

"Where would you be without students?"

The Gateway

"Back in my office."
-Eric Geddes

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Protest fruitless

by Kim St. Clair

The Board of Governors passed a recommendation calling for a 25% tuition fee increase last Friday, despite the protests of over 2000 students who rallied outside University Hall during the Board's coffee break.

The crowd began to assemble about 10:00 am and had swelled to its maximum by 10:30 at which time Eric Geddes, Chairman of the Board, and Harry Gunning, President of the university came out of the meeting to speak to the students.

Before the speeches from the Board officials, the crowd chanted slogans such as "we can't afford it" or "we have a voice." During the speeches, several individuals shouted obscenities.

In addressing the crowd, Dr. Gunning said, "I was deeply impressed by the turn-out. I can assure you that I will report this back to the Board. But I would like to make it perfectly clear that the proposal for the fee increase has been done with great reluctance on our part. We will do our very best to take into consideration your concerns when taking the matter before the Board."

Chairman Geddes directed blame for the fee hike proposal on the provincial government, whose 11% freeze on funding has forced the university to adopt budgeting measures. "We have pleaded for exemption from that freeze, and the government is simply not prepared to make an exception for education," he stated.

"We appreciate the reason for your demonstration today. Your representation will be given full consideration," he added.

Both Gunning and Geddes pointed out that all protests against the funding cutbacks made by the university to the government have met with negative responses.

SU President Graeme Leadbeater also addressed the crowd and charged that "the Board has not done an adequate job in opposing the 11% ceiling. If they decide to increase tuitions they will be insulating the provincial government from criticism of the 11% ceiling."

Leadbeater expressed concern over fee hikes being implemented alongside proposals for quotas on non-quota faculties, which together would serve to limit accessibility to university.

His views supplemented those of SU executive member Terry Sharon, who spoke to the crowd as it assembled, saying that turning to students alone will not eliminate the cause of the fee increase. "A fee hike will not end the problem," he said. "Fee increases will come again and again."

Both the University of Lethbridge and the University of Calgary have passed recommendations for tuition fee increases.

News analysis

Fee hike a foregone decision

by Greg Neiman

There seemed to be little relation between what happened outside University Hall last Friday and what happened later inside, when the Board of Governors discussed, then approved a 25% tuition increase proposition to the provincial government.

President Gunning and Board chairman Eric Geddes, forsook their mid-meeting coffee break to appear at the rally, reiterate prepared addresses given at last Tuesday's forum, and then return to their unfinished business inside.

The tuition increase question was one of the most foregone of issues the executive could ever hope to raise a protest rally against. Although debate at the Board level lasted an hour and a half, there was little likelihood the three students representatives Graeme Leadbeater, Jack Girton, and Gary Draper, could sway even one vote against the proposition.

One Board member even took the time during a question period to scold Leadbeater for his "negative approach" to the issue in his SU brief. She said that to raise considerations of the poor minority on campus, and the prospect of high student unemployment next summer "in the province with



the lowest unemployment in Canada", was unjustified.

"Each of you has the opportunity to come to the university. The decision is yours and ours to come here," she said, emphasising that students have the responsibility to pay once they decide to enter university.

Girton's plan to spread the projected budget deficit across the entire university community as opposed to partial rectification via tuition hikes received nominal consideration. Girton said the Grad Students' Association was willing to support an actual cut in the increases of TA salaries if academic and non academic staff would bear a similar brunt of the university's hard times.

But it was clear that minds were made up well in advance of the meeting, and that the debate

could have been foregone completely for all the changes it could have effected.

Only three votes were registered against the proposal, being those of the students.

One university administrator, vp (academic) Dr. Myer Horowitz, did express a desire to keep tuitions low, but financial conditions imposed by the provincial government forced him to support the increase proposal.

"If only one student is not here because of the cost, it's of concern to the university," he said.

About the only unanimous stand the Board took was on the issue of where to lay blame: on the provincial government.

Although advanced education minister Bert Hohol told the Federation of Alberta Students

that tuition increases were not a policy of the provincial government, its September 1975 brief outlining the intention of the 11% ceiling mentioned a possibility that "tuitions may be increased".

Geddes, Gunning, and the rest of the Board repeated many times before and during the meeting that a continued lobby on the ceiling although desirable would be fruitless and futile.

The government remains firm in its stance on the 11% spending guideline, and no hope was expressed at the meeting that it would change.

The tuition increase will become law as soon as the provincial government approves it, and the policy that may force continued hardship on the university will probably likewise continue.

HUB sale awaits investigation end

HUB has not yet been transferred to the university administration. Further negotiations with the SU and studies into the physical structure and maintenance of the building are being conducted prior to finalization of the transaction.

In a report to the Board of Governors Friday, Eric Geddes,

Board chairman, outlined the status of negotiations between the university and the Students' Union regarding the SU's request to be rid of HUB.

Residential policy, policy concerning commercial leases, personnel transfer, and mortgage transfer have been more or less settled, he said, but a study into the structural

condition of the building was being conducted which "remains as the most important unresolved item."

HUB, long the financial bane of the Students' Union was, in the opinion of the SU executive, a hindrance to the organisation's ability to serve student needs.

Active participation in housing enterprises is not the business of a Students' Union, says our executive, which formalized its intent to fob HUB onto the University in a letter dated Nov. 17.

Negotiations had been in effect since Sept. 30 to formalize a transfer which would leave the SU with its licenced lounge, billiards hall, and record store - box office, said the report.

The transfer, if settled on during negotiations, is not final until both Students' Council and the Board of Governors make approval.

Geddes, when asked by a Board member, said he "wouldn't like to comment" on when negotiations would be completed.

A healthy student...

Disease can strike at any time.

Because of this, the Board of Governors recently approved establishment of an optional intersession fee of \$3.00 for use of the University Health Service.

The fee covers both graduate and undergraduate students for the intersession period of May 1st to August 31st.

Under existing arrangements a student has the option of paying \$10.00 for certain extended benefits provided by the University

Health Service - in the case of an undergraduate the fee covers the winter session, while graduate students pay for a "session". No provision is made in the calendar for the intersession period, and this proposal bridges the gap in coverage.

It is endorsed by the Director, the Student Health Service Advisory Committee, and the Graduate Students' Association.

The \$3.00 fee will be collected by the University Health Service at the time of registration. It covers all or any part of the intersession.



Geddes and Gunning (grinning).

Photos Mike Amerongen.