

As the noose tightens . . .

Austerity and the student

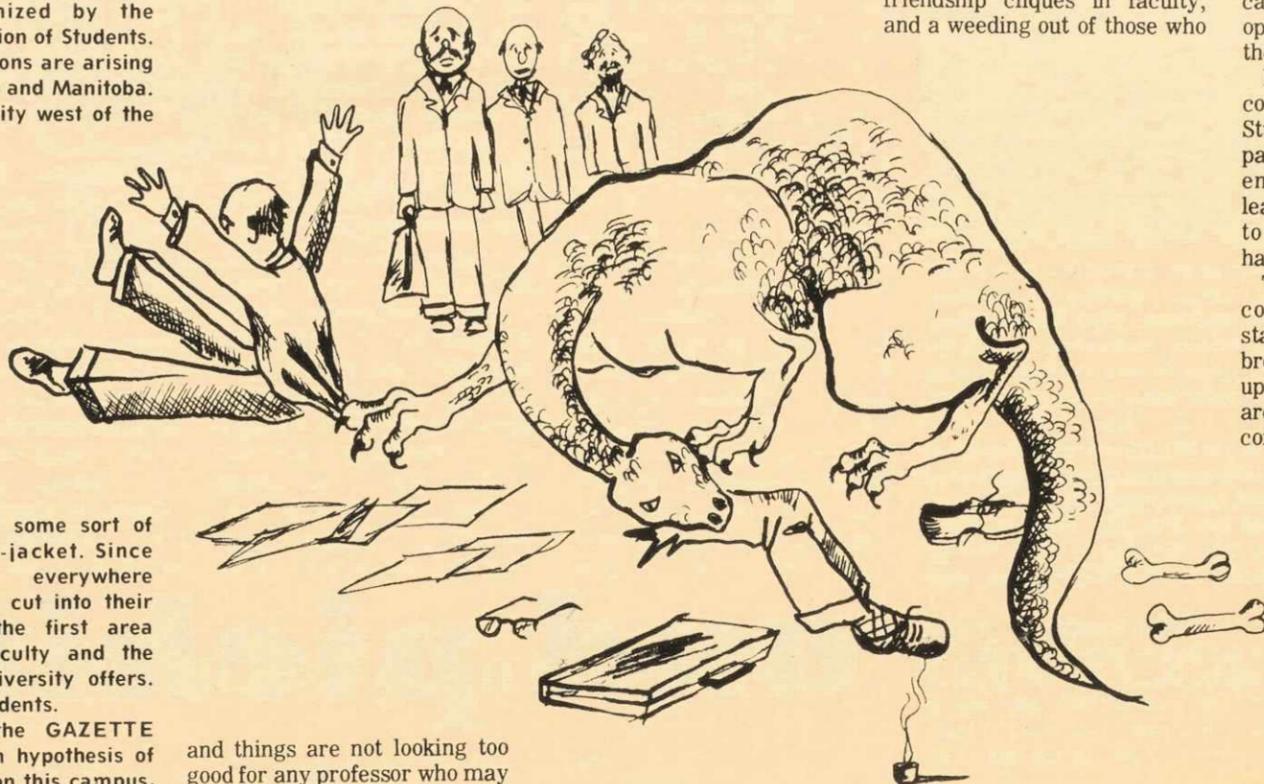
This is the first of a series of articles on the University and the economic crisis now facing it. This situation is not unique to Dalhousie. Last year in Ontario, the Davis government arbitrarily forced every university in the province to raise tuition. The result of this decision produced a fees boycott, organized by the Ontario Federation of Students. Similar situations are arising in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Every university west of the

for the universities for the upcoming year. This year, however, the statement takes on added significance. Professors' contracts are not being renewed, political in-fighting is rampant in many departments,

the general Bachelor of Arts programme has dropped by about 500 students. The Bachelor of Science degree has taken up most of the slack. So, while faculty may not lose staff, it would appear that individual departments will certainly face

This trend is already surfacing in the Sociology department, where at least two professors have not had their contracts renewed. A third is expected to be dismissed next year. All the signs, therefore, are pointing to a tightening up of the friendship cliques in faculty, and a weeding out of those who

extremes of thought at Dalhousie, then students should be prepared to resist such measures. Student evaluation of professors could play an active role in determining just who will go and who will stay. Unfortunately, the only people capable of organizing student opinion are the course unions or the Student Union. Faculty has never encouraged course unions. The Student Union has tended in the past to concentrate only on entertaining the students, leaving the academic problems to "those best capable of handling the problem." The Student Union's own course evaluations, to be started sometime after March break, have potential to shore up weaknesses in this neglected area. However, it is one thing to compile statistics, and another



Maritimes is in some sort of financial strait-jacket. Since Administrations everywhere are reluctant to cut into their own budgets, the first area affected are faculty and the courses the University offers. The loser — students.

This week, the GAZETTE presents its own hypothesis of events to come on this campus, what to expect if they occur, and just how we might lose.

Everyone in faculty and Administration was aware of how far the austerity programme had already advanced before Dr. Hicks, President of Dalhousie, made his "Herald"-ed announcement on the situation. Petty measures, such as professors cutting down on the number of times that they could use the photocopier, had become standard procedure. Teaching assistants, where available, were being overworked.

Dr. Hicks' statement really was no surprise. He is always expected to make some public announcement just before the Nova Scotia government announces the level of assistance

and things are not looking too good for any professor who may decide to petition the department for more funds for his or her particular priorities.

The facts of economic austerity dictate that some drastic cutbacks are necessary, somewhere. Vice-President (Academic) MacKay concedes this point. "Financial problems may dictate cutbacks," MacKay states, but adds, "No faculty will find itself with less staff next year than it has at the present moment."

This statement by MacKay may seem slightly euphemistic, particularly if one examines enrolment statistics. The Faculty of Arts and Science experienced a slight decrease in enrolment this year, of approximately 150 students. However, those registered in

cutbacks. What will be the criteria used to determine who is to be fired (or not rehired)? Further, are the non-rehirings going to fall mostly on the shoulders of the non-conformists?

To the second question, Vice-President MacKay answers no. He maintains that all non-tenured professors have signed their contracts for three or four years. They cannot expect to be rehired, unless competency can be demonstrated.

However, the present methods of assessment fall only within the jurisdiction of faculty and administrative positions, all of whom could be less than objective, particularly if political beliefs somehow became challenged.

just don't want to belong. The university is supposedly a community where there is a freedom to exchange intellectual ideas. If examination of professors becomes an exercise in the purging of the

to argue with Administration to preserve impartiality and fairness in professorial hearings. As yet, no student leader has shown that they are prepared to take up that part of the task.

**Next Week:
Sociology, English,
Romance Languages, et al**

**Who's Going?
Why?**

**Who's Not Going?
Why Not?**

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