therefore, has made several donations, during the 1998-1999 year. The Federation loaned NAC several computers for its annual general meeting in Ottawa and provides other services when possible. An urgent appeal for contributions to NAC's *Campaign 5000*, through which it seeks to raise 5000 donations of \$100 annually, has been sent on behalf of the Federation to appropriate individuals and groups.

Federation representatives attended the annual national general meeting of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women from June 4 – 6, 1999. The meeting included panel discussions about globalisation, the World March of Women 2000, and Aboriginal women's issues. NAC decided to place priority on a national campaign on pay equity, child care, and eradicating poverty. On June 7, NAC's Annual Lobby Day was attended by more than 130 participants.

### **CANADIAN COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT COALITION**

The Canadian Community Reinvestment Coalition, an Ottawa-based organisation calling for reforms to the financial services sector, has over 100 member organisations representing a cumulative total of 3 million Canadians. The CCRC's main demands include the creation of a grassroots Financial Consumer Organisation with power to help reform financial services in Canada, no mergers of Canada's "Big Five" banks, and more enforceable regulations to protect consumers.

The Federation signed a letter sent by the Canadian Community Reinvestment Coalition on June 22, 1999 to Minister of Industry John Manley. The letter included a critique of the federal government's recent report from consultations about the financial services sector, and a renewed call for the creation of a citizen's Financial Consumer Organisation. A letter was also sent to Finance Minister Paul Martin condemning voluntary codes of ethics for banks.

Another current campaign of the CCRC is the *Money in Politics* project, a report including recommendations for changes to legislation governing federal elections. As a result of policies enacted by the Mulroney government, federal legislation is reviewed every five years, and the

reviews for 1999 include the election laws. Although the Federation has had several discussions at general and national executive meetings, a request to sign on to the reforms proposed by the CCRC was declined to provide time for further discussion.

### **CANADIAN PEACE ALLIANCE**

The Canadian Peace Alliance, founded in 1985, is an association of 200 Canadian organisations, including labour, students', faith, women's, and environmental groups, working for peace and disarmament.

National Chairperson Conlon spoke at a news conference on June 8<sup>th</sup> announcing a June 19<sup>th</sup> Day Against War in Kosovo. National Deputy Chairperson Carlyle participated in a June 19<sup>th</sup> event in Ottawa. Anti-war events took place in several communities across the country.

### **LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

From time to time, the Federation offers support to workers enduring labour disputes. In supporting workers and their unions as outlined in Federation policy, the Federation raises awareness, helps bring about fair and timely settlements to labour disputes, makes the links between labour struggles and student struggles, and opens doors to further solidarity work. Letters, however, are an insufficient form of support: member locals are encouraged to contact labour unions to organise solidarity pickets and awareness-raising events in their communities.

#### **Support for Striking Québec Nurses**

In June 1999, after the Québec provincial government turned down demands for ten percent wage increases over three years and other demands for much-needed reinvestment in health care, Québec nurses voted overwhelmingly in favour of strike action. On June 26, 1999, nurses walked off the job and continued to strike despite threats of severe penalties such as loss of seniority. During their job action, the nurses generally achieved a high level of public support for their job action. On June 30, 1999 National Chairperson Conlon sent a letter of support to Jennie Skene, President of the Quebec Union of Nurses.

### Support for ISTS/Tel Av technicians

On September 9, 1999, technicians at the language interpretation firm ISTS/Tel Av went on strike over stalled contract negotiations. The main concerns from the technicians' Communications, Energy, and Paperworkers' Union surround seniority, training and other non-monetary contract terms. Until this dispute, ISTS/Tel Av has been providing interpretation services for Federation meetings for many years.

In late September 1999, a letter of support was sent to André Foucault, Chief Negotiator from the Communications, Energy, and Paperworkers' Union, on behalf of the technicians. The letter included a commitment to avoid engaging ISTS/Tel Av until the strike is fairly resolved. On October 5, 1999, Foucault telephoned the Federation to express thanks for the letter. He also stated that the strike did not appear close to an end. For the November 1999 national general meeting, alternative services have been engaged.

### FULFILMENT OF DIRECTIVES FROM PLENARY

#### Support for the Campaign for an Inquiry into the Stand-off at Gustafsen Lake

In June of 1995, member of the Shuswap nation gathered near Gustafsen Lake, British Columbia to practise a traditional Sundance ceremony. The Sundance site was a portion of some 922 hectares to which, without the consent of the Shuswap nation, American rancher Lyle James had been granted grazing rights. When James attempted to evict the Sundance campers from their unceded land, they made clear their intention to stay. For the next three months, they were subjected to a campaign of legal, psychological, physical, and military intimidation from James and his ranchers, the RCMP, the military and the government

By the time the Shuswap defenders left the Sundance camp on September 17, 1995, some 77,000 rounds of ammunition had been spent. Helicopters, armoured personnel carriers, video surveillance, M-16's and land mines were used by the RCMP—making this Canada's largest-scale, non-wartime military operation.

After a 10-month trial that included police officers' openly admitting to a "smear and misinformation campaign" against the Ts'Peten Defenders and their supporters, guilty verdicts were returned against 15 people. Since then, dozens of organisations throughout Canada and the United States have been calling on the provincial and federal governments for an inquiry.

At the November national general meeting, a motion was passed unanimously to campaign in support of an inquiry into these incidents. On March 23, 1999, a news release was issued in support of an inquiry into the stand-off, and member locals were encouraged to write to the government of British Columbia and the federal government in support of an inquiry.

The Federation issued a press release on June 21 (National Aboriginal Awareness Day) calling for an inquiry into the Stand-Off at Gustafsen Lake, and for action on the killing of Dudley George. Members locals were also encouraged to organise local activities in support of these campaigns.

The use of force against Aboriginal protesters at Gustafsen Lake is one of the highlighted issues included on the Aboriginal Justice poster currently in production.

#### Support for the Coalition for an Inquiry into the Death of Dudley George

In September of 1995 First Nations activist Dudley George was shot and killed by the Ontario Provincial Police, as over 300 officers confronted 30 protestors in the Ipperwash Provincial Park, unceded Stoney Point First Nations land. For years, the Toronto-based Coalition for an Inquiry into the Death of Dudley George has been calling for a provincial inquiry. At the November 1998 national general meeting, it was resolved that the Federation join the Coalition, provide a donation, issue a press release supporting for a public inquiry, and encourage member locals to participate in the campaign. These directives have been fulfilled.

At the national general meeting in May 1999, it was resolved to further develop the campaign, including a directive to issue a call for national protests on June 21 (National Aboriginal Awareness Day).

In response to a letter from the Federation written May 5, 1999, the federal Minister for Indian Affairs and Northern Development continued to assert that an investigation into the death of Dudley George must be undertaken by provincial, not federal, authorities and that the federal government has "made progress in resolving the long-standing grievance relating to the 1942 appropriation of reserve land" in Ipperwash Provincial Park.

The Federation issued a press release on June 21 (National Aboriginal Awareness Day) calling for an inquiry into the death of Dudley George, and into the standoff at Gustafsen Lake. Member locals were also encouraged to organise local activities in support of these campaigns.

On August 18, 1999, Federation National Deputy Chairperson Carlyle spoke with Pierre George, brother of Dudley, who expressed concerns that the coalition was focussing too heavily on his brother's death and not enough on the issue of the outstanding land claims for which he had been fighting. The Federation agreed to discuss the issues Pierre raised with the Dudley George coalition and to meet with him to discuss the issue further.

### **1% Solution to the Housing Crisis**

The 1% Solution is a Toronto-based campaign to pressure governments to increase spending on public housing by 1%, as part of the solution to the national disaster of homelessness.

At the May 1999 national general meeting, it was resolved that the 1% Solution Campaign be endorsed, and that member locals be encouraged to participate in the campaign.

Information about the campaign was mailed to Ontario locals during the summer of 1999. However, because the material is Toronto-specific, further information is being sought, to be distributed more widely. Discussions are ongoing with coalition groups critical of the "1% solution" because it is primarily organised by housing providers and does not focus primarily on providing poor people with sufficient income to make housing choices. Backgrounders and calls to action from a variety of coalition campaigns

focussing on homelessness across the country have been distributed via electronic mail during the late summer and early fall. The National Anti-Poverty Organisation has provided materials that will be distributed to member locals in mid-December. Also, on May 21, 1999, National Chairperson Michael Conlon sent a letter in support of homeless protestors.

### **Action Programme to Defend Jobs and Services**

At the May 1999 national general meeting, it was resolved to endorse the Action Programme to Defend Jobs and Services, a campaign calling for reinvestment in Canada's social programmes and the implementation of social and economic policies opposing privatisation of public services and favouring job creation. Campaign information was sent as part of the coalition mailout to member locals and provincial components in mid-June.

## **International Solidarity Work**

### **CAMPAIGN TO OPPOSE NEW TRADE NEGOTIATIONS AT THE WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION**

Public opposition to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment forced the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to retract the latest drafts of the MAI agreement. The Canadian movement to oppose the MAI re-formed itself as the Canadian Roundtable on the World Trade Organisation, a body formed in 1994 during the Uruguay Round of negotiations for the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Across North America, post-secondary students have rallied under the banner of the Ad Hoc Student Coalition for Fair Trade. These two coalition groups are focussing efforts on opposition to the WTO's Ministerial meetings, to take place from November 29 until December 3, 1999 in Seattle, Washington. At the Ministerial meetings, the latest round of multilateral trade agreements among the 134 member countries of the WTO will begin.

There is serious concern that Canada will follow its U.S. counterparts by agreeing to open up health

care and education as free trade commodities. Despite denials by Minister of International Trade Pierre Pettigrew in response to a September 7<sup>th</sup> letter from the Federation, he was quoted in the Toronto Star in mid-November saying that Canada has “not ruled out” any policy areas for trade negotiations. This contradicts the federal government’s February 1998 declaration that social programmes would “absolutely not” be traded in the MAI negotiations.

Canadian and international campaigns to oppose the World Trade Organisation are forging ahead. The Federation continues to participate in both the Roundtable and Ad Hoc Student Coalition. Organising by the Ad Hoc Coalition is underway for a North American Student Day of Action on November 30, 1999, to coincide with labour-led protests the same day, in Seattle. The Federation produced and helped distribute a tabloid covering global trade issues and events.

In Canada, the Federation is one of the main sponsors of a cross-Canada caravan that is travelling across the country, stopping in over 20 communities to raise awareness about the WTO. Federation representatives will be attending Seattle events.

### **SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN FOR INDEPENDENCE FOR EAST TIMOR**

For the past twenty-four years the Indonesian government was forcibly occupied the island nation of East Timor. It is estimated that over 200,000 people died at the hands of the Indonesian military since the occupation began. At the November 1997 national general meeting adopted a campaign to support full self-determination for the people of East Timor.

After the August 30, 1999 referendum, in which over 78% of eligible East Timorese voters favoured independence, Indonesian military and their militias killed thousands and forced three quarters of the population into exile. Most parts of the country and the East Timorese capitol, Dili—including Dili University—were burned to the ground. Yet, the Canadian federal government made only weak statements in opposition to the massacre carried out by the Indonesian military and continues to assist the Indonesian government

through international trade deals and government-to-government (bilateral) aid.

In early August, the Federation participated in a Canadian Labour Congress-led delegation for East Timor. The Federation continues to work with the East Timor Alert Network and other coalition partners to raise awareness in Canada about the federal government’s role in propping up the Indonesian regime.

The East Timor Alert Network is calling for a focussed boycott campaign of Canadian and multinational businesses with strategic investments in Indonesia, a major advertising campaign to pressure the Canadian government to pull support from the Indonesian regime, and a fundraising campaign to assist the East Timorese resistance movement. Updates on these efforts are posted regularly to the Federation’s listserves, and member locals are encouraged to implement or support campaigns for East Timor at the local level.

The United Nations’ Education, Science, and Cultural organisation (UNESCO) is comprised of government representatives of United Nations member countries, and its mandate is to promote education, social programmes, and cultural protection for the world’s peoples. The body meets at the United Nations’ headquarters in New York and hosts special gatherings on a regular basis.

The Federation participated in the October 14, 1999 consultative meeting of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. This meeting focused primarily on follow-up from the October 1998 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education. The Federation also participated in a subsequent consultation in preparation for the UNESCO Youth Forum held in Paris in early November, 1999.

### **STATUS OF EFFORTS TO REBUILD THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS**

The International Union of Students is a federation of national student unions from around the world. It was founded 53 years ago, with purpose of fighting fascism and promoting universally accessible, publicly funded, and democratic post-secondary education. “Education is a right, not a privilege” serves as its motto.

However, since the decline of the eastern block, the IUS has struggled financially and organisationally. Most organisations, including the Federation, were dormant as members from 1994 until the World Festival of Youth and Students in August 1997.

Following a special, informal meeting of the IUS at the World Festival of Youth and Students in Cuba in August 1997, the Federation renewed its commitment to the international student movement. The Federation has filled its seat representing the Department of Women's Equality and Rights on the Executive Secretariat and been involved in efforts to rebuild the IUS.

Work on behalf of the International Union of Students since the May 1999 national meeting has focused on two activities: establishing a stable source of income for the organisation and preparing for the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress. The Federation also keeps a set of archival materials (mainly historic posters) in its national office, as a back-up to those housed in Prague.

Following a three-day meeting of the Executive Secretariat from July 18-20, 1999, final dates of March 13 – 19, 2000 were established for a Council meeting and the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress of the IUS. The Federation has taken on the responsibility of issuing materials for the Council meeting and 17<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Efforts to lease the IUS building in Prague under terms favourable to the organisation are well underway. Negotiations are currently underway to close a fifteen-year agreement that would provide enough revenue to help rebuild and sustain the organisation. However, the Executive Secretariat will continue to pursue other sources of revenue, in particular the collection of membership dues.

### **MEETING OF THE UNITED STATES STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

National Chairperson Michael Conlon attended the annual meeting of the United States Student Association from August 2-8, 1999. The USSA, based in Washington, D.C, is the only viable, national student movement in the United States. It has two full-time elected officials and three full time staff operating on a budget of approximately \$400,000. Recent USSA campaigns have focussed

on raising the maximum amount for a Pell grant (the U.S system of national grants for low-income students) and a strong push for Hate Crime legislation in the wake of the homophobic murder of Mathew Sheppard in Wyoming.

At the meeting the Federation presented a workshop on the state of organising in Canada and an overview of current campaigns. Plans for Access 2000 were outlined. The workshop was well received and several schools expressed an interest in endorsing Access 2000 and, perhaps, organising in conjunction with events taking place in Canada beginning February 2, 2000. The USSA also voted unanimously to send a delegate to the IUS meeting in March of 2000.

### **INITIATIVE FOR DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION IN THE AMERICAS (IDEA) CONFERENCE**

Throughout the mid-1990s, a tri-national coalition of teachers, students, and workers in Mexican, U.S. American, and Canadian public education systems developed to promote free public education at all levels. This coalition gradually developed into a series of intra-continental meetings. In November 1998, education activists from eight American countries met to discuss the implications of the Free Trade Agreements of the Americas (FTAA), and alternatives to the threats it poses to public education. A group called the Civil Society Network for Public Education in the Americas (CSNPEA) was formed. The IDEA conference was one of its first major projects.

Along with several other member organisations of Canada's Public Education Network, the Federation participated in the IDEA conference, held from September 29 – October 3. National Chairperson Michael Conlon established contacts with student unions, teachers' organisations, trade unions, and faculty associations throughout the Americas, and strategised on possible pan-American coalition activities. Contact was made with a student strike organiser from Mexico, and she provided updates about the situation there. Some work toward coordinating student efforts building for the WTO Ministerial meetings in November and promotion of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Union of Students was undertaken.

## Solidarity Work

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### **WORLD MARCH OF WOMEN**

At the July 1999 meeting of the National Executive, it was resolved to accept a position on the Canadian steering committee of the World March of Women. The march, spearheaded by the Federation of Women in Quebec (FFQ), is an international campaign against violence against women and poverty that will be punctuated by mass events in May, June, and October of the year 2000. The Federation attended Canadian Coordinating Committee meetings on September 10 October 13 and 14. In the new year, Federation locals will receive student-specific information for distribution, and to link to the Access 2000 campaign.

### **DONATIONS, LETTERS OF SUPPORT, AND ENDORSEMENTS**

#### **Nigerian Students Arrested**

In mid-May, the Federation learned that five Nigerian student organisers, members of the National Association of Nigerian Students, were arrested on Monday, May 10, 1999 for leading a campaign for the release of arrested students and for continuing the campaign against newly-imposed fees at Nigerian universities.

Also according to international reports, local magistrate refused to grant the students bail and adjourned the case until June 29, 1999. It is alleged that the arrested students were all beaten by the police, and refused food and basic sanitation services.

On May 21, 1999, the Federation wrote a letter to the Nigerian High Commission in Canada calling for the immediate release of these arrested students, funding for their legal expenses, and a public apology from Nigerian authorities for this breach of human rights secured under the United Nations' Covenant of Civil and Political Rights.

#### **Massacre in East Timor**

In early April, the East Timor Alert Network made reports that new massacres had occurred in Dili and other East Timorese towns. In one case people who had fled to safety in a church, including many children, were hacked to death with machetes as they left the edifice. At ETAN's request, on April 12, 1999, the Federation wrote a letter to appeal to

Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy to directly urge then-President Habibie and military General Wiranto to stop the occupation.

On June 15, 1999, a personally-signed letter was received from Axworthy, in which he outlined the Canadian government's response to the situation in East Timor. However, his letter did not state agreement to fulfilling any of the requests listed above. Follow-up work to pressure the Canadian government to undertake to help disarm Indonesian militia troops and other efforts are underway.

#### **Iranian Students**

In July 1999, students in Iran sparked a national movement against the repressive regime. After authorities cracked down on freedom of speech at universities and in the press, Iranian university students and others staged mass protests against the government.

On July 30, 1999, the Federation spoke at a rally in Ottawa in support of democracy activists in Iran. On July 30, 1999, the Federation wrote a letter of support to the association to defend human rights in Iran. On September 29, 1999, the Federation wrote a further letter, urging the Iranian minister of justice to repeal death sentences on activists and release political prisoners.

#### **Mexican Students', Workers', and Teachers' Strike**

In April 1999, after revelations that the Zedillo government was to repeal the country's zero tuition fee policy and implement vast tuition fee increases at the behest of the World Bank, students and the post-secondary education community in at the national autonomous university of Mexico (UNAM) began a campus-wide strike. The strike persists, and students continue to refuse to pay the "quotas". The strikers fear that World Bank policies would mean sharply declining enrolments, especially of low-income students, staff and teacher cutbacks, further privatisation, and threats to academic autonomy.

On July 29, the Federation sent a letter of support to striking Mexican students. This letter followed efforts in January 1999 to support school teachers

arrested in Mexico. A further letter of support was sent in September 1999.

### Fulfilment of Directives from Plenary

#### Opposition to the NATO-Led War in Kosovo

In response to the Canadian government's participation for the unjust and illegal NATO bombings of Kosovo, a motion was passed at the March meeting of the National Executive to call upon the House of Commons to end Canada's role in the air strike and other potential military efforts in Kosovo.

In early April, member locals began to participate in campaign against the NATO-led war in the Balkans. At the May 1999 35<sup>th</sup> semi-annual national general meeting, a discussion took place with guest speaker Carl Jacobsen from Carleton University. A motion was passed in plenary to oppose the NATO-led war in the Balkans, to call on Canada to withdraw from NATO's military attacks in the region, and to participate in the campaign against the war.

Throughout the period between the May semi-annual general meeting and the end of bombing in mid-June, the student movement at the local, provincial and national level participated in anti-war efforts.

On June 2, 1999 a membership advisory was distributed to encourage member locals to participate in the June 5<sup>th</sup> Day of Action Against the War in the Balkans. Prior to that, member locals and provincial components received regular

updates about Canadian and international anti-war arguments and activities.

### Support for Kurdish Leader Abdullah Ocalan

Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan has been targeted as a traitor and rebel by the Turkish government, with which the Canadian government continues to maintain active and strategic trade. Abdullah Ocalan was sentenced to death for treason by Turkey on June 29, 1999. Turkish Kurds and other Turkish groups are deeply divided and many fear outbreaks of violence across the region.

At the May 1999 national annual general meeting, it was resolved that letters be written to Canadian officials and to the Prime Minister of Turkey, to call for a fair trial for Ocalan, an investigation into the current conditions under which Kurds in Turkey live, and an end to Canadian arms trade with Turkey.

On July 30, 1999, a letter was sent to Minister of Foreign Affairs Lloyd Axworthy urging Canada to pressure the Turkish government for Ocalan's release. A letter of support was sent to the Toronto Kurdish Community and Information Centre.

### Support for the Extradition of Augusto Pinochet

General Augusto Pinochet's military government ruled Chile from 1973 to 1991 after ousting democratically-elected socialist president Salvador Allende. During his regime, thousands of people were killed or disappeared.

At the November 1998 national general meeting, a motion passed to support the extradition of former

## Solidarity Work

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Chilean President Augusto Pinochet from England to Spain, with goal of having him tried in his home country for the brutal murders and human rights abuses he commissioned during his nearly two decades of dictatorship.

On April 20, 1999, a letter was sent to the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs, urging Canada to support the extradition of Augusto Pinochet to Spain. The Federation has called on the Canadian government to publicly support bringing General Pinochet to justice despite massive legal challenges to the extradition ruling. General Pinochet's lawyers and ardent supporters such as Baroness Margaret Thatcher continue to challenge the ruling on the basis that the number and range of charges against Pinochet do not warrant extradition.

The Federation received a letter from Axworthy's office dated June 25, 1999. The letter states that the Canadian government supported and is heartened by the decision of the British House of Lords to extradite Pinochet and that the "episode has given renewed impetus to the creation of the International Criminal Court [...] to prosecute future human rights violators".

In a response received in October 1999 from the Ministry of Justice, the Canadian government's support for action to hold Pinochet accountable is expressed, although the federal government claims that it has no legal jurisdiction to pursue the matter.

At the time of writing, news reports stated that Pinochet is undergoing an independent medical test to see whether he is fit to be extradited to Spain to stand trial on torture charges. British Home Secretary Jack Shaw had suggested this measure upon learning that the Chilean government had asked for Pinochet to be released on humanitarian grounds. Pinochet is still under house arrest near London.

# FEDERATION PROGRAMMES

## International Student Identity Cards

The International Student Identity Card is the only internationally recognised form of student identification. The Card is produced and distributed by the International Student Travel Confederation and endorsed by the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural organisation (UNESCO). (The UNESCO logo appears on the face of the Card.) The Federation, and its predecessor organisations, have served as the Canadian agent for the Card since its creation in the late 1960's.

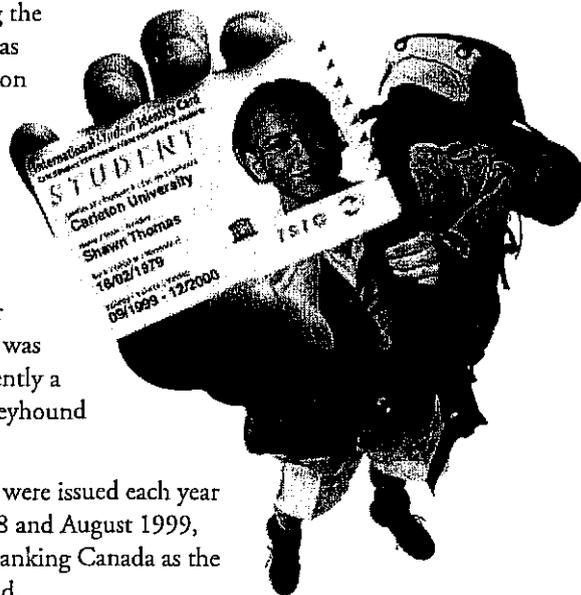
The price of the Card varies slightly from country to country. In Canada, the Federation charges \$16.00 for the Card; however, only non-members of the Federation pay this fee at the point of issuance. The Federation covers the cost of cards issued to its members from the membership fees.

A portion of the fees collected for all the cards issued in Canada is paid to the International Student Travel Confederation. The amount paid per card to the Confederation varies based on the volume of cards issued.

### DISTRIBUTION IN CANADA

In 1993, student discounts requiring the International Student Identity Card as proof of student status were secured on major domestic air travel routes. Immediately, the Federation experienced a substantial increase in Card sales. That growth has continued steadily every year since then. Demand for the card received another boost in 1997 when a major student discount requiring the Card was secured with VIA Rail. And just recently a major discount was secured with Greyhound Bus Lines of Canada.

Prior to 1993, roughly 15,000 cards were issued each year in Canada. Between September 1998 and August 1999, close to 145,000 cards were issued, ranking Canada as the fifth largest issuing agent in the world.



## Federation Programmes

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The vast majority of the Cards are issued by member locals and the more than 50 Travel CUTS offices across Canada. A small portion is issued by non-member locals that the Federation has licensed as official issuing offices and by VIA rail stations.

Prior to 1995, distribution of cards to all issuing offices – member local offices, non-member local offices and Travel CUTS offices – was administered by the Federation's former national office in Toronto. In 1995, when the Federation closed its office in Toronto and moved most of its operations to Ottawa, responsibility for administering distribution was transferred temporarily to the head office of Travel CUTS. In fall 1998 the Federation re-assumed responsibility for administering distribution to member and non-member local offices and this fall the Federation re-assumed responsibility for supplying cards to Travel CUTS.

### PROMOTION

This past summer several initiatives were introduced to increase the profile of the International Student Identity Card.

In June, a variety of high quality ISIC images, customised for each member local association, were included on the Federation's handbook kit compact disk distributed to locals. Several member locals subsequently used the images in their handbooks.

In July, the Federation included information about the Card on the 275,000 full-colour Studentsaver Card inserts that were either bound into or distributed with local handbooks.

In August, the Federation included, on the roughly 1,500 stickers and 1,200 window decals distributed to businesses offering Studentsaver discounts, both an image of the Studentsaver Card and the International Student Identity Card. Though Studentsaver discounts had always been available with the ISIC, that fact was never widely promoted.

Initial indications are that the initiatives have had an impact. Most member locals are well ahead of their last years' pace for cards issued. For example,

Lakehead University Student Union, which issued 1042 cards in 1998/99, has already issued close to 700 since September. Carleton University Students' Association, which issued roughly 3,000 cards last year, has already issued more than half of that amount since September.

### PRINTED ISIC'S

Three years ago the International Student Travel Confederation embarked on a project to update the quality and appearance of the Card. The new Card was launched in summer 1998 in time for the 1999 issuing year (September 1, 1998 to December 31, 1999).

While the personal data on the Card can be hand-written, just as it could be on the old Card, equipment and software is now available which allows for the issuing of computer-generated cards. This year, more than 80 percent of the cards issued around the world will be printed rather than hand-written. Canada is the largest issuing agent in the world not already issuing printed cards.

The Travel Confederation has set as a goal to have no more hand-written cards after this current issuing year. This poses a considerable problem for the Federation, given that over 70 Canadian member and non-member student unions currently issue the Card and the vast majority of those issue less than 400 cards per year. At roughly \$600.00 per Card label printer, it is well beyond the means of the Federation to supply each office with a printer. The current view is that printers will have to be purchased for the larger issuing offices and that much of the card issuing will have to become more centralised.

The budget adopted in May for the current fiscal year allocated funds for the purchase of an initial supply of label printers. In July ten printers were ordered from the International Student Travel Confederation for delivery in August. Unfortunately, due to a worldwide shortage of the printers, they did not arrive until early October.

At this point most of the printers have been deployed or will be shortly to offices issuing large volumes of cards. Two were placed in Newfoundland and Labrador: one in the Memorial

University Student Union office which issues roughly 2000 cards per year; and one in the provincial office for the purpose of issuing all of the other cards in the province. In British Columbia, printers have been placed at both the Malaspina Students' Union and Kwantlen Student Association offices. Combined, close to 2500 cards have already been issued to members of the two locals. A printer is also slated for the University of Victoria Students' Society office, the office issuing the largest volume of cards. It is hoped that printers will also be in placed shortly in the offices of the Carleton University Students' Association, Lakehead University Student Union and University of Prince Edward Student Union.

The National Executive has identified approximately 15 additional higher volume offices in which printers should be placed as soon as possible. Therefore, the National Executive is recommending that funds be re-allocated in this year's budget for the purchase of additional printers.

### FUTURE ISIC OPTIONS

The new International Student Identity Card design and structure allows for various co-branding and 'smart card' options to be added to the Card. The Travel Confederation has already arranged with some universities in other countries to make the Card the all-purpose student card for those universities. However, this is only feasible at institutions at which there are no part-time students or where a different card can be issued to part-time students. The Confederation and UNESCO stipulate that the Card may only be issued to students engaged in full-time studies.

As reported at the previous national general meeting, the National Executive has no immediate plans to pursue any co-branding or 'smart card' options; however, one member local, Malaspina Students' Union, has initiated discussions with Malaspina University-College about making the ISIC the institutional student card for full-time students.

### Studentsaver

In 1981 when the Federation was being formed, initial plans called for each individual member to be issued an International Student Identity Card as a Federation membership/discount card. In fact, in Fall 1981 close to 30,000 cards were issued to the first wave of individual members from the eight student unions that had passed Federation membership referenda the previous spring, prior to the official founding of the Federation.

It was quickly realised that the Federation did not have the resources and the associations did not have the capability to issue International Student Identity Cards to every individual Federation member. Most importantly, the Federation learned that it was not allowed to distribute the ISIC to part time students.

During that first year in existence, the Federation resolved to create a second discount card – the Studentsaver Card – which would be an inexpensive, easy to distribute alternative, absent of any cardholder data or photograph, and that would be available to part-time and full-time students.

### RE-DESIGN OF THE CARD

The Studentsaver Card was first issued in fall 1982 as a plastic card similar to a credit card. The discounts available with the Card were published in a national guide book that was produced and distributed with the Card. By the the mid-1980s the number of discounts had grown substantially necessitating a change to separate and smaller Eastern and Western Canada discount guide books.

The programme remained relatively unchanged until the early 1990's when, in an effort to reduce programme costs, the discount guide books were scrapped. As an alternative, the Federation began printing the local area discounts for the programme on institution-specific Cards. In addition to reducing production costs, the new cards had the potential of increasing exposure for local discounts. Very few students actually carried their discount guide books with them. It was hoped that by having the discounts printed on the

## Federation Programmes

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Card, students would be more familiar with them.

In order to accommodate the list of the discounts, the card was changed to a fold-out card with four panels. Even with the expanded size of the card, however, it could only accommodate approximately 40 discount listings. As a result, the number of discounts across the country dwindled from close to 2000 in the late 1980s to less than 500 by 1998.

The folding format also made card distribution less effective. As loose inserts in handbooks, the cards were often tossed directly in the garbage with other advertisements without being looked at. Many students who did keep their Cards, found them too bulky to keep in their wallets.

In January 1999, the National Executive decided to return to a durable plastic card for the programme and to use other methods to promote the discounts.

The new generation cards have achieved mixed results. Early reports suggest that the credit card size and professional look has increased use and retention of the cards. Unfortunately, the card material has not held up as well as was anticipated, with inks wearing off inside wallets. A more durable stock and laminate will be required for future cards.

### DISTRIBUTION OF CARDS

In past years the Studentsaver Cards were often not received on campus until early September because they could not be printed until after the completion of discount solicitation. This year cards were printed and shipped in late June, while discount solicitation was still underway.

In March the National Executive decided to ask member locals to bind into their local handbooks, where possible, a one page Studentsaver insertion on to which the Studentsaver Card would be gummed. Some 275,000 full-colour insertions were subsequently printed, though only half were bound into local handbooks. In some cases the insertions could not be included because the local handbook was an unconventional size and, in other cases, the Federation was unable to accommodate early printing or binding deadlines

of the member locals. There were also approximately ten member locals that did not produce handbooks this year.

Where the Studentsaver inserts were not bound directly into the handbooks they were often loosely inserted. The University of Ottawa Graduate Students' Association, which did not publish a handbook this year, included the Studentsaver Card and insert in a direct mailing to each Association member in mid-August.

The National Executive is confident that, as a result of this initiative, distribution of the Studentsaver Card to individual members has increased substantially over past years.

### DISCOUNT SOLICITATION

In an effort to better support member locals' discount solicitation efforts, and to combat aggressive competition, the National Executive directed that new and better materials be produced. This included the production of a full-colour Business Guide and an improved discount contract with two carbonless copies: one for the discount provider; and one for the discount solicitor. The Members' Guide to the program was also re-designed and updated.

The National Executive had hoped to have the discount solicitation materials available to locals by mid-April. Unfortunately, the materials were not completed and distributed until late May. On a positive note, member locals had a longer period in which to solicit discounts because they were not constrained by the printing deadline for the discount card. In some cities, discount solicitation continued until after the start of the current academic year.

The quality and quantity of discounts that were ultimately secured varies considerably across the country. In Newfoundland and Labrador, there are more than 200 discounts including discounts at several of the province's more popular fast food outlets. The provincial office secured grants to hire for the summer a full-time provincial coordinator to secure discounts. The College of the Rockies Students' Union secured more than 90 discounts in Cranbrook and surrounding communities in the Southeastern corner of British Columbia.

Unfortunately, some locals did not secure any discounts in their respective communities. For example, every member at Trent University who received the student handbook received a Studentsaver Card, yet no locations in the Peterborough area offer Studentsaver discounts.

The quantity of discounts is particularly poor in large urban areas such as Toronto and Vancouver. In fact, the signed discount agreements for Toronto – a total of only 16 discounts – were not received by the national office until earlier this week.

### COMPETITION

The loss of discounts in major urban areas is primarily attributable to competition from other discount programs headed by profit-seeking entrepreneurs. In recent years, competition to the Studentsaver programme developed primarily in the form of the National Student Price Card, a for-profit enterprise.

Through an aggressive and effective marketing strategy, the Price Card has captured many national and local discount providers. Meanwhile, the Studentsaver card remained unchanged and lost its share of national discount providers.

This year, a newer programme called Collegeclub.com emerged. Based in San Diego, USA, Collegeclub offers a student discount programme primarily to attract students to its website. Collegeclub then generates revenue by selling advertising space on its website, which also features a variety of clubs, dating services, chat rooms, and trivia.

While Student Price Club has maintained a strong hold on national discounts in Canada, Collegeclub has been very effective at securing discounts at independent businesses throughout Vancouver, where Collegeclub likely offers more than 200 discounts. However, either from lack of interest or effort, Student Price Club or College Club appear to offer few local discounts outside of major urban centres.

### PROMOTION

When the National Executive decided to produce the Studentsaver Card absent of the discounts listed on them, it realised that the biggest challenge would be promoting the discounts. The National

Executive decided that, first and foremost, the discounts would be promoted through the Federation's web site. One important advantage of this is that those connecting to the site are exposed to the Federation's other current work.

The National Executive also encouraged member locals to include in their respective handbooks the discounts for their local areas. Sadly, only a handful of locals appear to have done so.

Earlier this fall, the Federation had printed a supply of full-colour Studentsaver poster templates on which the discounts in a particular city, region or province can be printed. To date, only the poster for Newfoundland and Labrador has been printed. Now that discount solicitation for the year appears to have been completed, the National Executive is hopeful that printing of the remainder of posters can commence shortly.

### FUTURE PROSPECTS

A number of significant improvements must be made to the design, distribution, and promotion of the Studentsaver programme and to discount solicitation if the programme is to continue successfully. In particular, an earlier start on all elements of the programme will avoid many of the problems encountered in the past year. This includes soliciting more and better provincial and national discounts on to which local discount solicitation can be anchored.

Window decals are a key component of Studentsaver; however, in the past year many businesses did not place in their windows the stickers they received. In the coming year, discount solicitors will carry window decals and offer to place them in the business' window at the time the discount is secured.

The Federation's redesigned website will provide another exciting prospect for Studentsaver in the form of ongoing discounts and discount solicitation. The National Discount Coordinator can update the lists on the website from any computer connected to the web at any time. Future options may allow discount solicitors to immediately submit discounts through the Federation's website. Either way, the standard September to September discount timeline will no longer be required.

## Federation Programmes

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Improving Studentsaver will also require a strong commitment to the programme from member locals and provincial components. Both will have to take greater responsibility for ensuring discounts are solicited, that cards are distributed and that discounts are promoted.

### 1999-2000 Students' Union Directory

The Students' Union Directory has been published by the Federation since 1981. It is a unique document containing information about the various student unions across the country. Over the years the Directory has been expanded to include information on government contacts and social justice organisations and more detailed information about the Federation.

The 1999-2000 Directory includes improvements such as social justice organisation listings, more through campus organisation listings, colour tabs and a revised section on the Federation.

In an attempt to increase sales and distribution of the Directory, the cost of the publication was lowered substantially. A more aggressive advertising approach has also been adopted. Various social justice organisations and non-members are being encouraged to purchase the publication.

Although the vast majority of submissions from member and non-member locals were received past the deadline, the Federation endeavoured to uphold a mid-September distribution deadline. A data entry and design company was hired to input the information and to update the design of the Directory. The Directory was submitted to the Federation's printer in early September. Unfortunately, unbeknownst to the Federation, the printer has been beset with a variety of serious financial problems.

Although the printing company has produced the Directory for the previous three years, the company representative did not contact the Federation to discuss the problems and, as a result, the production of the Directory was delayed. The Directory was received in the national office in late October. All orders were couriered to member local

and non-member associations in an attempt to offset the delay.

Efforts are underway to develop a more concise information package, which will require less effort to complete. The forms will be made available on the Federation's web site allowing member local and non-member associations to submit the data electronically to the national office. An investigation into the logistics of producing the Directory on compact disc is underway.

### National Student Health Network

#### MEMBERSHIP

Since the previous general meeting, the National Student Health Network has experienced mixed results. Unfortunately, three student associations, the York Federation of Students, the York University Graduate Student Association and the Ryerson Students' Administrative Council have all selected other brokers for the 1999-2000 plan year.

On a positive note, two student associations, the University of Ottawa Graduate Students' Association and the University of Western Ontario Society of Graduate Students have joined the Network. Additionally, the Network is currently soliciting quotes from insurance providers for a health and dental plan at College of the North Atlantic. It is hoped that the information will be gathered in time for a referendum at the College late in the Winter Semester.

The National Executive is guardedly optimistic about opportunities to expand the membership of the Network during the remainder of the 1999-2000 plan year.

#### PLAN IMPROVEMENTS

In order to compete with larger brokers with significantly more financial resources, the National Executive has initiated work on a number of improvements to the plan since the previous general meeting.

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dun dun dunn*

### **One-time opt-outs**

In response to concerns about the need to opt out of the plan each year, the Network has begun work on a computer program that will require a student with other extended health coverage to opt-out of the plan only once during the course of their academic career. The Network is currently testing the program at the University of Victoria, where Local 44 is a member of the Network. It is anticipated that this feature will be available for use at other campuses beginning in the Fall 2000 semester.

### **USE of the ISIC as a "pay-direct" card**

One of the advantages that the Network has over other brokers is the ability to combine the benefits of the Network with the other programmes of the Federation. One such possibility is to replace the current "pay-direct" cards with the International Student Identity Card. Currently, most plans provide for a drug card with a magnetic stripe allowing coverage to be applied to prescription drugs at the point of sale. These cards eliminate the need for students to gather prescription drug receipts and submit them to the insurer for reimbursement. As the ISIC also comes with a magnetic stripe, it would be a simple process to encode the students' insurance information on an ISIC, rather than providing them with a separate card for insurance coverage. By providing plan members with an ISIC, the value of the Network would be greatly increased; as the Federation is the Canadian agent for the ISIC, it is a benefit that only the Network can provide.

### **Availability of network forms on the federation website**

With the increasing popularity of the internet as a means of exchanging information and receiving services, all of the forms that students are required to complete will be available for down-loading from the Federation's web site. Students will then be able to fill out the forms at home and minimise the stress of opting out of the plan or waiting on reimbursement for medical or dental expenses. Work has also begun on developing a computer program that will allow students to fill out the forms directly on the web site, thereby eliminating the line ups to opt-out. It is also hoped that this

will allow local plan administrators to devote more time to publicising the plan on their respective campuses.

Finally, in order to ensure that students will be able to find the site with ease, the Federation has registered the domain name [www.studenthealth.org](http://www.studenthealth.org). When students go to this address they will immediately be redirected to the Network's page on the Federation's web site.



# INTERNAL AFFAIRS

## National Executive

### CURRENT COMPOSITION

The following are the current members of the Federation's National Executive.

Aboriginal Students' Representative	Troy Sebastian
British Columbia Representative	Rob Fleming
Francophone Students' Representative	Margaret Bryans
Graduate Students' Representative	Joy Morris
Manitoba Representative	Rob Marriott
National Chairperson	Michael Conlon
National Deputy Chairperson	Elizabeth Carlyle
National Treasurer	Joey Hansen
Newfoundland-Labrador Representative	Jen Anthony
Nova Scotia Representative	Penny McCall-Howard
Ontario Representative	Mike Blower
Prince Edward Island Representative	B.J. McCarville
Quebec Representative	David Batistuzzi
Saskatchewan Representative	Heath Packman
Students of Colour Representative	Janelle Ho Shing
Women's Representer	Anita Zaenker

### CHANGES SINCE THE PREVIOUS NATIONAL GENERAL MEETING

In August, Maura Parte, British Columbia Representative on the National Executive, resigned her position. Rob Fleming, a director of the University of Victoria Students' Society, was elected as Parte's replacement by the British Columbia provincial general meeting held in late August.

At the May 1999 national general meeting, an election was to be held to fill the Prince Edward Island Representative position for the 1999-2000 year; however, due to the absence of delegates from the province in attendance at the meeting, no election was conducted. The position remained vacant throughout the summer. In late September, the National Executive organised, in accordance with Bylaw VI, Section 2 b, a by-election for the position. B.J. McCarville, a director of the University of Prince Edward Island Student Union, was elected to the position for the remainder of the 1999-2000 term.

Ben Monk, Québec Representative on the National Executive since May, resigned his position in mid-October. David Batistuzzi was elected to replace him at a special Québec Component general meeting held in mid-November.

### Federation Staffing

#### OVERVIEW

Since 1972, the Federation's national staff have been unionised with the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 1281. The Local also represents staff at the York Federation of Students, the Ryerson Students' Administrative Council, Carleton University Students' Association, the University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union, a number of Ontario Public Interest Research Groups, and other small, education-related workplaces in Ontario.

One of the most basic aspects of unionisation is that the terms of work are organised under a collective agreement, essentially a common contract with varying job descriptions and a pay scale. These collective agreements are negotiated by the employer (management, i.e. the National Executive of the Federation) and the Union (i.e. CUPE), on behalf of the employees. The result is a contract that, ideally, protects the rights of both the employer and employee, as regards such items as wages, benefits, hours of work, and discipline.

Management reserves the right to direct the workforce, with limits set by labour legislation and the collective agreement. Whenever possible, if disputes arise based on different interpretations of the collective agreement by Management and the Union, the Labour-Management Committee addresses them to the mutual satisfaction of both parties. If the Union, on behalf of the employees, is dissatisfied with any decision of the National Executive regarding staff issues, the Union may grieve, or lodge a complaint, against the employer.

Under the provisions of the collective agreement between the employees and the Federation, one of the at-large members of the National Executive serves as the Staff Relations Officer. National Treasurer Joey Hansen has filled this position since prior to the previous national general meeting.

#### CURRENT STAFF

The following are the current regular staff of the Federation directly funded by the Federation's national budget:

#### Campaigns Coordinator

Pam Frache

#### Discount Programmes Coordinator

Philip Link

#### Financial Coordinator

Johanne Laurent

#### Health Plan Coordinator

Todd Buttenham

#### Internal Coordinator

Lucy Watson

#### Manitoba Fieldworker

Kemlin Nembhard

#### Researcher

Denise Doherty-Delorme

#### Translator

Monique Landa

#### Translator

Carol-Lynn Prebinski

In addition there are several Federation employees who are employed by provincial components of the Federation.

#### STATUS OF THE NEWFOUNDLAND-LABRADOR ORGANISER POSITION

In May 1998 the national general meeting voted to supplement the Newfoundland and Labrador Component allocation in order to fund a temporary organiser position for the province. Following successful negotiations with CUPE 1281 to allow for the creation of the temporary position, Rajat Sharan was hired on a six-month contract in October 1998. In May 1999 Sharan's contract was extended for an additional year.

After the completion of the current contract, the National Executive hopes to cost share with the Newfoundland and Labrador Component the position on a permanent basis.

#### DEPARTURES SINCE THE PREVIOUS NATIONAL GENERAL MEETING

In July, Simone Saint-Pierre resigned as Communications Coordinator for the Federation. Saint-Pierre had worked for the Federation since

July 1994, starting as the Internal Coordinator before transferring into the Communications Coordinator position in 1995.

In summer 1998, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island Fieldworker Joe Byrne applied for and was granted a one year leave-of-absence from his employee position. In November, Jessica Squires, who at the time was the Nova Scotia Representative on the National Executive, was hired to replace him until the end of his leave-of-absence. This past summer, shortly before his scheduled return date, Byrne informed that Federation that he was resigning his position. Byrne had been employed with the Federation since fall 1995.

In early fall 1998, Graduate Caucus Coordinator Derrick Deans applied for and was granted a one year leave-of-absence from his employee position. In late September this year, Dean informed the Federation that he would not be returning to the Federation. Coincidentally, Deans had also started with the Federation in fall 1995.

### **STAFF LEAVES-OF-ABSENCE**

Since September Pam Frache has been on a leave-of-absence from her position as Health Plan Coordinator, in order to fill the Campaigns Coordinator until spring 2000. The National Executive is in the process of hiring a contract Health Plan Coordinator for a portion of Frache's leave-of-absence.

Manitoba Fieldworker Kemlin Nembhard recently applied for and was granted a leave-of-absence. The leave will commence on December 3, 1999 and conclude in April 2000. It is the National Executive's intention to replace Nembhard with a temporary employee who will work on a full-time basis and be responsible for fieldworking in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

### **TEMPORARY OFFICE STAFF**

In order to help compensate for several vacancies in the national office this fall, the National Executive and CUPE 1281 agreed in late September to the creation of a short-term

Administrative/Communications Assistant position. The position was filled in early October and will be in place until mid-December.

### **ADDRESSING CURRENT STAFF VACANCIES**

In January of this year, the National Executive resolved, due to financial constraints, to freeze all hiring for vacant staff positions until the end of the 1998-99 fiscal year.

During the remainder of the fiscal year and the period immediately after, the following positions became vacant:

- Campaigns Coordinator
- Communications Coordinator
- Government Relations Coordinator
- Graduate Caucus Coordinator
- Nova Scotia-Prince Edward Island Fieldworker

With the exception of the Campaigns Coordinator, which was filled on a temporary basis through an internal staff transfer, all of the positions remain vacant. However, with more financial resources now available to it, the National Executive intends to fill some of the vacancies as soon as possible.



# MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

## Membership Development

There are many ways in which the Federation keeps in touch with members on local campuses across the country. Notwithstanding national media coverage and other wide-reaching national activities, the work of the member local is crucial to the proper development of awareness among students at all Federation member locals.

Generally, the national office prepares materials and resources for use by the member local, relying on the member local to communicate directly with members.

## MEMBERSHIP ADVISORIES

Federation membership advisories contain updates and other key internal information. In order to keep members apprised of internal Federation activities, since May 1999, three membership advisories have been distributed to member locals by fax and email, in addition to numerous Access 2000 campaign updates.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF MEMBERSHIP AWARENESS STRATEGY

The Federation is best described as 'a partnership of students' unions.' Each member local of this partnership pools resources to undertake work at the provincial and national levels. Just as it is the responsibility of each member local to promote the work that is undertaken at the local or campus level, so too is it the responsibility of the member local to promote the work that it undertakes at the provincial and national levels.

Over the years, member locals have developed means to entrench the profile of the work that it undertakes at the provincial and national levels. The Membership Awareness Strategy, first passed at the May 1997 national general meeting, seeks to formalise practises that member locals can undertake to increase the profile of the work they do at the provincial and national level. The Strategy is divided into a preamble and two main components: Raising Awareness Among Elected Officials and Raising Awareness Among Membership on Campus, each with a checklist of reminders for member locals' convenience.

Since May 1997, the strategy has been updated from year-to-year and included in the Organising Manual produced each fall and distributed to member locals and provincial components.

### Votes to Re-affirm Membership

#### KWANTLEN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Kwantlen University-College is an institution with roughly 11,000 full and part-time students serving the sub-urban communities to south and southeast of Vancouver. The Kwantlen Students' Association was a founding member of the Federation in 1981. During the decade which followed, the Association participated actively in the Federation.

However, in 1991, the Association's active participation in the Federation began to wane. That summer, the Federation received notice from the Association that it intended to hold a referendum on Federation membership in September of that year.

The Federation informed the Association that it had failed to provide the other members of the Federation with the six month's notice that the Bylaws required and that, therefore, the notice was invalid. Early in September 1991, the Federation's provincial Chairperson attended an Association Executive meeting to explain in more detail the Federation's position. He left that meeting with the understanding that the referendum would be re-scheduled.

In late September, the Federation learned that the Association had proceeded with a referendum vote, and that the Association's members had voted, by a narrow margin, to de-federate. The Federation immediately took the position that it would not recognise the results as being valid and communicated that position to the Association.

At the time of the vote, the Association was more than a year behind on fee remittances. Despite repeated requests, the Association failed to remit those fees or any fees for the year in which the disputed referendum was held.

In summer 1997, the Federation was informed by its lawyers that it would lose any claim over the oldest of the fees owed from the Association if it did not initiate legal action by August 31 of that year. Though it was reluctant to do so, the National Executive felt that it had no option but to

seek a legal judgement in order to collect the fees.

The lawyers also advised, and the National Executive agreed, that a judgement should be sought as part of the legal action on the question of membership and on the matter of all fees collected but not remitted by the Association for the period following the disputed referendum.

In summer 1998, the Federation was contacted by the new president of the Association about whether a settlement could be reached before the matter proceeded to court. An initial meeting was held in which both parties informally stated their understanding of the situation. To the surprise of Federation representatives, the Association agreed with the claim concerning the amount of fees owed prior to and for the year of the disputed referendum. There was, however, no agreement on the issue of subsequent year's fees and on the basic issue of membership.

In the fall, an examination for discovery was held in which the Federation's lawyers sought evidence from the Association. To the surprise of the Federation, the Association expressed no interest in examining any representative of the Federation.

The matter remained relatively dormant until late January, roughly six weeks before the scheduled court date, when the Federation was approached once again by the Association's president seeking to negotiate a settlement.

Negotiations commenced within a few days and after a few hours a settlement was reached. Under the financial terms of the settlement, the Federation received all provincial and national membership fees – approximately \$78,000.00 – owed prior to and for the year in which the disputed referendum occurred. The Federation also received \$30,000.00 for interest on the withheld fees and for legal costs. The Federation relinquished any claim for membership fees for the years after the 1991-92 fiscal year.

On the question of membership, the Association agreed that the referendum had been invalid and that it was still a member of the Federation. It was agreed that a new referendum would be held in fall 1999 and that it would be conducted in accordance with the current Bylaws of the

Federation. It was also agreed that the elected leadership of the Association would take a neutral stance during the vote. The Association also agreed to actively participate in the Federation during the period leading up to the membership vote in September. In May, the Association was represented at a national general meeting for the first time in eight years and was represented at the provincial general meeting later in the summer. In September, the Association distributed the Studentsaver Card and commenced issuing International Student Identity Cards.

In mid-October, the referendum campaign commenced on the College's four campuses. The response to the Federation's campaigns from Kwantlen students was immensely positive. Most knew about and supported the tuition fee freeze. In addition, the services offered by the Federation were also a significant factor in the successful membership drive. Voting took place October 26-28, with 97.4% of students voting in favour of renewed membership. The final results were:

- 1641 in favour,
- 45 votes opposed and
- 3 spoiled ballots.

### Full Membership Votes

#### GRENFELL COLLEGE STUDENTS' UNION

Sir Wilfred Grenfell College is a campus of Memorial University of Newfoundland serving the west coast of Newfoundland. The Grenfell College Students' Union was a founding member of the Federation in 1981 and remained an active member of the Federation for the next 17 years. In March 1998, the students' union conducted a referendum on continued membership. During the campaign preceding the vote, false and misleading information was circulated about the Federation resulting in a majority voting against continued membership.

During the year that followed, the Union expressed a renewed interest in the Federation and the May 1999 national general meeting resolved to invite a representative of the Students' Union to the November national general meeting. However, the invitation was unnecessary as the Students' Union

submitted an application letter for prospective membership in the Federation in early September.

In early September the council of the union voted overwhelmingly in favour of organising a Federation membership referendum. In mid-September, Federation organisers and Students' Union volunteers collected the required 10% of students' signatures in less than a week. The campaign began almost immediately after the petition drive.

During the campaign students at Grenfell College were interested in the work of the Federation and expressed support for the idea of working with students across the country. Voting took place between September 28 and 30, with 96% of students voting in favour of rejoining the Federation. The final results were:

- 477 votes in favour;
- 19 votes opposed; and
- one spoiled ballot.

The National Executive has reviewed the full membership application letter, as per Bylaw I, and is recommending that the unions' members be accepted as full members at this national general meeting.

### Applications for Prospective Membership

#### QUEEN'S SOCIETY OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

The Queen's University Society of Graduate and Professional Students is composed of the roughly 2,000 graduate students enrolled at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

The Society's predecessor organisation, an unincorporated students' union known as the Queen's University Graduate Students' Society, was a founding member of the Federation and, for the decade which followed, actively participated in the Federation. In 1991 the Society incorporated, becoming the Queen's University Society of Graduate and Professional Students. Shortly after, the Society's executive declared that it was not the same organisation; therefore it was not obligated to

## Membership Issues

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collect the Federation's membership fees. The Federation was confident that the new Society's position was invalid but did not aggressively pursue the issue.

For most of the eight years since the Society's restructuring, there has been minimal contact between the Federation and the Society. However, this past spring that began to change. On May 2, National Chairperson-elect Michael Conlon made a presentation on the Federation to the Society's council. Later that month, three representatives of the Society attended portions of the national general meeting and in June one representative attended the Ontario provincial general meeting.

On September 15 National Chairperson Conlon made a second presentation to the Society's council. At the same meeting, the council voted overwhelmingly to apply for prospective membership in the Federation.

The National Executive has reviewed the Society's prospective membership application letter and is recommending that the Society be accepted as a prospective member at this national general meeting.

### **UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

The University of Manitoba Graduate Students' Association is composed of roughly 2,500 graduate students enrolled at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg.

On September 29 National Chairperson Michael Conlon made a presentation on the benefits of Federation membership to the Association's council. At that same meeting the council voted overwhelmingly to apply for prospective membership in the Federation.

The National Executive has reviewed the Association's prospective membership application letter and is recommending that the Association be accepted as a prospective member at this national general meeting.

### **Incongruency of Membership**

In 1992, the Ontario Federation of Students resolved to transform itself into the Ontario Component of the Canadian Federation of Students. At the time there were some members of the Ontario Federation of Students that were not members of the Canadian Federation of Students. As a condition of becoming a provincial component and receiving an allocation from the national budget, the provincial organisation agreed to require its members, that did not belong to the national Federation, to either join nationally or withdraw provincially.

In spite of the agreement, only some of the Ontario locals that did not belong to the national Federation have since joined. The following student associations continue to participate provincially and pay provincial dues without participating nationally and paying national dues:

- Atkinson College Student Association
- McMaster University Graduate Students' Association

The May 1999 national general meeting resolved that a plan be developed and implemented in the upcoming year to achieve full congruency within the upcoming year. The July 1999 National Executive meeting struck a subcommittee to develop the plan. It is expected to submit its findings and recommendations to the next National Executive meeting, scheduled for early January.

# FINANCES

## Budget Management

The annual budget constitutes the monetary targets of the Federation for the fiscal year to follow. The National Executive is responsible for ensuring that the budget is followed as closely as possible.

Nationally, the Federation operates with an annual budget of approximately \$2 million – an amount slightly smaller than the budget of the Federation's larger member locals. The budget for the 1998-99 fiscal year projected a combined surplus and share purchase in Travel CUTS of \$290,000. Results of the 1998-99 year, as well as an up-to-date picture of the 1999-2000 year will be presented at this meeting for the purposes of revising the 1999-2000 budget.

### 1998-99 MEMBERSHIP FEES COLLECTION

Nearly all member locals have now remitted all fees owed for the 1998-99 year. Unfortunately, some member locals have not yet remitted any membership fees. They are:

- Local 25-Ontario College of Art & Design Students' Union;
- Local 33-Emily Carr Students' Union;
- Local 34-Mount Saint Vincent University Student Union;
- Local 38-Association des étudiant-e-s du Collège Universitaire de Saint-Boniface;
- Local 45-Marine Institute Students' Union; and,
- Local 90-Saskatchewan Indian Federated College Students' Association.

Indications are that some of the Federation's membership fee projections were overly optimistic. In particular, enrolment at universities in Manitoba and Ontario, at which the Federation has member locals, appears to have fallen. Actual combined fees revenue for the year, from Local 8 and Local 37 in Manitoba, is more than \$5,000.00 under the amount budgeted.

On a positive note, fees from some locals in British Columbia, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia and revenue from some programmes have exceeded the budget projections, offsetting the loss of fees from locals in other provinces.

### EXPENDITURES

In general, spending for the year was maintained within the budgetary targets, with the exception of a few spending areas. By far the most significant of these are legal fees and membership referenda, though the National Executive took measures to compensate for the additional costs.

## Finances

### INVESTMENT IN TRAVEL CUTS

Each year, the Federation invests a portion of its surplus in its wholly owned subsidiary, Travel CUTS. This money is invested in order to allow for the continued, orderly expansion of the Company and as a means for the Federation to invest any surpluses it runs. For the 1998-99 fiscal year, the Federation received a nearly nineteen per cent rate of return on its investment, far greater than it would have received through nearly any other instrument of investment.

For the 1998-99 fiscal year, the Federation had budgeted for an investment of \$240,000 in additional shares. However, as revenues were higher than anticipated in a number of areas, the additional funds were used to pay for a portion of the shares which the Federation committed to purchase in the 1996-97 fiscal year, but for which payment had never been made. In that year, the Federation committed to investing \$250,000 but, at the end of the year, had only \$50,000 available to invest.

### Debt Reduction

As recently as three years ago, the Federation had accumulated a long-term debt of more than \$700,000, net of investment in Travel CUTS. Since then, the National Executive has worked to reduce the debt, which is now close to zero. As a result, the Federation has also reduced its interest and bank charges from \$10,000 per year to nearly zero.

### Membership Fee Issues

#### FEE ADJUSTMENTS FOR CPI CHANGE

In 1992, the Federation's membership fee was increased from \$2.00 per student per semester to \$3.00. At the same time, a bylaw was adopted stipulating that, starting in 1996, the fee would be adjusted each August 1 by the rate of change in the Canadian Consumer Price Index during the previous calendar year.

### CPI ADJUSTMENT FOR THE 1999-2000 ACADEMIC YEAR

The following table shows the adjustments which have been made to the national membership fee since the annual adjustments commenced in 1996:

YEAR	CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% OF PREVIOUS YEAR'S CPI	FEDERATION FISCAL YEAR	ADJUSTED FEE
1994	130.7	N/A	1995-96	\$3.00
1995	133.5	102.14%	1996-97	\$3.06
1996	135.6	101.57%	1997-98	\$3.12
1997	137.8	101.62%	1998-99	\$3.16
1998	139.2	101.01%	1999-00	\$3.20

As the table illustrates, the Federation's national membership fee for the current academic year is \$3.20 per student per semester.

The adjustment was calculated in early February when the previous year's consumer price index was announced by Statistics Canada. Notice was sent to member locals immediately thereafter.

#### STATUS OF THE ANNUAL CPI ADJUSTMENTS

Each member local falls into one of following four categories that describes the level of national membership fee it is collecting:

- collecting the correct base fee with all of the annual adjustments for inflation;
- collecting the correct base fee with some but not all of the annual adjustments for inflation;
- collecting the correct base fee but with none of the annual adjustments for inflation; and
- collecting the pre-1992 base fee.

The Federation does not currently possess accurate information on the level of national membership fees being collected by some member locals. Work to compile this information for those member locals is currently ongoing. This information is vital for budgeting purposes and determining which member locals require assistance to ensure that the correct fee is collected.

#### WORK TO ENSURE COLLECTION OF CORRECT BASE MEMBERSHIP FEE

Several member locals continue to collect only the original membership fee of \$2.00 per student per semester, even though it has been seven years since the membership voted that the fee be increased.

For the past two years, the National Executive has actively pursued the matter and some progress has

been made. This fall, Local 44 began collecting the correct base membership fee. The following member locals, however, continue to collect only the pre-1992 level of membership fee:

- Local 01-Carleton University Students' Association
- Local 24-Ryerson Students' Administrative Council
- Local 37-Brandon University Students' Union
- Local 47-University of Western Ontario Society of Graduate Students
- Local 48-University of Windsor Graduate Students' Society
- Local 56-Wilfred Laurier University Graduate Students' Association
- Local 68-York Federation of Students

The National Executive has continued to develop and pursue strategies for overcoming this problem. Since the previous general meeting, the following progress has been achieved:

**Local 24-Ryerson Students' Union**

Since September of 1998, the Federation has been involved in discussions with representatives at Local 24 regarding the implementation of the correct Federation membership fee. Initially, the Local felt that the political climate on the campus would not allow for the implementation of the correct membership fee, but that the climate of the campus could be changed in order to allow for the fee to be increased by fall 1999.

Unfortunately, due to concerns about the University's Board of Governors willingness to increase the fee without a local referendum, the local continues to collect only \$2.00 per student per semester. The Local has, however, scheduled a referendum to increase the fee early in the Winter Semester. The Federation has received assurances from the Local that Federation profile has been sufficiently increased to allow the referendum to pass without difficulty.

**Local 48-University of Windsor Society of Graduate and Professional Students**

In June 1997, the Federation received a letter from the University of Windsor Society of Graduate and Professional Students seeking information pertaining to outstanding Federation membership dues. The September 1997 National Executive meeting resolved that, in the event that the Society indicated its willingness to implement the 1992 increase to the Federation dues during the 1997-98

year, the Federation would not place the local under undue financial hardship as a result of the remittance of outstanding membership dues owed to the Federation.

Although no progress was made at the time, in June of this year, the Federation received an indication from the Local that there was a strong possibility that collection of the correct membership fee would begin in the Winter 2000 Semester. In late October, the Society sent a letter to the University requesting that the correct membership fee be collected. The proposal will be presented to the Board of Governors later this month and the Society does not anticipate that the Board will raise any objections.

As far as National Executive has been able to determine, none of the other member locals which have been collecting only the pre-1992 level of membership fees has initiated, since the previous general meeting, collection of the correct fee.

Uncollected membership fees constitute a significant amount of revenue lost to our Federation. During the 1998-99 fiscal year, there were seven large to medium-size member locals that were still collecting only \$2.00 per student per semester on behalf of the Federation. As the following chart illustrates, over \$140,000 in fee revenue was lost as a result:

MEMBER LOCAL	1998-99 FEES (\$2.00 per)	1998-99 FEES (\$3.16 per)	TOTAL NOT COLLECTED
Local 38	12,761.82	20,163.68	\$7,401.86
Local 01	50,642.00	80,014.36	\$29,372.36
Local 24	46,426.73	73,354.23	\$26,927.50
Local 47	8,821.29	13,937.64	\$5,116.35
Local 44	46,949.31	74,179.91	\$27,230.60
Local 68	83,170.49	131,409.37	\$48,238.88
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>248,771.64</b>	<b>393,059.19</b>	<b>\$144,287.55</b>

**MEMBERSHIP FEE COLLECTION ISSUES**

In May, the University of Ottawa Graduate Students' Association was accepted as a full member of the Federation. Unfortunately, due to a clerical error, the University did not commence collection of Federation fees this fall. The Association has received assurances from the University that students who attended this semester will be charged for two semesters worth of membership fees in the winter 2000 semester. The National Executive anticipates that this will not result in a significant loss of revenue.

## Finances

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Additionally, the Federation will not be receiving significant membership fees from Kwantlen University-College until the fall 2000 Semester. By the time that the referendum results were known, the University-College had already invoiced students for their Winter 2000 fees. These invoices did not include the Federation's membership fee.

### COLLECTION OF OUTSTANDING GENERAL MEETING FEES

For the past year the Federation has been actively pursuing collection of outstanding general meeting delegate fees. Only minimal progress has been made since the previous general meeting. The following is a summary of the amounts owed for the previous four general meetings.

GENERAL MEETING	AMOUNT OWED	AMOUNT COLLECTED	AMOUNT UNPAID
Fall 1997	82,445.90	66,810.91	15,634.99
May 1998	76,770.19	68,177.86	8,592.33
Fall 1998	89,173.26	65,137.06	24,036.20
May 1999	89,823.32	49,409.73	<u>40,413.59</u>
			\$88,677.11

various actions being lumped together on common invoices, with no breakdown included of costs among the actions. Work to correct the mistake is underway. In the meantime, the Federation's legal counsel is now providing breakdowns on new invoices.

Work on the 1998-99 audit has been postponed until the problem from the previous years has been corrected. The National Executive is hopeful that the audit will be completed by mid-December.

### Status of the 1998-99 Audit

Each year, as a requirement of the Canada Corporations Act, the Federation has its financial statements audited to verify their accuracy and to ensure that the Federation is following generally accepted accounting principles. Normally, the audit is presented to the membership for acceptance each November at the Federation's annual general meeting. Unfortunately, the audit for the 1998-99 year is not ready for presentation at this time.

In the past three years, the Federation has incurred significant costs associated with various legal actions. Several of the actions have been cost shared with provincial components and Canadian Universities Travel Service. In the course of preparing the audit, it was discovered that the Federation did not have accurate information on the amounts owed by those provincial components or the Travel Service and that, as a result, the Federation's legal expenses were somewhat overstated.

The problem was a result of the costs for the

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