

Ontario rejects proposed student aid increases

TORONTO (CUP) — The Ontario government has rejected the appeals of university presidents, faculty groups, student organizations and its own advisory council to increase provincial support for universities in 1975-76.

In a statement released here, Minister of Colleges and Universities, James Auld, said "in view of the prevailing economic climate and the current need for fiscal restraint, it is unfortunately not possible to increase the global sum already allocated to universities."

According to universities the 7.8 percent increase in the basic income unit for universities will not allow institutions to maintain existing educational standards.

Cutbacks in physical resources, non academic and academic staff, and a draining of institutional case reserves has already taken place on some campuses and is predicted for all institutions next year.

Student groups have been pressing for an increase in funding to avoid the expected effects of the provincial cutbacks on student's

education.

According to Auld's statement, the newly formed Ontario Council of University Affairs, which is appointed by the minister and which has little student and faculty representation, joined in calling for an increase.

The council advised that it would have been desirable for the government to provide an additional 16.2 million dollars to the university system to offset inflationary trends, to maintain or improve existing levels of service

and to accommodate predicted enrollment increases.

But Auld rejected this advice and has decided to give universities 567.5 million dollars for next year, which is 5000,000 dollars less than he originally said he would allocate.

Chris Harries, spokesman for the Ontario Federation of Students, was critical not only of the rejection of any further increase, but of Auld's decision not to allocate the full 568 million dollars.

"When Auld announced on

November 18 operating grants of 568 million dollars he was criticized by all members of the university community because it was insufficient to offset inflation and rising enrollment levels," he said.

Harries continued, "Since then the rate of inflation has further accelerated. Meanwhile Auld seems to have lowered his total allocation by a half million dollars."

He called this a "graphic illustration of how open he is to listening to what the university community across the province has to say."

Harries feels that the "stinginess" of the provincial government in financing post secondary education will jeopardize much of what has been built up in the past years.

He said the massive investment in education that was made during the sixties is actually being endangered by the present cutbacks. Harries cited examples where institutions were forced to allow expensive capital and equipment to deteriorate due to lack of maintenance funding.

According to Harries, OFS will be increasing its efforts to inform the public what is going on in post secondary education.

"There is no doubt that the government's strategy is to say that people don't want education, and that education is an expensive luxury item."

"We agree that education is expensive. We oppose wasteful spending in this sector. But we also feel that people know the value of education and want opportunities to be expanded, not reduced."

"We intend to take the whole question of opportunities for education and the quality of education to the public and ask them to judge," he added.

OFS and NUS receive increased support

OTTAWA (CUP) — Students at Carleton University have voted overwhelmingly to support the National Union of Students and the Ontario Federation of Students with fee hikes following a referendum conducted Tuesday

and Wednesday (Feb. 18 and 19) during the student general elections.

The 10 percent turnout at the polls was described by a spokesman as "average" for Carleton. Of those voting, 80

percent were in favour of the fee increase to NUS, while 77 percent were in favour of the OFS increase.

As a result, Carleton students will now be paying one dollar per year for NUS and one dollar and fifty cents from 30 cents and 40 cents respectively.

NUS executive secretary Maurice Proulx said, "a good feature at Carleton was the consolidation of a NUS committee which was instrumental in telling students why they should support NUS."

"The support of the rank and file for NUS will help the organization avoid bureaucracy that has hurt other organizations."

The positive vote to support NUS is particularly "sweet" since the NUS national office is located at Carleton and represents solid support on local ground.

Carleton OFS representatives were equally ecstatic about the results. The vote is a turn around from last year when Carleton students voted down a proposed increase in OFS contributions.

OFS organizer and vice-president academic in the current student council, Pat Daley, was exuberant when word was received of the results late Wednesday evening.

The Carleton victory of OFS organizers comes hard on the heels of repeated OFS referendum victories on many Ontario campuses. Two weeks previously, Waterloo students supported increased contributions with 82 percent accepting the increase to one dollar and fifty cents per student.

Senate examines drug use

OTTAWA (CUP) — Members of the Senate got a first hand look Feb. 5 at marijuana and hashish and heard detailed instructions on how to get high on drugs.

The Senate Legal Affairs Committee began study of the contentious Bill S-19 which would reduce penalties for simple possession of cannabis drugs.

A health department witness opened a black attache case and

produced bricks of hashish, two pounds of marijuana, a vial of hash oil, a couple of water pipes and dozens of marijuana cigarettes.

The senators examined the goods and asked questions but did not test the wares. "That would be illegal," said Dr. A.B. Morrison, who appeared before the committee as a witness from the health department.

Morrison said that available evidence points to the increasing

use of marijuana and hashish. Health department statistics indicate that at least one million Canadians have now experimented with the drugs.

The bill before the Senate would eliminate jail sentences for simple possession of cannabis and reduce maximum penalties to \$500 for a first offence and \$1,000 for subsequent offences. A person convicted of cannabis possession could be jailed only if he failed to pay the fine.

Penalties for trafficking in cannabis also would be reduced to a maximum of ten years in prison from life imprisonment. The act would remove cannabis offences from the Narcotic Control Act and bring them under the Food and Drugs Act.

OSAP applications rising

TORONTO (CUP) — Applications to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) are up 12.7 percent from last year, according to Ontario Minister of Colleges and Universities James Auld.

Auld suggested that some of the increase in aid for students was due to the program being made "more generous", but a spokeswoman for the Ontario Federation of Students took issue with this point.

"It is difficult to comprehend why Auld would refer to the program as more generous when students are presently living on a weekly allowance of 32 dollars which has been shown in a number of studies to be inadequate," said Carolyn Kendrick.

She said the increased expenditure and applications was due to

the fact students and their parents are getting poorer, not that OSAP has been made "more generous."

The Graduate Student Association Spring General Meeting

Tuesday, March 11, 7:30 pm,
Tartan Room, STUD

- AGENDA:** - election of president,
1st vice-president, and treasurer
- report on residence survey
- president's report
- change in financial policy of GSA
- new business

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