

## Forum successful

# Budget protests begin

by Trish Aikens and Nigel Allen

University tuition in Nova Scotia will not rise to \$900 next year "if I can do anything about it", Nova Scotia Premier Gerald Regan promised Wednesday. He did not promise to increase the universities' operating grant from the previously announced seven per cent to the eleven and a half per cent recommended by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC).

Regan spoke at a forum organized by Dalhousie Student Union to promote its fight against post-secondary education cutbacks. Students will march on the Legislature Friday to protest the cutbacks. Regan told the forum that the health budget would increase 6.2 per cent and that the budget for public schools would increase by 7.5 per cent.

MPHEC had recommended no tuition hikes for the next three years. If this was impossible, they asked that tuition increase no more than four per cent. Robert Sampson, Student Union President-elect, said that if "tuition increases substantially it is likely that the quality of education will go down. A cutback in education, he said, "is the wrong approach". Dr. Roland Pucetti, Dalhousie Faculty Association president, said also that if tuition fees increased four per cent the faculty would receive less than a one per cent salary increase.

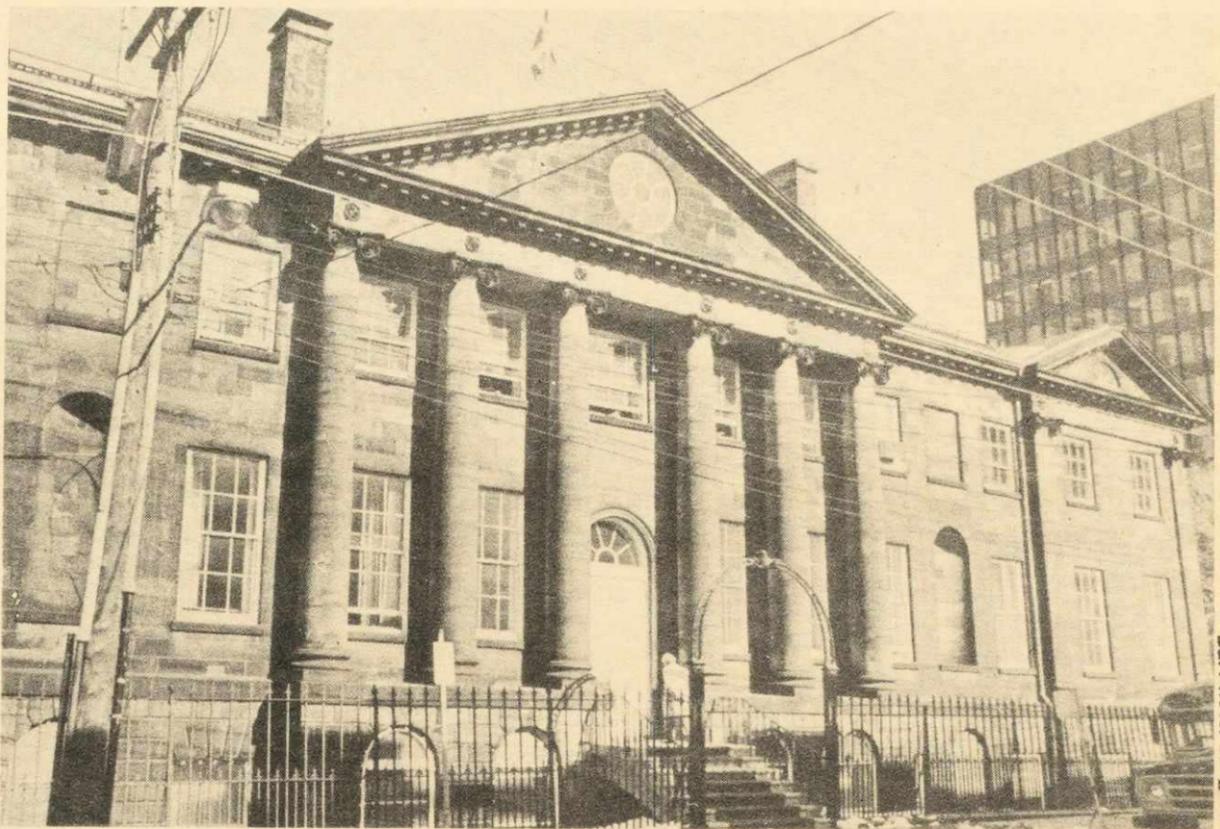
Regan said that the provincial government's costs increase more each year than tax revenue. This year, he said, budgetary requests were \$200 million more than provincial government income. Regan said that he "wished the heck" free university education was possible. "There is every bit as strong a case for free university education today as for free high school in the 1930's" he said. Officials of the Atlantic Federation of Students have also said that they want free tuition, but they did not mention the subject at Wednesday's press conference or forum.

Student Union president Gordon Neal said at a press conference that students were subject to restraint on three fronts: education cutbacks, poor summer job prospects, and difficulties in obtaining student aid.

He expressed concern over certain programs the university had approved "when funds are available" Neal speculated that funding might come from tuition fees if MPHEC was unwilling to pay.

If the cost of living rises, Regan said, then tuition can be expected to rise as well, but not as much as the cost of living.

Dalhousie Student Union arts representative Bernie MacDonnel,



Dal Photo/Langille

The Province House will be the destination of a student march on Friday.

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charged that "universities will soon become the havens of the rich". He asked Regan to justify the cutbacks.

Regan said that there were "no grounds on which we can rationalize" education cutbacks, poor day-care or low social assistance payments.

Dalhousie Student Union Vice-president-elect Peter Mancini said that "poor people are paying taxes towards education. If tuition increases, the poor will be educating the wealthy — more to those who least need it!"

Regan rejected a student's suggestion that enrollment in universities be restricted to those who "deserve" admission.

He did not reply directly to a request that all tax points transferred from the federal government for education would be used for education.

involving sick leave, transfers, contracting out and seniority.

The Union feels that under the university's sick leave proposals, "You get sick at your own risk. When you return you might not have a job."

Much talk has occurred on the issue of transfers since the **Gazette** first reported on this particular round of negotiations. A Union spokesman said that the university has proposed to do all transfers out of the general work crews but retains the right to 'shuffle' caretakers. Since caretakers are Union members this is still an area of deep dispute between the university administration and the maintenance

## Dal faculty annoyed

by Eric Lawson

Dalhousie University faculty are agitated by and concerned with the recent decision of the Council of Maritime Premiers to limit university operating grant increases to seven per cent, Dalhousie Faculty Association president Dr. Roland Pucetti says.

"Students have a stake in this faculty-oriented decision," he said. The quality of education at Maritime universities "will ultimately suffer" because of the limitation.

"The very best teaching comes from the best research," Pucetti said, adding that research financing will become "impossible" as increased operating costs and salaries will use up most of the seven per cent increase.

Pucetti also feels that university professors will begin leaving Maritime universities as better opportunities open up in the United States and central Canada. The young mobile staff of the universities are greater, he said. They

have no objections to forfeiting their tenure, he continued, as they can get it elsewhere.

When asked how the faculty intended to go about alleviating the

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**ANTIGONISH — St. Francis Xavier University will raise tuition from \$735 to \$850, Mike McInnis, an official of the St. F.X. student union said Tuesday.**

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problem, Pucetti replied that they certainly intend to approach the government, but not necessarily alone. "Politically we (faculty) have no public base, so we have to go to the public and hit the government in its weak point — its votes."

Both students and faculty will suffer as a result of financial limitations, he added, and he urged students and faculty alike to actively oppose the recent operating grant decision, as well as others of the same nature.

## Workers approve strike

by John McLeod

Dal maintenance workers have voted 81% in favour of going on strike effective March 30. Monday's strike vote came after negotiations for a new contract broke down on March 11, when, according to a Union negotiator, the university reversed itself. Dal maintenance employees are members of CUPE Local 1392.

According to Union official, Keith Barrett, "On Monday (March 7) we offered them a deal they couldn't refuse, and they didn't, but on Friday they did." The university's negotiators were overruled by three of the university Vice-Presidents, Vagianos, MacNeil and MacKay, and because of this a deadlock resulted.

Four areas of dispute remain,

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# MARCH !

## Protest tuition hikes

### Friday 11a.m.