

University's international role examined

by Michael Burns

"The role of universities in international development is presently inefficient, inadequate and, I submit, somewhat fuzzy", said Vice-President of Dal, G.R. MacLean, on Friday. The remark was occasioned at a panel discussion on the subject, featuring MacLean, President of Dal, Henry Hicks, and R.I. McAllister from the Department of Economics.

The discussion, chaired by Hicks, at first sought to define the role of universities in international development. Taking the lead, Hicks proposed that Canada is a "debtor" country in terms of higher education, and ex-

plained that universities are not responsible for solving economic, social and political problems. They have neither the mandate nor the resources for solving such problems, he said, and they must remain detached in this regard. Instead, universities must teach and conduct research. While addressing the question of what universities can do for developing nations, the president poured scorn on the Government of Nova Scotia for its "regrettable" action of late in implementing a discriminatory fee policy sanctioned against foreign students studying in Canada. He insisted that to discriminate

against foreign students is to "downgrade the interest and enrichment of the student body," and added that we do not want "an inbred educational system" here in Canada. In concluding his introductory remarks, Hicks said it is essential that developing nations foster their own systems of education.

On the subject of differential fee status for foreign students, Vice-President MacLean took Hicks to task, throwing the weight of his personal support in favour of its implementation. Once again at variance with Hicks, he said he felt that rather than making a contribution to inter-

national development, the universities are making a contribution to international understanding. And it is a myth, he went on, that most foreign students are from the less developed countries (LDC's). Thus, he said, we are doing more for the developed nations in terms of education, especially the U.S., where there are already many well-established institutions of higher learning. He further commented that there exists a discrepancy in that foreign students are judged and accepted on strict academic merit, rather than on the needs of the particular developing nation. In his closing

remarks, MacLean recommended that the Government of Canada contribute to international development by accepting foreign students who are chosen by their own countries, and by assigning them to universities across the country.

The discussion drew to a close with a refreshing slideshow presented to the small, Friday-night gathering by R.I. McAllister from the Department of Economics. The colourful series of slides provided an example of the activities of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), in Ghana (Capital: Accra, official language: English). It was shown that in such projects, universities can, with the assistance of such an external agency as CIDA, go one step further in offering practical aid to the LDCs. Finally, McAllister, in summing up the evening's proceedings, stressed that the role of universities in international development necessarily implies a two-way learning process.

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NEW YORK (ZNS-CUP)—The disco industry may soon be rivalling MacDonal's and Kentucky Fried Chicken as nation-wide dancing franchises equivalent to fast-food chains spring up across the U.S.

The New York Times Magazine has reported that disco has grown from a network of scattered dance halls just a few years ago to an industry currently generating \$4 billion a year—making it as big a business as network television.

And the magazine says this is only the beginning. One disco franchise, known as the "2001 club" is expected to multiply to 150 clubs in the 1980's. At \$35,000 per franchise, that amounts to over \$5 million in income, not including profits from the gross incomes of each club.

These clubs are geared like "IBM, with specifications right down to the macrame wall hangings", the magazine said. Each club plays computerized disco hits, with a "schedule that moves a neophyte dancer so smoothly through an evening that he never realizes he is being processed as methodically as hamburger on a McDonald's grill."

Meanwhile, a Honolulu firm specializing in designing discos will team up with a Hong Kong company to build Mainland China's first disco nightclub, in Shanghai.

Representatives of TJ Discos and a Hong Kong firm, C and W Management, will fly to Peking in the near future for two days of negotiations with Chinese officials.

The disco will be operated by the Chinese government's state-owned travel agency.