

AFS pertinent issue this summer

In an interview with the Brunswick this week student union president, Steve Berube, discussed his various activities and concerns since the end of the last academic year. The discussion covered problems with AFS and related affairs of Atlantic universities, lack of sensitivity of the provincial government and other matters.

By GERRY LASKEY

Berube expressed very negative sentiments in regards to developments within the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS) this summer. He described the May 8th AFS conference as "really a rather useless conference". He said that the delegates were more concerned with constitutional wrangling and "backroom" politicking than discussing the issues. UNB is not an AFS member but attended as an observer.

Controversy flowed from the resignation of the AFS treasurer and its handling by the AFS

executive. Berube said he and Mt. Allison student union president Fraser Seeley communicated with many union presidents concerning the internal troubles of AFS and the lack of communication between the executive and the member institutions. Berube said it was "just one thing after another" with AFS. He said very pessimistic notes were sounded by other presidents in correspondence with him over the summer.

Berube attended a conference of Atlantic student presidents held at Dalhousie University in August where, he said, "It was pretty well decided that AFS was dead." He said that many of the members remaining in AFS had agreed to try to get out in referendums this fall. He voiced his dissatisfaction with the typical rhetoric and lack of real direction by organizations such as AFS. "This whole idea of sitting down behind the 'student movement' is bullshit," he said.

Out of the Dalhousie meeting came a new regional Atlantic Communications Network which Berube described as "a very loosely structured means by which we can get together" similar to the New Brunswick Coalition of Students. (an organization which

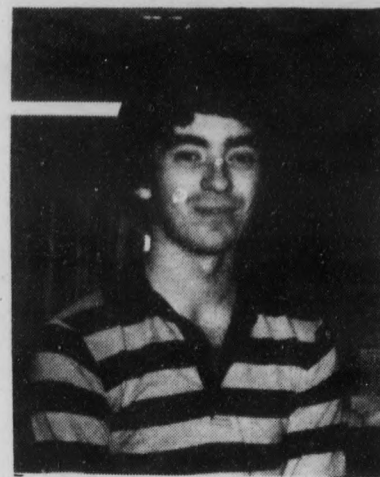
began last fall). He said that he got far more out of meeting with other unions in this way in regards to campus activities, putting pressure on governments and other things than at any formal conference.

Berube seemed fairly optimistic about the new organization.

Berube met with Premier Hatfield to discuss several questions. He said that "there are never any results coming out of Dick Hatfield," and added that "if he calls an election he may be able to look at them for another four years." One question discussed was the appointment of a student representative on the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission. Nova Scotia already has a student MPHEC member. New Brunswick has not decided on such a move even though all other categories of representation on the MPHEC (eg. administration) are based on one rep for each province.

The appointment of a student from only one province alters this structure.

Berube also had strong criticisms of Youth Minister Jean-Pierre Oullette. "I'm really very dissatisfied with the minister," he said. He



SRC PRESIDENT, STEVE BERUBE

said that during his term as Youth Minister Oullette has done very little for the students. He added "I don't think he knows the problems of students. They should get him out and give the students a break." He said the minister seems to ignore the student advisory committee on student aid and wants the students to do all the work. He complained about never being able to meet with Oullette despite attempts this spring and summer. "They seem to want to meet with us only after policies are made," he said. Berube concluded his remarks about the minister, "I hate to call him incompetent, but..."

Speaking of the alumni Berube said, "I think it's time the Alumni Association realized its time to stop thinking of erecting memorials and plaques." He said he thought the alumni should be more attuned to the needs of students. He mentioned that one

alumni class is looking into a scholarship fund as a project. He also noted that the university scholarship fund was increased by \$25,000 this year.

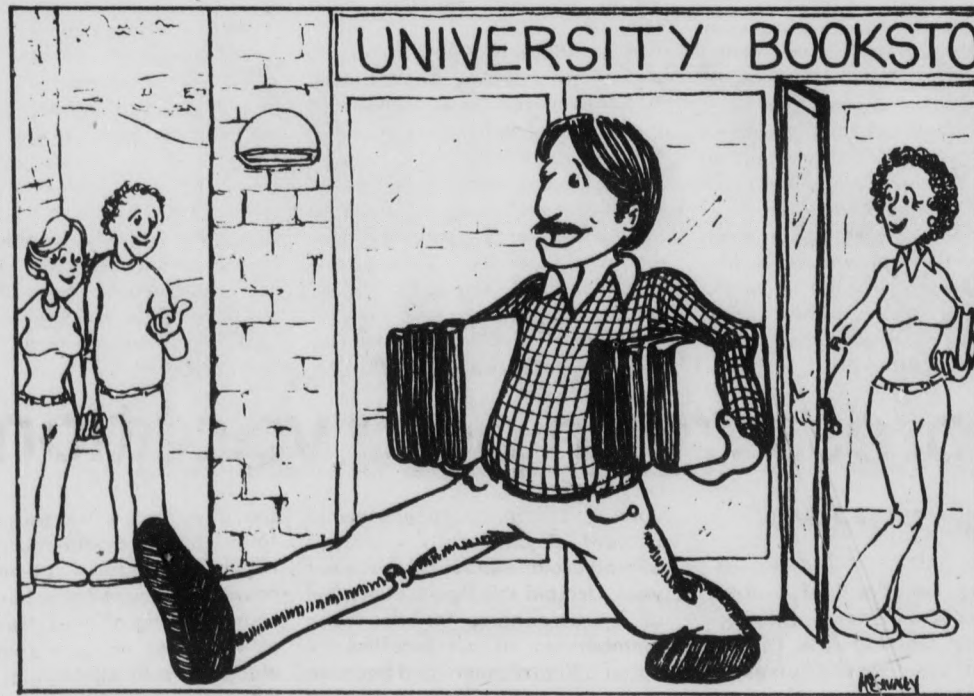
Turning to financial matters Berube said, "We look a lot better off than in the past. I'm almost certain there will be some surplus." He added that he handled all entertainment for orientation. He also said, "CSL (Campus Services Ltd.) looks like it will be a profit making venture this year."

Berube explained that the former union bookkeeper, Hilda Scott, resigned in the spring for personal reasons not related to her job. The new bookkeeper is Doris Wu.

Berube spoke about the work of several committees. He said that the committee looking into different fees for on and off-campus students recommended that it was not feasible. The uniform grading committee has met with some success as the School of Administration has implemented uniform grades. Berube said that the quality of education committee of the senate "could become to students THE most important committee on campus." He said the three faculty members have been appointed and the student rep is yet to be named. He urged students to get involved in this and other Senate committees as vacancies are forthcoming.

Berube also attended the conference of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) but was not impressed with the results. He said the AUCC was becoming just a "presidents' club."

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