

"I don't think any new powers are being given to the government through the Wright report. All the power is there now. If anything, I think the power is being pulled down from the Minister of Education and not up from the universities..." — George Kerr

Just what is an unnecessary problem?

We cannot in all conscience begin without first questioning a basic assumption upon which your report was written and indeed an assumption which pervades the whole of the Ontario government's thinking. On page 10 of the draft report you write: "Because the socializing of citizens and their preparation for life and work in our society are the two essential functions of the educational system, it is an inescapable fact that education cannot get too far ahead of, nor too far behind, the society it serves."

Taken by itself this statement is harmless enough. However, when viewed in conjunction with the Canadian Union of Students statement reproduced on the preceding page of this report that "it (education) can be used both to liberate and repress," a statement which from experience we are forced to accept, your statement looms ominous indeed.

The growth of post-secondary education in Ontario has been fostered over the last two decades primarily in order to ensure the emergence of a technologically advanced corporate state. In accordance with this assumed need our universities and colleges have been used to a) job-train technicians and professionals, b) aid in the creation of new employment in the tertiary industries that are not directly related to the actual production of goods, c) control the influx of human resources onto the job market, and d) educate the populace in terms and theory directly compatible to their integration into the political socio-economic structure of our society.

It strikes us that the commission has done an excellent job in recommending changes in the post-secondary structure that would further enhance and facilitate this aspect of its function. However, in its stated reluctance to critically examine the universities' role in examining that society.

We believe that the universities alone offer the facilities and atmosphere for continuing debate regarding our society, its ills and its direction. We would further maintain that we must cherish and safeguard this function of our universities, for the collapse of free

and continuing discussion and criticism can only lead to a static, bureaucratic and repressive society.

Further to this perception, we must ask the question: are the recommendations designed to safeguard education as a liberating force or can they be employed as a subtly repressive force that will stifle debate through indirect (or perhaps direct) political control over both educational content and alternatives to existing institutions?

Recommendation 52 of the Draft Report advises the establishment of co-ordinating board for universities composed of 13 government appointed members, among whose functions will be "To establish new faculties and programs and discontinue unnecessary faculties and programs, at both the graduate and undergraduate level." What, we may ask, is an unnecessary program? Is a program that examines the values of our society "unnecessary"? Clearly, or at least we hope, this is not what the commission had in mind. However, the dangers in establishing a government co-ordinating board to oversee university operations must be apparent.

This is only one example of the kind of recommendation and indeed the overall philosophy of the draft report, which makes us fear for the future of our universities the gravity as viable, energetic and free institutions. We cannot understate the gravity of this fear and we hope that the commission will, before presenting its final report to the government, re-examine both the content and potential implications of its recommendations.

As such, we are deeply concerned that the commission has set as a deadline for its final report the late spring or early summer of this year. It would seem that to a large extent the commission has already decided the content of that report. Under the circumstances, we can only hope what otherwise we would demand — that the commission take every conceivable step to incorporate consistent criticism to recommendations in its draft report is not its final recommendations to the Ontario government.

Glendon Student Union

Wright report is WRONG

By LYNN SLOTKIN

It's no best-seller with Fine Arts

Fine Arts students turned up in full force at Burton Wednesday for a teach-in on the Wright report. Associate dean Joseph Green and theatre professor Mavor Moore spoke against the report.

Green objected "the diffuseness of the recommendations throughout the report when taken together with the vagueness of the specific recommendations creates an ambience hard to define but is something like mercury — a substance which though shining and shimmering in its appearance, is most difficult to grasp." Green describes the report's failure to speak to any concept of quality in post-secondary education as the single most disturbing concern of the report.

"The report appears to view post-secondary experience on a continuum. On the one hand, it speaks about highly formalized training of professionals and para-professionals. On the other hand, it speaks to the casual almost informal, perhaps quasi educational experience of theatre-going and gallery attendance. Nowhere can we read of the singular combination of highly rigorous formalized disciplinary education and those semi-formal socializing experiences which constitute university life."

"Nowhere can we find any concept of a buffer between government co-ordination and the institutions which those boards will co-ordinate. Nowhere is there a device established for the protection of the integrity of the individual institutions.

"The lines from the institutions through the boards to the minister is clear. The implications of those lines are rather disturbing. Who speaks for the universities, for the colleges, for the cultural institutions? We are told quite clearly who speaks for the government.

Moore said that since the recommendation would set up a government appointed board to co-ordinate the activities of all the cultural institutions in Ontario, why was there no representative of the cultural community on the 13 man Commission?

Moore commented that the Commission worked on the report for two years and spent \$1,300,000 yet the public had only three months to respond to the report. The three months January to March is the worst time of the year for students, faculty and administration with exams and essays. Moore demanded why the Commission couldn't have waited a much longer period of time for the public's response.

He said there were only 40,000 copies of the report printed when there are 20,000 students at York alone.

Wright commission member Vincent Kelly said the purpose of the report was to make it easier to get into university and at the same time save money for the province which pays a large portion of the students' tuition. He said he favored hiring more women for the various teaching jobs in the universities.

When pressed to answer why the public only had from January to March to respond to the report, Kelly answered that January was the soonest the printer could get the report out.

Michael Brown commented that the Wright report wanted all students who have been out of full-time, regular education for two years to have the right to conditional admission to post-secondary institutions without formal requirements. Brown said this really meant that if a student dropped out of school in grade 10, worked for two years, he or she was eligible for admission to a post-secondary institution without formal requirements. Kelly did not refute the statement.

Cheryl Rosen commented that if women were to be hired they be qualified, not just token women on a faculty. Another student commented on the section giving the government control to establish new programs and activities and discontinue unnecessary programs. He said the first courses to go would be the fine arts courses. Kelly did not refute the statement.

Rosen pointed out that although the report is trying to help lower income groups through loan scheme proposals, proposed tuition fees would be too high for middle income students who were ineligible for the new loan schemes.

Music dean D.P. Silcox pointed out that it was improper for one man (Doug Wright), to be chairman of the Committee on University Affairs that was set up by the Ontario government then to become the chairman of the (Wright) Commission on Post Secondary Education advocating changes in the educational system, and then become deputy minister in Social Development which would implement the report.

He did say the commission should re-examine and clarify the report. He said he favored an extended period of time in which the public could examine the report and would make that proposal to the commission.

The federal Youth report wants better individuals not industrial studs

By ROBIN ROWLAND

At first glance the educational motherhood rhetoric in the Wright report and in It's Your Turn the report of the federal government's Committee on Youth seem almost identical.

Read it again and you find the crucial difference. The Wright report approaches education from the institution. The Youth report approaches education from the point of view of building a better individual.

The Youth committee report says "an educated population is a national resource." The Wright report aims at training those cogs in the wheels that keep industry going.

To develop the human resource, the Youth committee sees education as producing a better person, more humane and aware of social problems, but still training him for labor market.

The Wright report aims at educating someone who can continuously adapt to a changing technology and labor market. Thus it emphasizes accessibility for all age groups to education and availability of loans to those who have left school.

The Youth committee puts emphasis on "clarifying individual goals as well as adding to their educational flexibility."

The Wright report sees education as producing employable people to meet the standards set by the employers.

The Youth committee wants to meet half way between the aims of the corporation and the aims of the individual. They say education should be more practical and relevant but the employer and the post-secondary institution should still look at

both the individual's and social needs and thus re-evaluate their criterion for teaching and hiring.

The philosophical difference between the two reports explains their differences on such things as student loans which are both a provincial and a federal responsibility. The Wright report wishes to make the institution, the bureaucracy and the government processes less expensive by raising fees and changing loan policy. While this has the stated purpose of making educational life easier for the poorer student it actually makes it harder both for the poor student and the middle class student if one takes into account the figures on summer and permanent employment for 14-19 and 20-25 age groups given by the report of the Committee on Youth.

Employment of youth, never good, will get a lot worse, says the report. In the future unemployment will be permanently and disproportionately high for the 14-19 age group both in the summer and throughout the year. This is not as bad for the 20-25 age group who have better training. But it still won't be enough to finance an education as jobs are taken over by automation, and by older women entering the labor force.

The Youth report also sees the job situation for young people getting worse because of a natural increase in adult unemployment where employers will tend to hire the skilled and reliable workman over the temporary student. The post-graduate picture is also bleak with more competition from a larger population, increased competition between men and women and by massive and un-

predictable changes in the occupational structure. In addition there is a natural tendency for youth unemployment despite cyclical changes in national employment figures.

The Wright report did not even consider the employment picture. It recommends a fee raise and a toughening of loan granting situation. In one area the Wright and Youth reports are directly opposed — in the formula of parent paid proportion of fees and expenses. The current formula has a family with an income of \$8,600 per year and two children at post secondary institutions paying \$1,366 or 16 percent of income before taxes, rent or mortgage, food and other living costs. The Youth report recommends complete abandonment of such provisions and greater flexibility in applying formulae for loans, including removal of summer earnings clauses. The Wright report doesn't even mention summer earnings clauses in their discussion of loans.

The eventual aim of the federal government should be complete subsidization of a highly varied post-secondary education the Youth report states.

The Youth report's findings seem to be more attuned to the realities of education today. The Wright report may be only a stop-gap measure.

In the long term view the Youth report fears that post-secondary institutions will be established as a great divider between a new Family Compact of highly skilled elite and the masses. Though education is constitutionally a provincial responsibility, the Youth report predicts the next constitutional crisis will be over education.