

THE BRUNSWICKAN

Canada's oldest official student publication

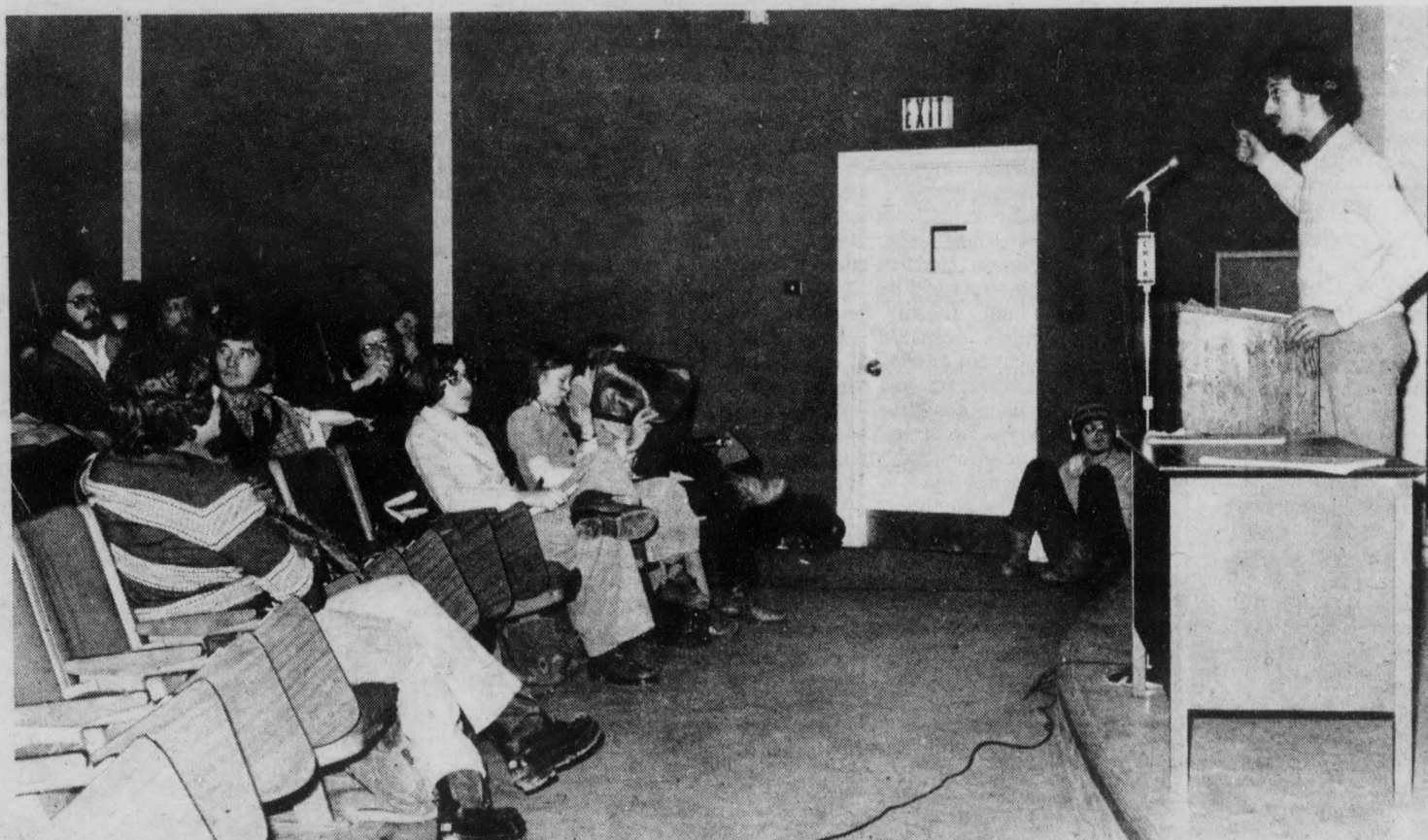
VOL. 110 ISSUE 15

FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 1976

24 PAGES

FREE

Students plan massive demonstration to improve provincial aid program



Atlantic Federation of Students provincial caucus chairperson Mark Giberson makes a point at Monday's meeting while discussing student aid. The meeting resulted in plans for a province-wide demonstration to support AFS demands for improvements in the provincial aid program.

By BURT FOLKINS

The possibility of a student demonstration by New Brunswick university students became more evident following a general meeting on this campus January 12.

The meeting was called by the New Brunswick caucus of the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS) over the student aid problem in this province. The primary purpose was to get support from the student bodies of

St. Thomas University and UNB.

Universite de Moncton, student council general secretary Gerard Blanchard said "we weren't expecting what happened here, ... that the students here (UNB and STU) weren't too much involved".

He said that the number of people present seemed concerned and that our problem seems to be communication with other students.

Regarding U de M, Blanchard said students there would vote in

favor of the demonstration and that referenda have already been held and the students are well informed about student aid on that campus. They feel, however, that they do not have enough pressure to force the government of the province to take action on student aid without the support of other universities, particularly UNB.

Lise Ouellette of St. Louis Maillet in Edmunston said they are not in favor of a general demonstration at the present time because it may damage the success of a federal-provincial contract on student aid to be signed with this province in 1977. However, they will inform their council of what happened at UNB and will hold the referendum on the nineteenth. If it is successful they will follow the other universities in a demonstration against the New Brunswick government.

Presently on the campuses of UNB and STU there is a mass campaign to inform the students of the demonstration and student aid in general. Jim Smith, president of UNB SRC said that both radio and newspapers in southern New Brunswick will be contacted to help in the campaign, as well as the student media services.

Smith will also meet with representatives of the senate and ask that the professors give their support to the demonstration as well as the president and administration of UNB. Final plans and duration of the demonstration are in the making but it could last from one to three days.

Smith said an information centre has been set up in the Student Union Building and that two pamphlets are being printed, one to describe what the demonstration will entail and the other to inform the students on Student Aid. Final notice of the length of the demonstration will be known Thursday Jan. 15.

To date there has been no reaction from the government of New Brunswick as to proposed demonstration. Premier Richard Hatfield and Education Minister, Jean-Pierre Ouellette, are out of the province, and the acting premier, Stewart Brooks, could not be contacted at press time.

Should the referendum be in the affirmative by a majority of the New Brunswick university students, a demonstration on the January 21 will coincide with a general demonstration in the province of Ontario by university students over student aid.

Smith said this is only a coincidence, not a planned action, but if it is the case, it would provide more pressure on the student aid question.

Photo by Steve Patrique

Senate motion supports demonstration

By KD & P

Students gained the support of the University Senate in their quest for student aid improvement last Tuesday.

With the exception of two abstentions all of the members of Senate approved a resolution stating, "That the academic senate of the University of New Brunswick express its support of the principle of improved Student Aid and requests that the professors of both campuses not penalize in any way any student who does not attend classes in order to participate in the province-wide demonstration to a maximum of two consecutive days, supporting the request for improved student aid."

The motion was amended, with

the addition of a two-day duration clause by Professor D.M. Fellows, for the original motion by student Senators Mike Mephram and Randy Hatfield.

As a prelude to motion, President John Anderson said over the past few years, the students and the university have been trying to communicate their dissatisfaction with the present student aid program. Anderson said "possibly that's not the right word. It takes two to dialogue."

In the last four years on at least six occasions, the proposed changes have been put before the Department of Youth, said Mephram. "They've had very little to say to us ... We have followed all of the legal channels and done everything that could be done. We see the demonstration as our last

resort," stated Mephram.

The proposed changes as outlined to the senate are as follows:

That a representative of student interests be seated to government-al policy making bodies dealing with the question of student aid, and that these include one representative from a French language institution and one from an English language institution. Appointments to be made by the N.B. Caucus of A.F.S.

That the maximum loan be set at \$900 and that the remainder be considered a bursary to the total sum of \$2800. Retroactive to September 1, 1975.

That the interest free period for repayment of loans be changed from six months to one year; effective immediately.

That the financial contributions expected from all students be

reduced and that contributions expected from second, third, and fourth year students be uniform, retroactive to September 1, 1975.

That the allocation for living expenses be increased by 25 percent and that this amount be indexed annually to the rate of inflation. Retroactive to September 1, 1975.

The senate sent a letter to the premier supporting the idea of changes in the student aid program. The letter was acknowledged by the premier, who stated that he would see that the requests were considered; nothing happened. A copy was also sent to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission with the same results. "We are ignored apparently by the provincial government and the Maritime Higher Education Commission," said Sharp.