

Protest march Tuesday

Students will march Tuesday to protest cutbacks in funding of post-secondary education.

The march to the legislature, involving students from all of the New Brunswick universities, will coincide with the opening of the new legislative session.

The march will protest the diversion of Federal funds earmarked for post-secondary education for other uses, as well as cutbacks.

UNB SRC president Gerard Finnan said he and the other SRC presidents are spending much time ensuring this march is highly organized. He said the last march in September was not well

organized and therefore did not create a favorable impression.

Students, faculty, and anyone interested will congregate in the parking lot above the SUB at 1:30 Tuesday. The parking lot will be closed off by security before noon so people are asked to avoid parking there Tuesday.

Finnan said students will be given sheets of chants to be used during the march, and will be organized so the march can proceed promptly at 2 p.m. Parade marshalls with megaphones will coordinate the chanting, and campus

police will be present.

The march will be made as long and

narrow as possible. Hopefully, said Finnan, marchers will be able to totally surround the Centennial Building. At the legislature, speeches will be given by the SRC presidents, and a representative of the faculty association.

Marchers will be carrying banners, and picket signs and buttons will be distributed. After the legislature speeches, the march will continue back to campus in an orderly fashion.

Finnan said, "We need numbers, this is what is important." "If students don't want to pay a lot more money, they are going to have to attend".

All politicians will be at the legislature for the speech from the throne.



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Finance minister responds

Provincial finance minister, Fernand Dubé, said yesterday the overdue announcement of post-secondary funding levels from the government would have to wait until a cost-sharing agreement is worked out with Ottawa.

He issued the following response to an article in last week's Brunswickan alleging diversion of funds by the provincial government:

Universities have expressed concern about the amount of financial assistance that they receive from the provincial government. This is an issue that I am more than willing to discuss. In fact, such dialogue will be helpful in our budget process, and is part of our system of government.

I am particularly concerned about the assertions that the Government of New Brunswick is contravening a federal provincial agreement in our allocation of funds to post-secondary education. This is not true. Perhaps some background will help set the record straight.

Under the Established Programs Financing system (EPF) that was put in place in 1977, the federal contribution toward the cost of health and post-secondary education was to be a single annual grant. This was to replace an earlier arrangement by which the

federal government reimbursed the Province for a percentage of specific provincial expenditures in the health and post-secondary education fields.

The Prime Minister made several statements in 1976 and 1977 to clarify the operation of EPF; he said "federal payments should be calculated independently of provincial program expenditures". He argued that the federal proposal would benefit the provinces since "the movement to block funding would increase substantially the flexibility available to the provinces with regard to program decisions".

The whole idea behind the EPF grant was that the provinces would not have to spend a certain amount of money on health or a certain amount on post-secondary education in order to receive financial assistance from the federal government.

If you doubt my word on this, call the federal Auditor-General or Minister of Finance. You can also check with the Economic Council of Canada and Herb Breau, Chairman of Parliamentary Committee on Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements.

You might ask yourself if we have broken an agreement with Canada, why don't they take their money back? The

answer is that we have not contravened or violated any agreement or legislation of the Government of Canada.

Where does this notion come from then, if there is nothing to it? It arises from the way Canada budgets for the EPF grant. When the deal was made in 1977, provinces assumed that the payment would be made by the Department of Finance as is the case with equalization. Instead, for their own internal reasons, the federal government arbitrarily divided the budget for EPF between the Department of National Health and Welfare and the Department of Secretary of State. This part of the EPF grant is paid out by the Secretary of State, creating the notion that a certain percentage of the federal transfers under the 1977 deal have to be spent on post-secondary education. That is not true. A couple of years ago the same allegations, based on the same reasoning, were made about funds for health care. It took an inquiry by Justice Emmet Hall to finally end those assertions.

Provinces were surprised that the federal government chose to allocate the EPF grant in pieces rather than as a single payment from the Minister of Finance. And I can tell you that the controversy generated on this issue by cer-

tain federal spokesmen has done a lot to poison relations between the federal government and the provinces.

If you want to talk numbers, I am prepared to do so according to the terms of EPF. These terms were spelled out by the Prime Minister as follows: "the provinces would have to agree to spend the Federal EPF funds in the fields in question, but would not have to make mat-

ching expenditures of any kind from their own sources." New Brunswick's spending on these programs exceeds the EPF grant by \$249 million in 1979-80, \$294 million in 1980-81 and by an expected \$343 million in 1981-82.

So far this controversy has achieved nothing but give the federal government an excuse for reducing the size of the EPF grant to provinces.

No SUB referendum

By GORDON LOANE
Brunswickan Staff

There will be no SUB referendum on March 29th. The UNB Students Representative Council, meeting in emergency session yesterday, voted 6 to 5 to cancel the scheduled vote. Two other motions introduced and passed concerning the referendum at previous council meetings were also rescinded.

SRC President Gerard Finnan asked council to support the March 29 vote calling for a \$15

SUB levy. The motion also asked the council to accept a plan to move the College Hill Social Club to expanded facilities on the third floor of the SUB. Council voted against the Finnan motion.

Meanwhile, SUB Board Chairman David Kay revealed that the board had met earlier this week to approve plans by the Social Club to move to the second floor. SRC Engineering Representative John Bosnitch said he will ask for the impeachment of the UNB representatives on the SUB Board as a result of the action.