

From East to West

Students to pay more

OTTAWA (CUP) — Students at Simon Fraser University, hit by a 25 per cent tuition increase this year, have won the right to have a B.C. court decide whether the fee increase is lawful.

For other Canadian university students, that decision couldn't have come at a more opportune time. Across the country tuition increases next year are almost as sure a thing as rising unemployment figures.

There are indications that tuition will rise in at least seven and possibly eight provinces next fall. Only in Quebec and British Columbia are administrators confident that tuition for resident students will be the same come next September.

Tuition fee increases in most Canadian provinces have had a major effect in pushing up the overall cost-of-living in six major cities last fall, and prospects for next fall are just as gloomy.

In 1975-76 tuition represented 11.6 per cent of total operating income for Canadian universities but in 1976-77 that figure rose to 13.5 per cent.

A province-by-province survey indicates why that percentage increased in the past year and why it is likely to do the same in the next.

The Atlantic

In Nova Scotia, students who paid a six per cent increase this year and who were promised a three-year freeze on increases, now face the likelihood of annual hikes of between six and ten per cent.

The Council of Maritime Premiers in December told the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission they were not willing to meet the MPHEC's request for a 14 per cent increase in operating assistance for the 1978-79 academic year.

This makes a tuition increase almost certain. MPHEC said in November that even with the desired 14 per cent increase in operating assistance, tuition increases would have been levied this year.

Father Malcolm MacDonnel, chairperson of the Atlantic Association of Universities (AAU), said the question of fee increases would have to wait until the administrators have a clear idea of what their financial situation will be next year, and whether the governments are prepared to make any specific recommendation on the question of tuition fees.

Students in New Brunswick's post-secondary institutions, who have suffered two consecutive tuition increases in two years, are also likely to feel the effects of the Maritime premiers refusal to provide additional funds.

Quebec

In Quebec, differential fees will probably be introduced in the coming year according to university administrators. But a general tuition hike is unexpected. The Parti Quebecois, in its party program, is committed to the abolition of university tuition but says it needs an additional \$50 million to achieve it.

The central student union at the Universite de Montreal says the Levesque government could raise the money through corporate taxes and has lead a boycott of fees at that campus since September. The union says it wants a return to a policy which allowed students to pay fees in the spring when government loans and grants had been received.

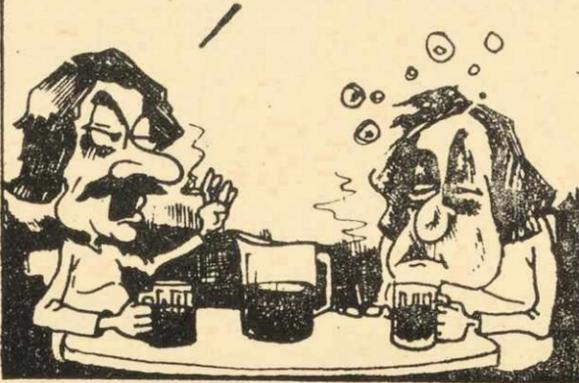
The original deadline at U de M for payment of tuition fees was Oct. 25 and is now Jan. 31. Only a small number of students are still boycotting and government loans and grants are now arriving.

Ontario

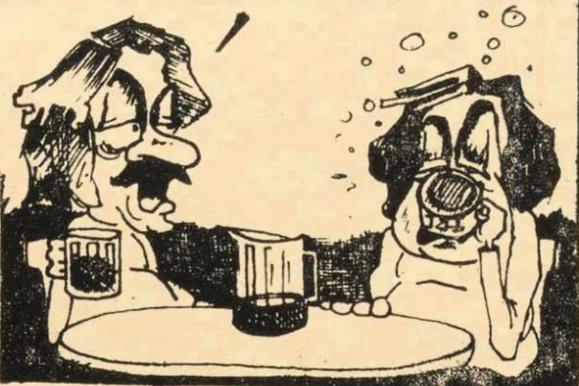
In Ottawa, Toronto and Thunder Bay, StatsCan lists tuition increases as a factor in the 8.7 per cent rise in living cost last October. Ontario students paid \$100 more this year for tuition. International students took that increase, as well as a whopping 250 per cent fee differential. Another tuition increase was planned by the province but was withdrawn following the student protest last spring.

The government has assured students that no increases are planned for 1978-79, but at least one

WITH A TUITION INCREASE WE SHOULD RECEIVE A MUCH WIDER RANGE OF COURSES...



...WHICH WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY RAISE THE INTELLECT OF THE AVERAGE STUDENT...



AND RESULT IN A HIGHER STANDARD OF EDUCATION AND INCREASE THE QUALITY OF THE LEARNING PROCESS...



... THEN AGAIN MAYBE THE BASTARDS WILL JUST KEEP IT !!



recent government report advocates students supporting a higher proportion of education costs. The report, written by York University professor John Buttrick and released in November, recommends that the government "push tuition up as rapidly as is politically feasible" to the point where it covers the cost of instruction.

Ironically, Buttrick's rationale for the increase is one of making university access more equitable. He notes there has been "an orderly transmission of the class structure from one generation to another" and that, accordingly, the poor subsidize the rich who attend university. "People ought to bear the costs of what benefits them," he concludes.

Minister of Colleges and Universities Harry Parrott agrees students should bear some of the

cost of their own education, but says he would not take the point as far as Buttrick.

The large representation of wealthier people in universities is "more a social problem than an economic problem," he added.

Manitoba

Students at the University of Manitoba can expect their third tuition fee increase in as many years, according to U of M president Ralph Campbell.

In a recent interview, Campbell said he did not know how large a grant the university would receive from the provincial government but added it is apparent that "all government-funded institutions are in for some very austere times." In recent weeks the provincial government has cut back its funding of several cultural institutions and cancelled a job creation program.

Acting student union president Caroline Dabrus said the union would oppose the increase because the university was already "nickeling and diming students to death." She said that in the past year the university had, in anticipation of a decreased grant from the province, started charging students for services which had previously been free. Students have already had the equivalent of a tuition increase because of this, she said.

Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Universities Commission plans to index tuition fees at the province's universities and technical institutes to a fixed percentage of total operating budgets in the coming year.

The board of governors at the University of Saskatchewan this month "rejected in principle" the plan, and "reserved the right to review tuition fee costs annually." Legally, the boards of both universities set tuition fees, although the commission allots funds.

Jeff Parr, University of Regina student union president, said the Universities Commission had told him that tuition would become a fixed portion of operating costs—probably around 11 per cent. Parr said a 12 per cent increase in tuition is likely throughout the province.

An increase would come on the heels of a nine per cent increase in 1975-76 and a 10 per cent increase in 1976-77.

Parr presented a petition signed by 1,420 University of Regina students in October protesting the plan to index tuition fees to inflation. "Every increase in tuition restricts more and more people from post-secondary education, making this institution even more elitist than it is now," Parr said.

Alberta

In Alberta there has been a clear indication from the provincial treasurer that there will be no increase in provincial grants to universities—which means, according to University of Lethbridge president Bill Beckel, a tuition rise at that campus of "no less than 10 per cent and no more than 25 per cent next year."

Beckel said there will probably be a "modest increase" in operating grants but not enough to offset another fee increase. Last year fees at the U of L went up by 25 per cent.

Last September, Minister of Advanced Education Bert Hohol said there would be a province-wide increase but as yet no formal announcement has materialized.

The Federation of Alberta Students (FAS) has embarked on a campaign to forestall any such announcement. This month FAS plans to distribute pamphlets on tuition to all Alberta post-secondary schools, and follow with a letter writing campaign, local seminars and press and classroom information sessions. In February, FAS plans to present the 10,000 expected letters to Hohol at a mass lobby of informed delegates from each campus.

Hohol, in turn, has agreed to set up a committee to study the costs faced by students in attending an Albertan post-secondary institution.

FAS believes the committee was established to justify any future tuition increases but also feels that the committee's existence makes an increase this year unlikely. FAS says to increase fees while the question was being studied would make a mockery of that committee, which costs \$175,000.