

Free tuition not the answer

BY GINA STACK

Most students do not want to see an end to tuition fees according to the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations.

On Tuesday, the national student organization, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) called for the abolition of tuition fees. Its rival organization, the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) countered this stance stating "the assertion of doing away with tuition fees in order to eliminate student debt is not only irrational but also impossible given [Canada's] current financial situation."

Dalhousie has been a member of CASA for the past two academic years. In the spring of 1996, Dalhousie students voted in a referendum to leave the CFS and join the newly formed CASA. It was decided that the CFS was too protest orientated, and Dalhousie

students preferred the more lobby oriented CASA.

Dalhousie Student Union president Chris Adams agrees with CASA's stance on tuition. He says that students must be willing to work with the federal government.

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"It's unfair at this point in time for the CFS to call for the abolition of tuition when they're not offering any alternatives to tuition," said Adams.

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Adams says that the CFS has

done nothing to work towards reforming the student loan program and they have been critical of the federal government's announcement during the throne speech that it will set aside \$1-billion for a scholarship and grant fund beginning in the year 2000.

"You can't go out with the idea that everything the federal government does is wrong because they haven't made zero tuition the most important issue on their agenda yet," said Adams.

Dalhousie will be directly involved with CASA's next attempt to lobby the federal government.

The national director of CASA, Hoops Harrison, says that the alliance will meet with representatives from the federal government in Halifax next month "in order to re-draw the current student aid program". Dalhousie will be taking part in this event scheduled for October 20.

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