

Students demonstrate to stop university closure

NELSON (CUP) - Seeking community support to prevent the possible closure of the only university in the British Columbia interior, students at Notre Dame University (NDU) took to the streets here February 13, carrying placards and distributing information to the community at large.

The march followed closely the announcement the same day by acting administration president Val George that NDU may be forced to close at the end of the current academic year. George said the provincial government had failed to guarantee continued funding beyond that time.

The government has not yet issued a definitive statement of its intention but local officials, students and NDU administrators

have begun the crusade against the government's announcement.

Last fall, student and faculty pressure managed to turn back two plans by the then NDP government: first to close the university and later to turn it into an extension of one of the coastal universities.

The NDP finally conceded to the further development of a full university for the interior, but failed to initiate any legislation to that effect before the Social Credit Party defeated them in the recent B.C. election.

In late January, new Social Credit Education Minister Pat McGeer announced he was discontinuing the government's annual grant to NDU, which last year amounted to \$1.8 million, and about

90 percent of its operating budget.

At the same time he handed jurisdiction for NDU over to the Universities Council of B.C. (UCBC).

But at that time the Council, which had been responsible for distributing funds only to the three public B.C. universities, had already submitted its budget and according to Chairperson William Armstrong, failed to get even that amount from the government.

He said the Council has no money for NDU and has not asked the government for more.

"It's strictly a matter of efficiency," Armstrong said in an interview. "The costs per student are somewhat higher at a small university." (Notre Dame is a private university at present with

about 500 students and 150 faculty.)

While the faculty-student ratio is high, figures indicate the costs per student are actually lower than for the coastal universities. The Council last year gave the public universities (UBC, Simon Fraser, and the University of Victoria) \$150 million in operating costs for roughly 40,000 students or about \$3950 per student. With \$1.8 million for 500 students, Notre Dame's ratio would be lower at \$3600 per student.

The Faculty Association of NDU (FANDU) immediately accused the Socred government of breaking faith and cutting off Notre Dame's funding to glorify the large universities on the coast. In the campaigning prior to December's election Socred candidates and the

president of the party promised NDU would be retained as a four-year university.

"If NDU is closed", said Lorne Nicholson, the NDP-MLA for the area, "it will be the biggest betrayal of a community in the history of British Columbia."

NDU is the second largest non-government employer in Nelson.

In a press release, FANDU reiterated a common charge that coastal domination and "complete disregard for the interior" were at work.

Both Education Minister McGeer and his deputy Walter Hardwick taught at UBC. McGeer was unavailable for comment and Hardwick would only say it was up to NDU's Board of Governors to negotiate with the Universities Council.

In a statement released by the student press in Nelson, the Executive of the Notre Dame University Board of Governors said "for twenty-five years Notre Dame College and - since 1963 - Notre Dame University has been a vital part of the educational and cultural life of the Kootenays, the withdrawal of government support will have a very serious impact on the community."

And at the same time students from NDU have been meeting, demonstrating and gaining support for the continuation of the Interior University.

"We mean business", said student union vice-president Rich Nevels. "The community needs us and we need the support of the community."

The student union is prepared to launch a class action suit against the government if NDU students do not receive written guarantees of the validity of their degrees and transfer of credits, according to student president Andy Shadrack.

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Cutb

DENVER (CSP-CUP) hiked and budget cut giving an ugly edge to students hemmed in costs.

Although most staying tight-lipped budget for next year colleges that have put on the line have been angry rallies, threats student-staff strikes, tions that higher e becoming the domain.

In Georgia, Illinois New Jersey, students fronted administrators month over education feel are becoming high. Shoving match regents and students college presidents "recalling the mood of have been the result of tuition hikes and layoffs faculty members a school.

Students hit with tuition increase during the University of Georgia an indignant crowd uary, protesting what a 25 percent increase vital part of the year. has skyrocketed, cut trimmed library he services and faculty jobs on the campus.

A rally that drew faculty hit hard on t creases in tuition we minority students. A charged that tuition "come down hardest least able to pay." Bl of the school's student threatened to call a strike even if the rest government doesn't t

At Trenton State Co Jersey, students an

NUS I

WINNIPEG (CUP) the University of M overwhelmingly Feb join the National Students.

In a referendum he time as elections council president, s 2127 to 1227 not to \$1,000 fee necessary national union.

Although both pre didates supported NU council gave no lead issue and financed anti-NUS campaigns.

The anti-NUS cam ized by two students with the student ne Manitobian, consist pamphlets and new age of why students NUS.

An interview Manitoban staffer leader of the anti-N which appeared in week of the refer that students shoul NUS because th government "is ent ble for education NUS, as a feder "lobby group", wou for nothing, it state

The article failed more than 50 percent for the province's sector comes from government, and loans and aid policy

Food is flu

OTTAWA (CUP) - According to the president of the Canadian Restaurant Association a lot of the so-called "flu" attacking Canadians this winter is really food poisoning, and Canada's restaurants are responsible.

"Dirty spoons, spotty glasses, a guy preparing food with an open cut on his hand, cups turned upside down on the table, any of these is enough to give you a good dose of food poisoning", James Rae said in a February 18 interview for the Ottawa Citizen.

Rae, who was in Ottawa to open the association's Ottawa Office, also condemned the industry for serving unnecessarily large helpings and for continually being inconsistent in their preparation of meals.

According to Rae, a recent survey in the United States showed an estimated 90 percent of the country's restaurants did not measure up to the government's minimum health standards. Although no study has been conducted in Canada, Rae said he suspected the situation was much the same here.

Customers should have no hesitation about reporting spotty dishes or silverware, a waitress putting her hands to her face or hair, a filthy washroom, or anything else that makes them uneasy, he said.