

B.C. says 'no way' to foreign student fee

VANCOUVER (CUP) Less than a year and a half after his first attempt, a British Columbia member of the legislative assembly is reopening his campaign to impose differential fees upon international students.

In a letter published in a local community newspaper March 14, MLA Jack Davis claimed that charging visa students full cost fees will save the province between \$20 and \$30 million annually, and free up space for "our own young people."

But statistics from the three B.C. universities indicate the savings, if any, cannot approach the \$20 million mark, and Davis offers no sources for his figures and comments.

"The scam that these B.C. educators are engaged in is selling our low fee university education to well-to-do foreigners,"

states the letter. "We'll foot the bill for everyone's university education regardless of their wealth or where they come from," it says.

"If our young people are slow in signing (at university) they will find all the places taken. Result: native British Columbians with a grade 12 diploma may be turned away while foreign students whose registration is organized for them are attending classes in record numbers."

But there are only 1,863 visa students attending the three B.C. universities this year: 832 at the University of British Columbia, or 3.48 per cent of the student population there; 213 at the University of Victoria, or 2.14 per cent of the student population; and 818 at Simon Fraser University, or 10.1 of the university's student population. And

there are less than 1,000 international students in the community college system.

UVic's Jim Currie, a presidential assistant and head analyst, said the total subsidy to visa students could be estimated by multiplying the number of students by \$5,000 which is the approximate subsidy per B.C. student. Under this method, the top limit for visa student subsidies would be \$15 million.

Currie said studies to provide accurate figures have not taken place. SFU's John Chase, head of the university's statistics and analysis branch, agreed Davis' claims were unsupported.

"If the visa students weren't there, would their spaces be filled by Canadian students? I suspect not," he said March 15. "How much would costs be reduced? No one knows."

Davis has advocated the imposition of differential fees for almost two years, despite cold rebuffs from the provincial Social Credit government. A report written in late 1980, intended for discussion in the legislature, but never heard, caused a furor when it was instead distributed to university heads and boards of governors.

In that report, Davis said foreign students are getting a "free ride" at Canadian universities and prevent "our own people" from attending.

Several groups charged Davis was racist because his statistics, which he admitted were not sound, were based predominantly on Asian students and student appearance, not their passport.

"I'm not a racist, I'm being entirely logical. Call me a

nationalist if you like," Davis said at that time.

Former UBC student affairs vice-president Erich Vogt called Davis' first report "inexcusably wrong." Said administration president Doug Kenny: "(The report) is founded on wrong premises. It's founded on wrong facts."

Currently, none of B.C.'s public post-secondary institutions charges differential fees. SFU considered implementing differential fees as part of its retrenchment program, but rejected it after a few weeks of deliberation.

Davis, a former Liberal cabinet minister, is also well known for his conviction in 1978 for theft when he exchanged first class plane tickets for economy and kept the difference.

No Huckleberry Finn

(RNR/CUP) — April has been designated "I read banned books" month by the American society of journalists and authors in an effort to dramatize what they consider to be a rising tide of censorship in the United States.

In the last six months of 1981,

the society says more than 100 titles were removed or threatened with banishment from schools and public libraries. Among the titles were "Huck-

leberry Finn", Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice" and "The Fixer" by Bernard Malamud.

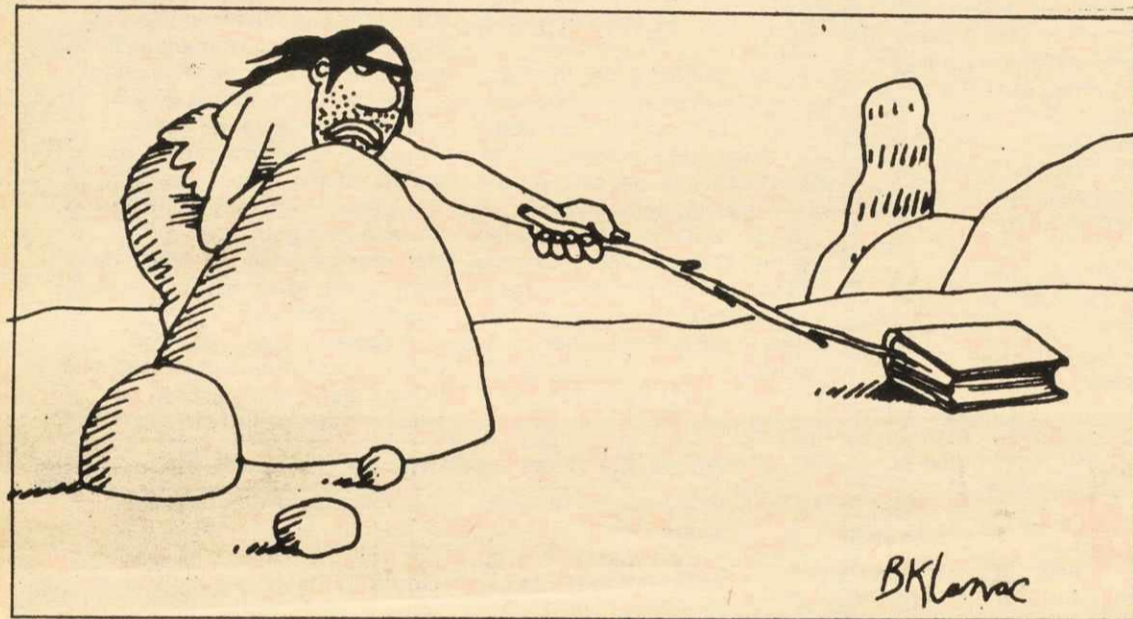
Coin epidemic

(RNR/CUP) University of Iowa health officials are reporting a minor epidemic involving students who have to have 25-cent pieces removed from their digestive tracts.

The culprit, doctors say, is a drinking game called "quarters,"

which requires students to drink from a beer mug containing a 25-cent piece and catch the coin in their mouths.

But so far 15 to 20 students have missed and required treatment at the school infirmary.



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