

Fees to go up?

It is likely that fees at Dalhousie will go up next year, as a result of a cutback in governmental aid to the province's universities.

Although Dr. Hicks cannot clarify the situation, since the University Grants Committee has not yet informed the colleges of its decision, it is known, for example, that the '69 - '70 Dalhousie Calendar has gone to press without a schedule of fees, which suggests that rates may be changed.

Usually reliable sources indicate that a tuition hike of \$50-\$75 and residence charges close to \$1000

may await the student next year.

Considered in the light of national trends, the situation is distressing. A recent Dominion Bureau of Statistics study shows that Dalhousie's \$610 tuition fees rate among the highest in the country compared with the Canadian average of \$503. This is simply because students supply a larger proportion of university operating funds in the Atlantic region than elsewhere in Canada. For example, during the 1964-65 term, student fees in this area accounted for 38.9% of operating funds, while the national average was 30.4%.

Why do we pay such a large portion of the costs of university operation? Why can't our fees be reduced, if not to a reasonable level, then at least to a figure more in keeping with the national picture? One could argue that such a move would necessitate an increase in taxes to cover the lost provincial revenue, and this would be true — within the existing structure of financial priorities, which places education relatively low on the list of worthy causes.

Very few governments recognize that educational expenditure is a sound investment in the future rather than a burden which must be tolerated, if only to keep the peace. It is somewhat ironic, to say the least, that Newfoundland, poorest of the poor in most respects, should lead the way in providing higher education at minimal cost, and in so doing make Universal Accessibility more a reality than a meaningless slogan.

This, then, is the situation which we face. It would be insane for us to endorse and encourage perpetuation of governmental short-sightedness by allowing yet another fee increase to be thrust down our already well-stretched throats. Dalhousie students must be prepared to take strong collective action in the event of any such move, and to provide leadership in this regard for students throughout the province, who would be faced with similar problems. Student government should initiate action both individually and in conjunction with the administration.

With the inevitable failure of such customary negotiations, students in this province must take unilateral action to prevent government mismanagement from further restricting the universities to the privileged self-perpetuating elite capable of absorbing higher costs. A general student strike would be a most effective means of indicating disfavor should events develop as now seems probable.



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(from S.F. State Strike Daily)

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Editorial