

NUS calls for an end to discrimination , continued

inaction, the national union calls on students "to join with others who are working to reverse the present decline."

"Unless those in Canadian society who are being exploited through the housing crisis work together, there is little likelihood of governments acting to make decent accommodation available to all."

The statement points out that "a considerable number of student governments have already contacted active community housing groups and tenants unions in their community" and urges that others do likewise.

According to NUS, students have "a unique role to play" in community housing action. Students, as a low income group during their term of studies,

compete with other low-income groups for housing. However, they are in a unique position because of their existing organizational structures through which collective resources and action may be utilized.

Also, students move more frequently than other groups, and hence have a chance to "feel the housing crunch" more often. And, students who live in institutional accommodation can participate more freely in pro-tenant activity "because they have less reason to fear landlord reprisals," the statement reads.

But the fact that students have a better chance of affording adequate accommodation after they graduate is viewed as a mixed blessing from the perspective of students as pro-housing activists.

On the one hand, the statement says, they are "less liable to discouragement", but on the other they are "more liable to lose interest" in the issues of improved housing for all.

Improvement in housing, according to NUS, includes the preservation of neighbourhoods, increased protection for tenants, and government action to increase the stock of housing available.

With particular reference to students, NUS calls for "an end to discrimination by occupation" whereby landlords can refuse to rent to students because they are students.

And the national student union

also calls for resumed government funding of student residences "where there is a proven need." Because students compete with other low-income groups for housing, the provision of student residences would reduce the pressure on that type of accommodation, the statement says.

It concludes by urging students to realize that the "housing crisis" isn't just something that happens for three weeks each year in the Fall and to students, and asks students and student organizations to become more involved in ongoing community housing action programmes.

Submissions, ideas requested for student aid hearings

TORONTO (CUP) - Student aid will be the topic of public hearings held in Ontario by an advisory committee to the Minister of Colleges and Universities. The

Ontario government announced this August 14.

The committee is requesting submissions from student, labour, business and other interested groups on current needs and new aid schemes, as well as comments on the Ontario Student Assistance Programme (OSAP) and the newly introduced Ontario Student Loans Plan.

According to a senior student aid official in the provincial government the purpose of the hearings is to solicit opinions and prepare a report on the position Ontario should take in the upcoming federal-provincial renegotiation of the Fiscal Arrangements Act.

The Act, due to expire in 1977, outlines the tax and funding arrangements between Ottawa and the provinces, and includes a section on provincial participation in the Canada Student Loans Plan.

The official denied that the decision to hold public hearings at this time meant that Ontario was dissatisfied with the results of last year's federal-provincial talks on student aid.

Those talks, he said, were "more general in scope" and the recommendations coming out of them were acceptable to Ontario.

He said the hearings and report, to be conducted by the Ontario Advisory Committee on Financial Assistance for Students, will "be more concrete than philosophical" and would "start from scratch" and investigate Ontario's student aid system in detail.

"The advisory groups concerns are more immediate. They're being asked to take a fresh look at student aid and cannot assume that the present OSAP system is the one we're going to have to live with for the next ten years," he said.

According to the official, the advisory group could decide to recommend that Ontario pull out of the federal aid system "if it looks better for Ontario."

The written request for submissions put out by the Advisory Committee, however, gives a very broadly worded definition of the concerns of the group.

They ask for submissions on "any and all" matters relating to "the financial arrangements required, in the long run, to assist students in pursuing their post-secondary studies or training" and on the administrative steps and procedures needed.

The submissions "may simply address themselves to specific needs or problems ... analyse or criticize any or all features of existing Ontario student assistance programmes ... (or) may choose to advance revised or completely new schemes of student assistance."

Public hearings by the Committee are to take place on November 26 in Thunder Bay and Sudbury; on December 5 in London and Ottawa; and on January 20-21 in the Toronto area.

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