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Photo by Martin Cohn

Broadbent, McDonough on campaign trail in Halifax. See story p.9

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Public surveyed

Education gets high priority

by Matt Adamson of Canadian University Press
HALIFAX (CUP)—Almost 80 per cent of Maritimers are opposed to cutting back public funds spent on education, according to a survey of public attitudes commissioned by the Association of Atlantic Universities.

About 75 per cent said their province benefits from a system of publicly supported colleges and universities.

The survey, compiled by the Atlantic Institute of Education, is the first large scale survey of public attitudes towards education to be done in the Maritimes or Canada, said the author of the report and the institute's acting director, Dr. Andrew Hughes.

More than 1,100 people were interviewed for the survey during July and August of 1979.

The report said only a small minority, 3.6 per cent, said tuition costs were too little. 34.4 per cent said they were about right, while 40 per cent said they were too much.

Since a considerable proportion deems tuition levels to be too high and only a minority believed tuition should be raised, "any endeavor to raise tuition levels would clearly be out of step with general public opinion," the report said.

Maritimers rated government funding of public schooling, health and medical care, and job creation programmes as more important than post-secondary education.

Regional development and consumer protection were

seen as having the same funding priority, while welfare programmes were rated as less important.

Respondents to the survey ranked health sciences, and agriculture and forestry, as the university and college programmes having the highest value to Maritime society.

"To the public these are obviously the areas where we should devote a great deal of our energy and resources," said Hughes.

Technical fields, teacher education, law, business administration, and physical sciences were clustered as the second priority, said the report.

Social sciences, women's studies, humanities, and fine arts were the third priority.

While a large majority said society benefited from government assistance to higher education, "the public is generally ambivalent or, at best, only slightly positive in its assessment of the performance of our colleges and

universities generally," the report said.

55.3 per cent of those surveyed said they were "somewhat satisfied" with the performance of their local higher education institutions. 20.3 per cent said they were "very satisfied". About 10 per cent said they were "not satisfied".

Over half the people surveyed, 54 per cent, could not suggest ways performance could be improved and a large proportion could not comment on the importance of the

functions of post-secondary institutions.

Hughes said, "there seems to be a general belief that higher education is a good thing, but when people are asked how well it is doing, people are not generally well informed about university."

John Keyston, director of the Association of Atlantic Universities, said the AAU will now have to decide if an information campaign to the general public will be done.

Arts and science

Five candidates for new dean

by Brenda Nichols and Sylvia Kaptein

The Search Committee for a new dean of Arts and Science has come up with a short list of five candidates, but, unlike the recent search for a Dal president, the process is not a secret one.

The list consists of Dr. J. Gray, the present dean, Dr. Ken Mann, Dr. Brian Hall, Dr. H.W. King, all from Dalhousie University, and Dr. Donald Betts from the University of Alberta. The appointed dean of Arts and Science will preside over twenty-five departments which includes three hundred and fifty professors and approximately four thousand students.

The dean, who will come into office on June 30, 1980 for

a five year term will have a difficult job, as the faculty is under financial constraints due to the government's cut-backs.

The selection of the new dean is not as secretive as the recent presidential search was. Letters were sent to all chairmen of the departments soliciting their opinions. Approximately three hundred people were told of the names on the short list.

Student input into the matter is welcomed by the committee. Jim Wentzell, the only student on the ten member search committee, has formed a student subgroup which has met the candidates and will relay their opinions back to the committee.

The present dean, Dr. Gray, has introduced new courses into the curriculum, such as a

marine biology honours class. He has also established numerous co-operative projects for arts and chemistry students, and a math project is proposed for this year. Dr. Gray believes that Dalhousie University is highly regarded for its honours programs, and he said that the faculty of Arts and Science is the "heart of the university."

Dr. Mann, a professor of 30 years experience, was the chairman of the biology department for six years.

If elected dean, Dr. Mann would like to bring matters out in the open. He said that there are far too many confidential decisions being made. By opening up decisions, Dr. Mann said there would be fewer problems with the faculty forming unions in order to be heard.

Dr. Hall, the present chairman of the biology department said that Dalhousie's Arts and Science faculty is due for a change relating to faculty matters and said that the morale of the faculty is low.

Dr. Hall believes he would be able to capably fill the position of dean because of his administrative experience both as a chairman of the department and as a member of various committees. He has also earned a good academic reputation from his teaching and research, he said, which is very important for a dean.

Dr. King is the secretary of Arts and Science at Dalhousie and is responsible for the organization of many committees. He wishes to make the courses at Dalhousie a basis on which the students

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