



# The tuition nightmare

BY DANIEL CLARK

It is now official. The Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) has advised the University President, Tom Traves, to increase tuition 7.6 percent across the board for 1997-98.

I suppose that this is no big surprise seeing as BAC had recommended as much in their 1996 report for next year and the year after. BAC Report IX (published last year) said that tuition would need to go up 10% a year for three

years to cover shortfalls caused by government cutbacks.

Who would have thought, but 1996 was a surprisingly good one for Dal. Shortfalls were less than expected, and therefore we only have to cough up 7.6%.

At the Senate meeting on Monday, I led a contingent of Senators who were opposed to either the increase in tuition, further departmental cutbacks, or both. I know that students have been tapped dry. In a time where student loans are frozen, summer jobs are harder to come by (and are paying less), and parents are struggling to make ends meet, the last thing we need is for tuition to go up again.

Collectively, various Senators have suggested solutions such as increased lobbying of government, increasing the number of campus jobs available to students, and even tapping our endowments. President Traves seems to be sympathetic, but in the end will probably agree with BAC and raise tuition again.

It amazes me that in these days of "Building a bridge to the future" and "Bringing our deficits in line for our children," that it is those children, who in the end, will pay the price for these initiatives. I understand that the economy will not take any more overspending, but I have to believe that the way that governments hemorrhage money, there has to be somewhere else they can cut.

We are the most important resource that this country has. There was a time when going to University guaranteed you a job; not anymore. We're paying far

more for an education than has ever been paid before, and our opportunities are less and less.

Universities and student unions have ways to speak to and lobby governments, but either they're not working hard enough, or they're not working together. Having two national student lobby groups is not helping either.

This is an election year. Quite possibly both the Prime Minister and Premier Savage will be calling elections in 1997. As your Senate rep I want to tell you that students represent a massive lobby. It's time for us to tell the Prime Minister and the Premier that if education and students are not important, then maybe we'll have to find someone who sees the relevance of it.

We are a power to be reckoned with. We represent the bodies, and the universities represent the money. If we could get together, then the government will have to listen. Prime Minister Chrétien seems to be indicating that it is time for Canada to spend some money. We have to convince the government that we need help.

My name is Daniel Clark and I am one of your Senate representatives. We need to work together to keep tuition down and make sure that we have a future once we graduate.

The only way that DSU president Brad MacKay, DSU vp academic/external Chris Lydon, Senate representative Chris Adams, and myself can help you is if you are willing to help us. We can all be contacted through the DSU offices on the second floor of the SUB.

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