

Ont. gov't commitment questioned

OTTAWA (CUP)—A little publicized report on accessibility to post-secondary education in Ontario has seriously questioned government's proclaimed commitment to university accessibility.

York University professor Paul Anisef says in his Ministry of Education commissioned report that the Conservative government insists that student assistance programs will make post-secondary education accessible while admitting that money may not be the biggest barrier.

"One can question why policy makers, having identified the importance of factors other than money, did not develop educational strategies to reduce social, cultural and geographic barriers to accessibility," Anisef says in his report.

The lack of such comprehensive policies throws the provincial government's commitment to equality of opportunity in post-secondary education into doubt, says the report.

Anisef wrote that post-secondary institutions, particularly universities, are dominated by

middle class men while working class children and women are disadvantaged groups. They are less likely to entertain the idea of a university education.

"The provision of grants, loans, and scholarships to disadvantaged groups of students rapidly (becomes) the short-run, apparently easy solution for ameliorating inequalities in educational opportunities.

The report further states that changing the underlying sources of these inequalities is a more complex and difficult task.

The report's main recommendations include government funded "headstart" programs to help poor children at the pre-kindergarten levels and summer learning programs for economically disadvantaged elementary school children.

Some student leaders charge the Ontario government has deliberately downplayed the report. Although the report was ready last March, it was not released until July, no press conference was held to announce it and it is now "out of print".

Guy Wright, the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario executive officer, said CFS-O obtained a copy of the report from Anisef himself.

Wright said the biggest problem with the report is getting the education ministry to respond to it.

Bette Stephenson, provincial Minister of Colleges and Universities has made no announcements about the report. She continues to insist that the Ontario Student Assistance Plan allows any resident to attend a

post-secondary institution.

"It's quite clear that accessibility should be a constant concern of the ministry but we don't see that, particularly considering the way the report has been handled," said Wright.

"Nobody likes to hear that universities are elitist institutions," said Catherine Glen, a Carleton University Students' Association executive. "The Tory government claims it has been committed to an accessible high quality education and it's a farce."

Harassment case settled out of court

OTTAWA (CUP)—A 17-month legal battle between three students and three professors at Carleton University over allegations of sexual harassment has been settled out of court.

The journalism professors dropped charges of slander and libel against Susan Dusel, Maureen McEvoy, and Deborah Woolway August 23 after the three women said they regretted

any distress their statements about sexual harassment in the school of journalism may have caused.

Roger Bird, Brian Nolan and Bob Rupert sued the three journalism students for \$180,000 plus costs after March 17, 1981 press conference.

Names and specific incidents were not cited. Nolan, Rupert and Bird filed libel charges

claiming that the allegations had harmed their reputations. They said that all 16 male journalism professors in their department had been implicated.

Procedures for dealing with sexual harassment are currently being developed at Carleton University.

The information office is distributing a brochure at registration that urges students to take

complaints of sexual harassment to their department chair, the dean, the Ombuds office, the women's centre, or the counselling service.

Complaints are eventually referred to the dean, who must investigate the complaint and take disciplinary action.

Ombuds person Jim Kennelly said the issue had to be brought out into the open.

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