

Survival in the 80's

Task force suggests no cut-backs

Ottawa (CUP) — A Parliamentary Task Force examining transfer payments from the federal to provincial governments has recommended that no cuts be made in funding for post-secondary education.

The report of the Federal Task Force on Fiscal Arrangements was released on Monday August 31. It declares the government cannot reduce its transfer payments without serious damage to the post-secondary education, health, and social service systems in the provinces.

The report recommended the current level of funding for these programs be maintained, despite a threat by Liberal Finance Minister Alan MacEachen to cut 1.5 billion dollars from the federal cash transfers to provinces through which these programs are financed.

The Task Force, composed of four Liberal, two Progressive Conservative and one New Democratic MPs, travelled across the country receiving briefs from interested groups.

Representatives of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) in Ottawa and the Regroupement Des Associations Etudiantes University hearings.

In their submissions, both student groups claimed a decrease in funding by the federal government would result in a decrease in the quality and accessibility of post-secondary education in Canada.

CFS also recommended that the federal government develop a central set of goals and objectives for post-secondary education across the country.

The Task Force rejected this idea, claiming that since education is a provincial concern, "Any

federal attempt to legislate national standards for post-secondary education would be unacceptable."

The report however, does suggest "that early attention be given to the definition of purposes in post-secondary education that are of concern to all governments. In this connection, priority consideration should be given to the need for more highly qualified manpower in the 1980's, and the confirmation of existing commitments to student mobility and quality of access to post-secondary education for Canadians."

The Task Force Report also recognizes the need for improvements in the Student Assistance Plan, and recommends "that priority attention be given to early adjustment of existing programs that will ensure that needy students have realistic levels of assistance in the light of rising living and other costs, and reduced opportunities for summer earnings."

The Task Force also commented on recent increases in the differential tuition fees applied to International students by various provinces. The report states: "We are concerned that this practice could have an adverse effect on Canada's international objectives, such as assisting developing countries through providing education and training for their citizens. It is also in the interest of long-term Canadian economic, political and social development, both at home and abroad, to ensure that foreign students continue to be welcomed in Canada for educational purposes."

In the meantime, the CFS is organizing a campaign to pressure the federal government to accept the recommendations of the Task Force.



'I'm terribly sorry sir, but in the process of cutting out programs for the poor we inadvertently cut out a program for the rich.'

Revolution, says committee

TORONTO (CUP) — The report of the Committee on the Future Role of the Universities is probably the most significant document on the university system in the last twenty years. Some of its recommendations if adopted would entail a restructuring on the same massive scale as in the transformation that followed the second world war. Here are some highlights of that report.

Goals of the University System
"The Committee begins by re-affirming the objectives for universities stated by the Ontario Council on University Affairs (OCUA);

"To develop a more educated populace, to educate and train people for the professions, to

provide study at the highest intellectual level, to conduct basic and applied research, including development and evaluation, and to provide service to the community."

Funding and Re-Structuring

"To meet fully the objectives...the Committee recommends funding increases during the 1980's at a level which equals the rate of inflation and meets the cost of faculty student advancement, and provides an additional \$25 million per annum for equipment replacement.

The following structuring is proposed; Ontario would have one comprehensive cable offering a very broad range of high quality programs at all

levels...four full-service universities offering more restricted programs...(and) four or five special purpose institutions."

"Of the remaining institutions, some will have to be closed, and the rest will have to be restructured in keeping with the accessibility objective."

"The temptation might be to allow the universities and the province to 'muddle through' the next decade in the same manner they have for the past four or five. This is superficially easy, but will ensure the demise of quality universities."



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