

Tell me Ronnie...

...what do you think of gun control now?

Grants, not loans: FAS

by Mike Walker

The Canadian student loan system should be dismantled and replaced with a pure grant system, the Federation of Alberta Students decided on the weekend.

About 40 delegates to the FAS annual general meeting approved in principle a call by the National Union of Students (NUS) for an all-grant student aid program for students demonstrating true need.

The program could be paid for, NUS says, by abolishing the current tax deduction for tuition fees and the \$50 per month deduction for attendance at a post-secondary institution.

Federal government officials have estimated that abolition of the deductions could pay for most of the cost of turning the loan program into an all-grant program.

The delegates, five of whom were from the U of A, noted that most students who had large enough incomes to claim the deductions do not need student

loans, while most students qualifying for loans do not make enough money to pay appreciable taxes, and thus do not benefit from the deductions.

In addition, the \$50 per month deduction is transferable to parents of students, who often claim it themselves.

Some delegates claimed it was unfair to force poorer students to shoulder \$15,000 debt loads to go to university, while wealthier students and their parents, who don't need help, cash in on income tax deductions.

Delegates realized, though, that governments would not accept an all-grant system. They agreed to call in the short run for a combined loan-grant system.

The current loan-remission system converts a portion of a student's original loan to a grant only if the student meets an arbitrary summer savings requirement and, usually, if his or her parents contribute to his or her expenses.

Students not gaining

Status quo upheld

OTTAWA (CUP) — The National Union of Students (NUS) has levelled strong criticism against a government report for its failure to deal with fundamental problems in the student aid program.

The report of the federal provincial Task Force on Student Assistance said loans, as opposed to grants, encourage drop-outs and are less attractive to lower income students.

One in eight students have problems repaying their loans, according to the report.

Despite these findings, the task force made no recommendations for changes to the loan based program.

According to NUS researcher Jeff Parr, "The task force was selective in its interpretations and conclusions. They do not see the problems with loans as significant."

In a published response to the task force report, NUS has called for future student aid programs based solely on grants and distributed entirely on the basis of need.

The NUS response calls for a major overhaul of the assessment of financial needs under the current system.

The NUS response also criticizes the task force's failure to deal with parental or spousal contribution requirements.

Parental contributions are currently mandatory. Students not receiving parental or spousal help are not compensated.

According to the NUS response, "Only the actual amount of parental and spousal contributions should be counted as resources for the purposes of calculating students' needs."

Parr criticized the report for "its total refusal to look at cost allowances for student aid program."

The report says costs allowed

under the program have kept pace with inflation.

"This tells me nothing," said Parr. No assessment of whether the costs allowed were ever adequate has been made," he continued.

Board of Governors rep quits U of A

by Alison Thomson and Peter Michalyszyn

Ken Lawson-Williams, elected by acclamation as the Board of Governors student representative this spring, has resigned from the Board and withdrawn from the university.

Lawson-Williams left the

Lethbridge Board helps fight cutbacks

CUP - the U of Lethbridge board of governors, on a rare occasion, have thrown their support behind the students' union and national student campaign aimed at halting possible funding cuts to Canadian post-secondary education.

The federal government is considering altering the established programs financing (EPF) agreement which provided \$2.7 billion to provincial education in 1979-80, and because of the program's uncertainty, national and provincial student groups are campaigning.

Board chair Phil North said Alberta may not feel the effects of EPF re-negotiations as much as other provinces, but added, "the fears and principles are the same here."

Lorraine Mitchell, students' councillor and Alberta rep to the National Union of Students, said, "Essentially we're asking for

university because of low marks, a result, he says, of his many commitments on campus.

He was Students Union rep to the Board, a member of the Priorities and Planning Committee, the Discipline, Law and

board support based on our mutual concerns."

"We're seeing a situation here where education is being caught in the middle, and a situation where education could be the fatality," she said. The motion passed unanimously with little discussion.

Mitchell said student organizations have always criticized EPF, because the provincial allocations are not used exclusively for education.

She said, for example, the Nova Scotia government has in the past used EPF monies for road-building.

In the present discussions the federal government is looking for a higher profile than what has been exhibited before said Mitchell.

But she said the recently formed parliamentary committee is not dealing specifically with post-secondary education.



In its efforts to subvert the Canadian way of life, the American capitalist state is importing light, efficient frisbee devices to keep U of A students' thoughts away from the economics of nationalism. Over to you, Pierre.

photo Bill Ingles



Ken Lawson-Williams

the concerns of the students, and the university as a whole."

Speculation on who may be appointed to the Board position on an interim basis is rampant. Names being mentioned include current Board rep Mary Ann Gillies, outgoing SU vp external Kris Farkas, and former vp academic Chanchal Bhattacharya.

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