

It's hard to believe.

"I believe and I've always believed that all students who are qualified and who want to obtain a higher education should have the opportunity to do it, no question in my mind about it. I'm a very firm believer in education and I will continue to say so in government."

Premier John Buchanan
St. Mary's Journal, Dec. 6, 1978

The above quotation was not even an election promise. Buchanan was comfortably settled in the premier's office by December. So who is he trying to kid?

The rationale for the government's decision to limit the increase in operating grants to universities is at best an indication of their almost total ignorance of the problems facing students and post-secondary education. The Conservatives placed little emphasis on education in their eight years of opposition. Terry Donahoe was handed the education portfolio because he is supposedly young and dynamic, and Dalhousie and St. Mary's are in his riding. He was even a member of the St. Mary's Board of Governor's until last year. The Board's minimal input during the power struggle that has only recently been resolved proves the position was only tenuously connected to the university community. By continually evading the press he has given the impression that he is not really sure of what is going on. And that's probably true for the rest of the cabinet.

The cutback in government funding will have serious effects on students at Dal. Tuition was going to increase as much as the cost of living, even if the MPHEC's recommendations had been met. The possibility of a tuition hike of more than \$100, escalating food and book costs make the idea of a university education financially unrealistic to many high school students.

That students demand a freeze on tuition is hardly selfish. We pay to go to school by foregoing the salaries we would earn in the workforce. All taxpayers contribute to the over 70 per cent of a university budget that comes from government, but only a relative few reap the benefit of that contribution by being able to send their children to university.

The indication that government policy is just as callous as it is without reason is the implementation of a \$750 tuition increase for any visa student wishing to attend a university or college in the province. Visa students bring money into the country. As they make up only 7 per cent of Nova Scotia's students, they don't occupy places that could go to Nova Scotians, and they enhance the community culturally. We were assured during the election (at a public forum at the Grad House) by a campaigning hopeful that he was opposed to differential fees.



Now, as Education Minister and without any public discussion, he is instituting them.

The government's flippant treatment of tuition fees, while not even bothering to respond to concern about underfinanced programs (such as Dalhousie medicine), uncompetitive faculty salaries, inadequate library facilities, and lack of funds for research, illustrates an attitude that is out of touch with what people in this province are doing and thinking.

As students, we are going to have to bring this government down to earth. Two years ago student reaction forced the government to increase grants to offset a tuition increase. This year the stakes are higher. Government is not trying to ignore students, it's trying to bleed them.

Student leaders in Antigonish this weekend will be discussing ways to make the government understand universities' need for adequate operating grants.

There will be a general meeting of the Student Union on Monday at 12:30 p.m. in the Green Room. Show up and say what you think.

the Dalhousie Gazette

The Dalhousie Gazette, Canada's oldest college newspaper, is the weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student Union members, and is a founding member of Canadian University Press.

The views expressed in The Dalhousie Gazette are not necessarily those of the Dalhousie Student Union, the editor or the collective staff. We reserve the right to edit material for space or legal reasons, or if it is considered offensive to our readers.

The deadline for articles and letters-to-the-editor is noon on Monday. No unsigned material will be accepted but anonymity may be granted on request. Letters should not exceed 500 words and must be typed on a 64-character line and double spaced.

Advertising must be submitted by noon on the Friday preceding publication. National Advertising is handled through Youthsteam, 307 Davenport Road, Toronto, Ontario M5R 1K5 (416) 925-6359.

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Gazette

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Applications for the separate positions of Orientation Chairperson and Shinerama Director are now available in the Council offices, 2nd floor SUB.

Interested?

In becoming one of the two co-editors, or in working on advertising for the '79 student HANDBOOK? Apply now in the Council offices, 2nd floor, SUB.

ATTENTION GRADS

THE DEADLINE FOR GRADUATION PHOTOS FOR PHAROS, THE DAL YEARBOOK, HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO APRIL 1st. THIS MEANS THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE THESE PICTURES TAKEN BY MARCH 15.

PHOTOS OF GRADUATES RECEIVED AFTER APRIL 1st WILL NOT BE INCLUDED.