

Tuition fees to rise sharply

by Stuart Flinn

The tentative tuition fee hike set for September of 1991 would be an "onerous debt burden on students", says Dalhousie Student Union president Dave Shannon. The hike would see fees for Arts and Science students set in the range of 105 to 110 per cent of the average at other Nova Scotia universities.

"Onerous debt burden on students"

To put this in real terms, says Shannon, "tuition will be raised by 20 per cent when inflation is taken into account." If this is not frightening enough, the fees for the differential programs such as the professional schools and graduate programs could be much higher.

Dalhousie administration says major reform of the operating grant funding mechanism at the provincial level is the impetus for the recommended increases. The financial strategy committee's second progress report says, "The combination of a government policy to provide more distributional equity in grants to provincial universities, narrowly defined in terms of grants per weighted student, and aggressive recruitment activities by a number of other Nova Scotian institutions has disadvantaged

Dalhousie seriously."

The financial strategy committee sees the solution to the problem in a number of ways. These include fund-raising, the sale of university land, increased parking rates, restructuring non-credit programs, and raising tuition, among others.

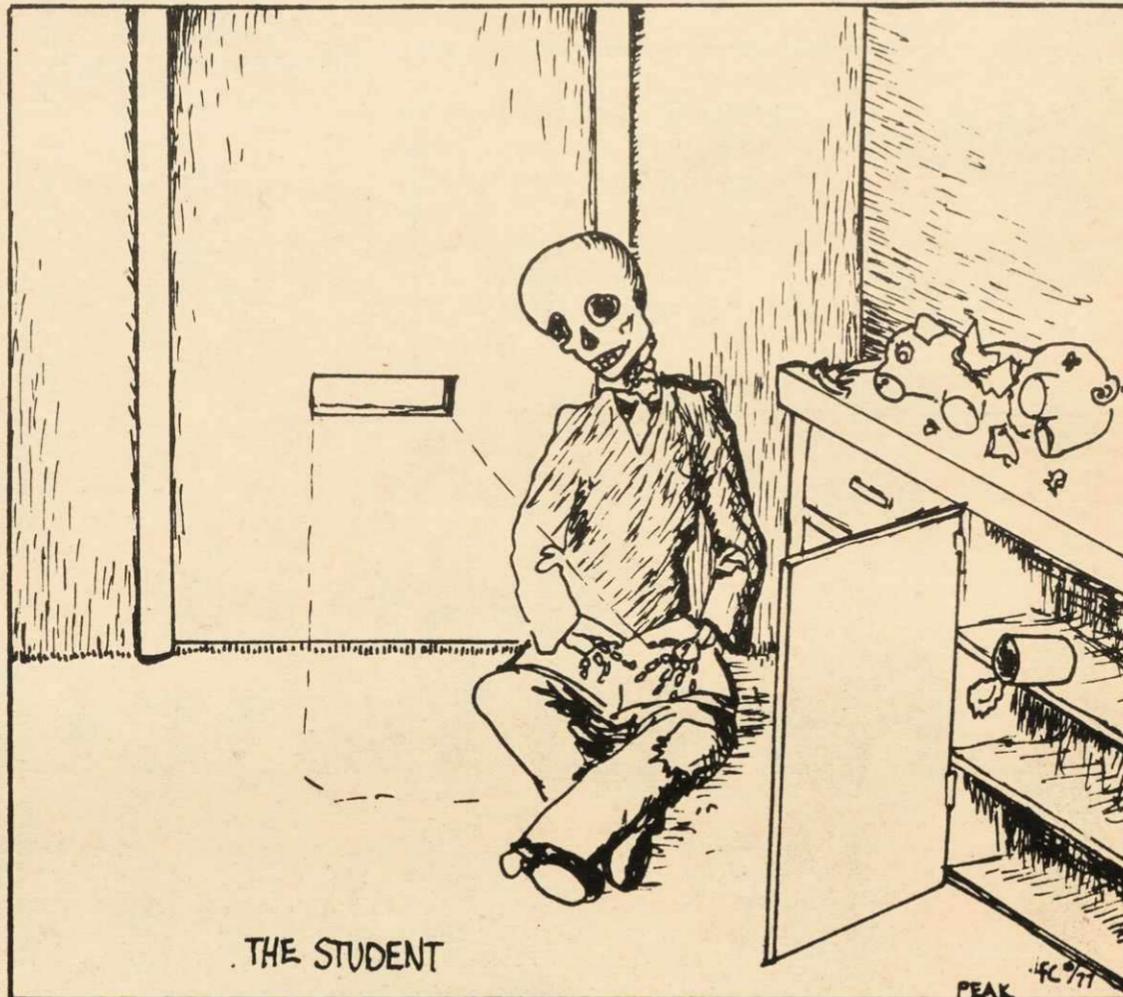
Another reason that tuition is being looked at as a possible source of additional revenue, says Shannon, is that "the DSU tuition fee agreement expires September of 1991." This agreement, called for a five-year moratorium on tuition hikes, but allowed for an increase in line with the rise in

between 1.75 and 2.75 million more per year

the cost of living.

The tuition fee increase would bring in between \$1.75 and \$2.75 million more per year, the recommendation says. Of this, one quarter would be available to aid in accessibility through scholarships and bursaries.

Shannon says the administration is looking in the wrong direction for funds. Increased costs to students "would hurt accessibility to Dalhousie for first-time and marginal financial students". Moreover, higher fees "would cause a heavy debt load for students while they were attending Dalhousie and would carry over to when they were start-



ing careers and families".

But the most important consequence, says Shannon, would be the "demoralizing effect it would have on the student. It would cause a backlash against the very avenue that the administration should be looking at for revenue — alumni support.

"With a disgruntled student

body, the negative fallout in both alumni support and in the goodwill toward the university from the business community could be disastrous. The recent capital campaign had a goal of \$25 million, and it raised \$40 million. This is where the future money will come from, not from the students. By burdening the students

and causing a drop in morale, the future fund-raising efforts of Dalhousie may be jeopardized."

Next week the financial strategy committee will present another progress report. This report will focus on human relations at Dalhousie, but should also shed more light on the tuition fee increase.

CFS reconfirms zero tuition fee policy

by Alex Burton

Between November 5 and 12, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) held their national conference in Ottawa and reconfirmed their zero tuition fee policy.

Roughly 200 student delegates attended the conference. The Dalhousie Student Union was represented by VP Academic Kim Vance, VP External Tom Digby, and Lynn MacMichael, a member of the external affairs committee. Other issues discussed at the conference included CFS's National Education Policy (NEP), the annual budget, CFS's government lobbying campaign, and abortion.

The zero tuition fee policy came up for consideration but was reaffirmed, says Lara Morris, President of the Students' Unions of Nova Scotia (SUNS). The tuition

fee policy was one of the issues dealt with in a review of the NEP. This is the first time in three years the NEP has been examined at the national conference, says Digby.

The NEP, says Digby, is "CFS's vision for the post-secondary education system." Other issues covered in the NEP are student aid, development of the community college system, and an emphasis on a research and development role for Canadian universities.

The majority of media coverage of the conference focused on two events. The first was a party (see the Gazette, Nov. 16) and the second was a student march on Parliament Hill. The march was declared a success, with approximately 2000 students participating in the protest. MacMichael was pleased with the march, say-

ing, "Everyone was so psyched, we were chanting and singing... we got the attention of the national government."

Carleton University students and CFS delegates were protesting Bill C-33. The legislation will cut \$4.8 billion from federal transfer payments for post-secondary education, says Digby. "That's a cutback of \$220 million for Nova Scotia, which works out to about \$75 per student."

The conference was also called successful by Digby, who adds that Dalhousie's concerns were adequately dealt with. "I'm really pleased with the staff and the conference," he says.

MacMichael says it was "as successful as a conference can be, considering there were 200 picky people."

Morris, who compared SUNS's relationship with CFS to a marriage ("sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't"), says, "CFS

conferences aren't a success, they're a mess." However, she says "we reaffirmed our goals and our commitment to quality, accessible higher education." She also says "CFS is our (students') only national voice."

CFS now claims to represent 250,000 students across Canada, excluding Quebec, and has an

operating budget of \$750,000, says Digby. The services budget has a deficit of approximately \$90,000, but Travel CUTS, a service provided by CFS, made \$54 million in sales last year, totaling over \$500,000 in profit. "Travel CUTS's profits help defray the CFS services budget deficit," says Digby.

WORLD AIDS DAY

The World Health Organization has designated Friday, Dec. 1 as World AIDS Day and you, as a member of the Dalhousie community, are invited to visit an information booth in the SUB lobby.

The Dalhousie University AIDS Committee will man the booth from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and will be available to answer any questions you have about AIDS and AIDS prevention.