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Phase out tuition fees - Gibeault

continued from p.3

There seems to be a good case for rationalization in major faculties. We may also want to co-operate with some of our sister provinces.

Gateway: Are tuition fees too high, too low, or about right?

Gibeault: It's lower in Alberta than many places. But we're not as low as, say, Sweden. I think trying to squeeze students will lead to a situation like the States where if you don't get a scholarship you're shut out of luck.

We haven't come to that, but we're moving that way.

If the minimum wage isn't raised the students can't make any money. Some students graduate with virtually a house mortgage to pay off.

Gateway: Philosophically, you oppose tuition. But New Democrat governments in B.C., Saskatchewan, and Manitoba haven't abolished tuition. Is the Alberta party at variance with other provincial New Democrats?

Gibeault: They may have different priorities than us. But it has been our policy for some time to look at reducing tuition fees. Maybe not at once, maybe a phasing out.

Tuition directly impacts on accessibility.

"We don't want Texaco and the Royal Bank setting priorities."

Gateway: Would the NDs try to direct the system toward the goal of diversifying the economy?

Gibeault: Post-secondary education is integral to economic diversification. If we're serious about having something to take over from energy and agriculture, government must show leadership.

It is, however, inappropriate for government to tell the institutions what to do, and when.

Gateway: But doesn't that already happen? The government already

uses 'conditional grants' for this project but not that one.

Gibeault: To a degree. There is a responsibility for government to train people for the jobs of the 1990s.

"The selection process is to look down a list of P.C. youth."

Gateway: Access touches upon Student Aid. The government indicates that Alberta has the second richest program of aid in the nation. What would New Democrats do to change the system?

Gibeault: Did the Minister also mention that last year they reduced the Student Aid pool 10.5 percent? I'm trying to get a feeling for the impact on ordinary students.

I think the whole idea of the \$1000 exemption is a mistake. I'm finding that it's an incentive to ask for more money than they need — it's a negative influence.

There are also special groups with special needs. Married students need some special attention.

Gateway: Living allowances from the Student Finance Board are significantly lower than the national poverty line. Would the New Democrats move them upwards towards the poverty line?

Gibeault: That's just what the U of C's SU VP External just told me. I think it reflects that better student input is needed on setting the living allowance.

The way it is now, the students on the SFB are appointed by the Minister. What I've heard is that the selection process is to look down a list of P.C. youth. There is no accountability there.

Should we be training any more petroleum engineers for example?

Gateway: The institutions have dug themselves a number of holes financially. One of the biggest is that faculty is getting older. Assistant

prof become associates, associates become full professors.

Would the NDs move to provide the institutions with financial flexibility needed? Some US state universities, for example, have established maximum tenure ratios.

Gibeault: That's an interesting question — we'll have to study it.

But tenure is a concept vital to academics.

I know too many work environments where creativity is stifled by the fear of speaking out — without tenure it is unlikely to have the creativity needed in an academic environment.

Gateway: Standard question for socialists — do deficits matter?

Gibeault: I think deficits do matter — we have to be responsible and say how we'll pay for things.

We've identified \$750 million in provincial government programs that are fat, or could be postponed.

"I think deficits do matter."

Gateway: That's a quarter of Alberta's \$3 billion annual deficit...

Gibeault: We also proposed \$1.2 billion adjustments in taxes, mainly corporate adjustments — that's two billion.

Gateway: So if the NDs were in power for twenty years we could expect balanced budgets over the twenty years?

Gibeault: That would be the goal certainly — extended periods of deficits would put us in a position similar to the Federal Government.

Gateway: Summer jobs — student employment — what would the New Democrats do?

Gibeault: I'd like to look at enhanced summer employment. \$5.50 an hour for STEP jobs makes it hard to save money.

There is a lot of work to do in terms of reforestation and environmental jobs.

Gateway: What's a budget number? How much would it cost to do the job you want to do?

Gibeault: That's something I want to get a handle on. I'm not sure of the number.

Gateway: What types of jobs would you like to provide? Do you like programs which provide incentives for private sector firms to provide jobs?

"The goal is full employment."

Gibeault: Current wage subsidies to private sector? Well, I don't think public sector should subsidize the private sector. If you've got a product to provide — provide it, pay people a reasonable wage — and price it accordingly.

I don't like the idea of subsidizing jobs in the private sector.

Gateway: What is an acceptable level of student unemployment?

Gibeault: If I'm a student and don't have a job that's unacceptable.

I guess the goal is full employment.

I don't have faith in the current government to have the political will.

Gateway: Would the NDs have the political will to go for full employment?

Gibeault: It would be a strong priority. Our party caucus is considerably younger than the government. We have that value that education is a priority.

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Sexual harassment is unwanted attention of a sexual nature, often with an underlying element of threat or coercion. Sexual harassment may occur between employer-employee, between professor-student, or between student-student.

If you need advice about a sexual harassment situation you can seek help from your association or union, or you can reach any member of the President's Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment (PACSH) for confidential advice by telephoning 432-TALK. The members of PACSH are:

(academic staff) Dr. Dianne Kieran, Chair of PACSH
Faculty of Home Economics
Dr. Paul Hegler
Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine

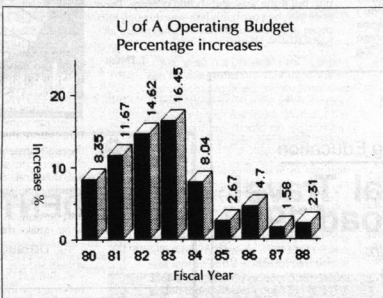
(non-academic staff) Mr. Tim Broadbent, Vice-Chair of PACSH
Department of Planning and Development
Mrs. Ellen Kull
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(undergraduate students) Faculty of Law
Mr. W. Wiley Thompson
Faculty of Medicine

(graduate students) Mrs. Margaret Day
Faculty of Arts
Mr. Michael Mernady
Faculty of Home Economics

The President's Advisory Committee on Sexual Harassment office is located in 2-1 University Hall. You can drop in anytime from 8:30 to 4:30 to talk with Ellen Schoeck Solomon, Coordinator of PACSH, or to be put in touch with a member of PACSH.

talk line telephone 432-TALK
(during working hours) 432-8255



CANCELLATION OF CLASSES: NOTICE TO STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS

The Executive Committee of General Faculties Council has approved a request from the Students' Union that classes be cancelled from 12 noon to 1 p.m. on **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16** and not on Wednesday, February 12. Classes are cancelled so that students can attend the Students' Union Election Forum.