

Gazette Forecasts Grant

The Dalhousie Gazette is forecasting that this university will receive between 10.7 and 11 million dollars in Provincial Government aid in the coming fiscal year. The actual figures will likely be tabled in the Legislature today or tomorrow when Education Minister Gerald Doucet presents his Department's estimates.

The figure represents about a million dollars less than the 12 million dollars requested by Dalhousie, and an increase of close to two million dollars over last year's grant.

Whether or not it will be sufficient to prevent a fee increase at Dalhousie is another matter altogether. President Henry Hicks was unavailable for comment at the time this story was being prepared.

The Gazette projections are based on the allotments to individual universities in the past and the total announced last week in the Legislature of 23,750,000 dollars to be given out by the province to all provincial universities in the fiscal year 1969-70.

When asked for a breakdown

in aid to universities last week after the total amount was tabled in the Legislature, Education Minister Gerald Doucet demurred, saying that it would be "improper" of him to release any figures prior to their being announced in the Legislature and that, if he did, his colleagues would "scold" him for it.

While Mr. Doucet might get "scolded", thousands of Nova Scotian university students wait another weary week, wondering if they will be coming back next fall. . . .

Randy Rapped!

Commenting on charges by outgoing student union President A. Randall Smith that the provincial government's failure to notify Universities of their Annual Grant for 1969-70 was the "most serious abrogation of cabinet responsibility in the history of Nova Scotian government," Education Minister Gerald Doucet said:

"I can't imagine Randy making a statement like that. I would choose to believe that he was wrongly quoted. The University Grants Committee makes recommendations to me and I, in turn, refer them to the Minister of Finance as, of course, I must."

"The Minister of Finance is not able to deal with a recommendation of that kind," Mr. Doucet went on to say, "except in relation to the total provincial budget and it is a matter of common knowledge amongst those who know how government operates, and I include Randy as one of those people, that the Minister of Finance with his Board (Doucet is not a member) doesn't settle his budget until about ten days before he tables it in the House."

The very earliest this year that I would have had actual knowledge of the extent that it had been decided on would have been ten days ago. Can you imagine the impropriety, he asked, "of my officially releasing that until the Minister of Finance had introduced it in the House?"

In reply to a question on whether or not it would be more useful to have university grants recommendations made for the year in advance instead of as present, when the Grants tabled are for the upcoming year, Doucet shrugged and said that it would not be appropriate for him to comment at the present time.

Doucet was speaking with the Dalhousie Gazette shortly after presentation of the Estimates in the Provincial Legislature.

Chairman Gerry

"I believe our people are prepared to give educational spending a high priority, providing that the funds are efficiently spent".

"It is widely agreed that the function of public education is to make possible for every child, as his right, the kind of education that best suits his abilities and needs."

"School organization exists to further educational aims rather than simply administrative convenience."

"Attitudes and opinions developed by students are ultimately far more important than the facts and processes they learn."

State University "Never Entered My Mind"

"I can honestly tell you that the concept of a University of Nova Scotia has never entered my mind," Gerald Doucet said when asked if the Government had any plans to press for the amalgamation of Nova Scotian universities into one large institution.

It is "a matter for the University Grants Committee to consider and make recommendations on," the Minister said.

When asked if such a scheme would not lighten the financial burden of the Government, Doucet noted: "I suppose it is a question of how best to reduce and eliminate all existing duplication, and yet maintain individual local autonomy and involvement. This is a matter the University Grants Committee has had under very active consideration and a subject which has been reflected in their Annual Reports since their inception in 1963. The form that this ideal arrangement might take is not one in which there is anything like a consensus of opinion."

Some have alleged, he said, "that this could best be done by a central administrative structure of a University of Nova Scotia and this has been put forward as a possibility for achieving this end. That's not to say it is necessarily the only way in which it can be done," he hastened to add.

"Very Much Aware"

The Provincial Government is "very much aware" of the student unemployment crisis, Gerald Doucet told the Gazette, but added that it was a national and not a provincial problem.

His department has been in contact with Federal officials attempting to obtain some increases in Nova Scotia's student loan allotment, "because we've been using literally millions of dollars more than our standard allotment in every year of the program. We've been fortunate," he said, "in that we've received supplementary allotments without having them charged against us, because other provinces haven't been using their full allotment."

The prospects for this continuing however, are dim, as the cost of living rises and the student unemployment situation worsens. It is, admitted Doucet, "a good deal less optimistic than before."

Bursary Will Not Go Up

The \$340 bursary tacked on to the Federal Government's thousand dollar student loans will not be raised for next year, Gerald Doucet said last week.

"We considered and earnestly tried to find monies for the purpose of increasing the \$340 bursary and spent a good deal of time in discussions with the Treasury Board on this point, but in the end, we had to tailor what we could spend with what was available."

He added that the decision not to increase the allotment was "a matter of judgement. We had to face reality. I'm not going to tell you how much of our asking budget was cut, but notwithstanding that, we still end up with forty-two million dollars we have to find on our present rate and base of taxation." That amount, it is projected, will be needed to finance new government programs in the coming year, notably Medicare.

Grants Known Today??

Gerald Doucet, Nova Scotia's Minister of Education would like the universities to be informed as quickly as possible of the breakdown in University Grants to the various Nova Scotian colleges, but feels it "would be improper of me to give it (the breakdown) until it is presented before the House." In the estimates tabled in the Legislature last week Assistance to Universities was listed as \$23,750,000 but no college by college listings were introduced at that time. Doucet's turn will likely come today or tomorrow when the Estimates for the Education Department are introduced in the House.

The Minister did say however that "the increase in operating grants in the forthcoming fiscal year represents an increase of 24.1% over the previous fiscal year."

This brings the "total monies emanating from government to universities of \$64,550,000 as compared with \$564,000 five years ago," the Minister told the Gazette.

Commenting on a Gazette source which said that the breakdown would undergo little change from that recommended by the University Grants Committee (also not released at press time), Doucet said: "We have always looked upon the university Grants Committee as a very real, independent committee whose recommendations bore the greatest amount of weight."

