

Conference opposes differential fees

OTTAWA (CUP) - An action campaign to oppose differential fees for third world students, give Canadians the facts about those students and streamline policies for admission to the country and the education system was adopted by delegates attending a Third World Students in Canada conference here Nov. 19-21.

Resolutions demanding eased employment restrictions on third world students and better campus services were also passed by more than 100 delegates and attending the joint conference of World University Services Canada and the Canadian International Bureau for International Education (WUSC-CBIE).

The core of the campaign rests on the formation of a

committee to "undertake a wide and in-depth public education campaign on the various aspects of Third World students in Canada."

Delegates said Ontario was allowed to impose differential fees on international students and Alberta to propose them without much public or institutional protest because of a lack of information.

The committee will call on third world organizations in Canada, academic and church groups as well as labor, students and politicians to inform Canadians. Other than holding nation-wide press conferences, exact strategy for circulating the facts about international students in Canada were vague.

CBIE executive director J.

Alan Rix emphasized the need to move quickly saying, "This is not a long battle ... we'll know by March if we've been successful."

The conference urged provincial and federal governments to wait for information studies from WUSC-CBIE before deciding policy affecting international students. And when policy is discussed, post-secondary institutions, the National Union of Students and the provincial student organizations plus academic associations should be consulted.

Delegates agreed unanimously to fight differential fees for third world students, urging Ontario colleges and universities to reject them and calling for an investigation of

their constitutionality. But they did not agree the two-tier fee system should be abolished for all out of country students. Some said those from wealthy nations should pay more.

As a result the inclusion of all international students was rejected in a motion recommending third worlders be given special consideration for admission to post-secondary education without financial guarantees, providing part-time jobs, free accommodation or other compensating factors are present.

Delegates also rejected the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) as the sole basis for admission after it was noted that studies have shown no relation between low TOEFL

scores and low grades.

Instead it was recommended the test be used following guidelines set in the TOEFL manual which advise that required language proficiency levels in the faculty students are applying for be considered as well as partial scores on the test and other available data.

Existing visa student employment policy was also rejected. Delegates decided third world students should have the right to part-time and summer work permits while studying

During a workshop session Kaspar Pold from the Queen's University International Centre pointed out that 7,000 summer jobs went unfilled in Ontario last year, roughly equivalent to the number of international students

Visa student information

OTTAWA (CUP) - Delegates to the conference on Third World Students in Canada here Nov. 19-21 decided that providing Canadians with information about visa students was a key strategy in countering attacks on them in the form of differential fees and quotas.

The Ontario government's decision to impose differential fees this year "comes from a climate of misinformation" charged Carleton University president Dr. Michael Oliver at the joint conference of World University Services Canada and the Canadian Bureau for International Education (WUSC-CBIE).

What are the facts about visa students?

The Foreign Student File, an ongoing study published by the CBIE in September, provides some preliminary information outlining the number of visa students in Canada, their distribution across the country and in the various faculties as well as a brief section on Canadian students abroad.

About 51,460 student visas were issued in 1976. The figure is based on cumulative data so a student who is registered in January, went home and registered again in September is counted twice.

A total of 23,175 international students were registered in Canadian universities and colleges at the end of 1975 according to the Department of Manpower and Immigration.

Based on that figure international students made up a little more than 2 per cent of the 592,267 students, reported by Statistics Canada, attending Canada's post secondary institutes that year.

Of the visa students on immigration files, 67 per cent went to post-secondary schools, 24,000 to university and 10,600 to college.

According to the study, international undergraduate students predominated in arts and science (1,376) social sciences (1,777) and engineering and applied sciences (1,418). They made up 20 per cent of all engineering students in Canada, and about 14 per cent of math and physical science students.

The 75 international students registered in Canada's 16 medical faculties accounted for less than 1 per cent of medical students.

The study used 1971 statistics to measure numbers of Canadian students abroad because the figures are not readily available. At that time there were almost 13,000 abroad.

The report notes that before the late 60's the number of Canadian students abroad outnumbered international students here.



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