

NSU - Decrease Loans, Increase Grants

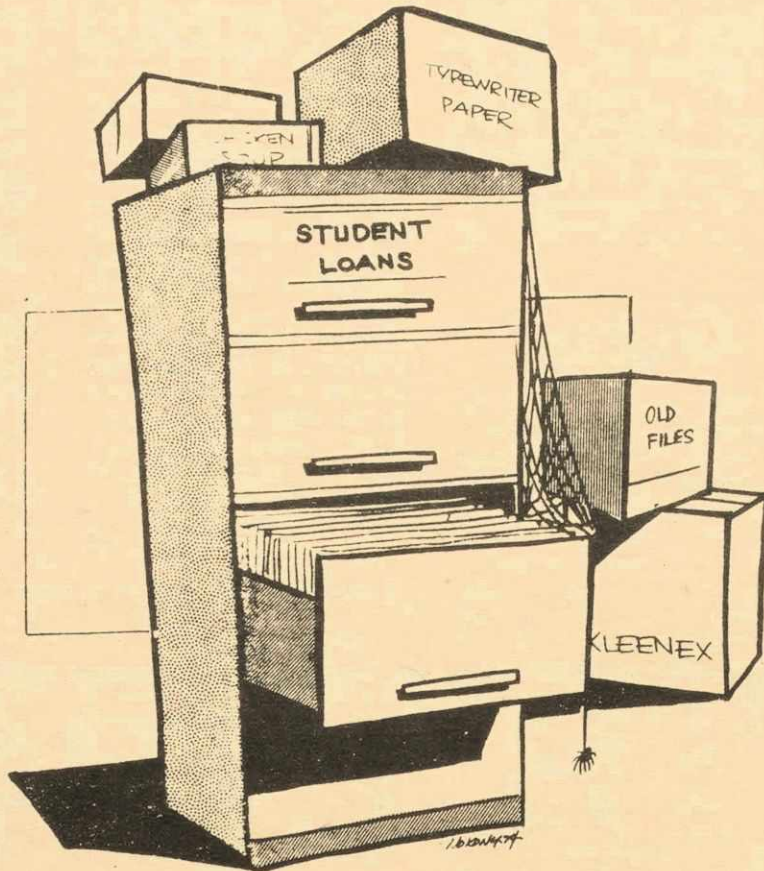
OTTAWA (CUP) - The National Union of Students (NUS) campaign for a better Canada Student Loan Plan (CSLP) is in full swing in all parts of the country.

The campaign is working on two levels. Nationally it will try to implement changes in the CSLP and provincially it will push for modifications in student funding plans.

"While NUS is striving for several main policies, the main purpose of the campaign will be to decrease students' financial liabilities by reducing the loan portion and not the grant portion of student assistance programs," said NUS National Office staff member, Hilda Creswick.

The NUS campaign comes at a crucial time as many provincial education ministers have been discussing increasing the loan ceilings for student aid programs. Also the federal government will be reviewing its entire relationship with CSLP next year.

Another main aim of the NUS campaign will be to push for standardized financial aid programs across the country. Since education is a provincial responsibility, each province sets its own criteria for loans and the amounts



of the loans paid out.

The federal government gives out money for the loan portion of a student aid grant while the provinces look after the bursary portion.

The NUS campaign is being run at the campus

level. The main policies of the campaign, financing, and timetabling were decided at a NUS general meeting in October. The individual campus campaigns will be co-ordinated with the NUS National Office in Ottawa.

"The individual campus committees will run the student aid campaign on their campuses. We have to pressure both the federal and provincial governments over the student aid issue, and these committees will be promoting the campaign and at the same time the National Union of Students," said Creswick.

The campus campaign committees will be promoting the campaign through leaflets, poster, pamphlets and symposiums. The NUS National Office has distributed posters and various slogans which can be inserted on the posters. The individual campus committees choose the slogan and print the posters.

The committees are also holding benefits to publicize the campaign and to defray the expenses involved. So far NUS has raised about \$4,000 from benefits and pledges from individual campuses.

NUS committees have been formed at Simon Fraser University, Capilano College and the British Columbia Institute of Technology in British Columbia. In Alberta the University of Calgary, University of Alberta and the University of Lethbridge have agreed to push the campaign.

In Manitoba all three universities Brandon, Winnipeg, and Manitoba have undertaken campaigns to push for changes in the provincial aid program.

In Saskatchewan both the University of Saskatchewan and St. Thomas More have agreed to work on organizing NUS campaign committees.

In Ontario, the Ontario Federation of Students is running an extensive campaign on student aid programs. NUS campaign committees have also been formed at Lakehead, Carleton and the University of Toronto.

While over 100,000 CEGEP students went on strike in Quebec over the student aid program, NUS has not yet formally approached them in regard to the student aid campaign. Several of the institutions have been sent information. Quebec does not participate in the CSLP but does receive federal money for student aid. Representatives from Quebec will be invited to the NUS May conference to discuss future cooperation.

Although the student aid campaign hasn't been officially endorsed by New Brunswick institutions, the issue has been receiving support. Representatives from five institutions met with provincial political party leaders before the recent provincial election to discuss student aid. NUS representatives will be meeting with student council leaders there to discuss support for the NUS program.

A NUS representative from King's College has expressed an interest in visiting Nova Scotia institutions to discuss the NUS proposal. Both Dalhousie and St. Mary's universities have expressed an interest in the campaign.

In Newfoundland the Memorial Union of Students (MUN) has expressed their total support for the campaign and will be coordinating their provincial campaign. MUN has been fighting the government for several months over student aid programs and has got some concessions.

NUS plans to continue campus coordinating committees and will decide on further steps at the conference in May.

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to work. A \$20 billion cut Michigan State University says that, "in addition to the reallocation effects of military spending, there is also the fact that for every dollar spent in that direction there are fewer jobs created than if the money were spent by consumers and the private sector including state and local government.

Where military expenditure would mean that over 65,000 could have jobs. A \$30 billion cut would put nearly 98,000 people back on the job," he said.

Women Press For New Rape Laws

VANCOUVER (CUP) - Delegates to the federal advisory council on the status of women in Vancouver Jan. 13 to 17 moved to urge Parliament to update obsolete laws dealing with rape and other sexual offences.

Chairwoman Dr. Katie Cooke said the council is ready to initiate advice to the government on what changes are needed in that

section of the criminal code.

"In case they forgot to ask," said Cooke, who makes it clear that council believes the law in general, and the justice minister in particular, is an ass.

Details of the proposed recommendations will be discussed at the council's next meeting slated for April 7 to 9 in Ottawa.

"Lang has said he will

introduce amendments to the criminal code as it deals with rape and sex offences but we (the council) haven't as yet, been asked for advice."

Cooke termed the practice of setting up the rape victim for character assassination by defence lawyers when the victim gives evidence as the crown's chief witness, "total absurd."

"That's one of the worst examples of the weird double standard that prevails in our society," she said.

The delegates also discussed family planning, birth control, and abortion among other issues of critical importance to Canadian women.

They agreed more specific information is needed from the federal level before an effective planning policy will have any force.

Cooke said the council needs to know what kind of family planning projects are now operating, how they are funded and what kind of monitoring is done by the health protection branch of the safety and efficiency of birth control devices.

There are physical and psychological obstacles to overcome before information and counselling on contraception can reach people who need it most, particularly in suburban and rural areas said Cooke.

The big question facing the council is how to get

family planning information to the people who need it the most, she said. The council hasn't yet come to grips with the problem, in which timidity and embarrassment perpetuates ignorance about contraception.

The Council also discussed human rights and justice legislation. Parliament has procrastinated too long in introducing laws that will end discrimination on the grounds of sex.

"At the federal level we are still getting promises and that's all," said Cooke. "It's vital that we have a law showing society's acceptance of the idea that discrimination on the grounds of sex is incompatible with democracy. At this point I'm not about to offer any excuses for why the government hasn't acted."

Other recommendations passed by the council supported the idea of unified family courts with federally appointed, specially trained judges, passport regulation amendments to allow a woman to use her maiden name without additional proof of identity and citizenship amendments restoring Canadian citizenship to women who lost it through marriage to an alien prior to 1947.

Also on the agenda were matrimonial property rights and housewives' entitlement to participate in the Canada Pension Plan.

