

"Gov't has mortgaged the future"

Parrott defends government, tuition increases

By KIM LLEWELLYN

Harry Parrott, Ontario Minister of Colleges and Universities, told a scanty audience in Vanier's Dining Hall last Tuesday evening that the Ontario government can no longer afford to finance universities as it did in the 60's.

"The 60's was an easy money decade," said Parrott. "We've been mortgaging out the future too severely and for too many years."

"The Role of the University" was the theme of the seminar which also featured York President H. Ian Macdonald, delivering the keynote address and panel members Sydney Eisen, Dean of York's Faculty of Arts, and Graham Murray, executive Vice-Chairman of Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations.

The seminar was part of the

"Education For Living" symposium given in honour of Vanier's tenth anniversary as a College of York University.



H. Ian Macdonald and Dean Eisen listen to Harry Parrott defend the Ontario government.

Besides the relationship of the provincial government to the University, topics for the evening included the implications of unionization on the future role of the University, demographic changes, and the roles and objectives of the University in the present and future.

Although Parrott spoke briefly, questions of the audience were mainly directed at him. In response to the proposal of raising corporation taxes instead of university tuition the minister said, "Raising taxes is not the answer. We must draw the line somewhere. If we combine all the tax revenue collected from the corporations we would have enough money to run the ministry for a total of 27 days."

He maintained that students pay only a small fraction of their education, "If every student paid 25

per cent of what his education costs we'd have all the money we want."

CUT FAT

Eisen compared the government idea of "cutting the fat out of the system" by comparing government-university relations with a doctor's relations with his overweight patient. Originally, he said, the patient is fat, but, through vigorous dieting, grows skinnier and weaker. Yet, on his repeated visits the doctor orders more and more weight loss.

"Ultimately," said Eisen, "you are putting the patient's life in danger."

On faculty unionization Eisen commented, "I have learned previously that if I said anything on unionization essentially critical I was subject to prosecution under the Ontario Labour Relations Act."

Murray cited the faculty desire to unionize as being two-fold.

"Firstly, professors have felt it is increasingly necessary to entrench their terms and conditions of employment in a formal agreement with their employer.

AUTONOMY

"In addition, collective bargaining will strengthen the hand of the university system over finding and securing an appropriate measure of university autonomy."

He also added that he felt collective bargaining will be done by sophisticated academics with every regard for the university as an institution he wishes to preserve.

On the topic of the university's role in society, MacDonald made general references about universities "pushing back the frontiers of knowledge."

"Universities have never been universally popular because they have been associated with the elite or have challenged the conventional wisdom of society. The first is unfortunate and the second must be preserved at all costs," said Macdonald.

Dean Eisen also added comments about university, saying, "To be a full member of this society you must get your share of education. A healthy society needs to educate its people well into the adult years."

At one point in his address he said, "Those (students) I've seen graduate in recent years are some of the best I've ever seen, and I say that after many years of experience."

Former NDP leader says elites must not be the people who run the country

By IAN KELLOGG

"The choice for the next generation is not whether you are going to have socialism or some kind of outmoded market system. The choice is between democratic socialism and collectivized socialism."

So said Tommy Douglas, past leader of the federal New Democratic Party (NDP) and the first socialist head of government in North America as premier of Saskatchewan from 1944 to 1962, when he spoke before a packed hall of students and faculty at York's Glendon College last Thursday.

Douglas was lecturing on the history of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) and the NDP. He used the occasion to make a strong defence of the principles and record of democratic socialism as represented in Canada by the NDP.

Douglas said, "We need to get rid of the mystique that only the corporate elite have the know-how to operate the economy. Basic decisions should be made by the people and not by a few businessmen in boardrooms," he said.

However, Douglas said democratic socialism is not a "blueprint" towards the socialist goal. Rather, he said "it represents a point of view, a series of principles, a collection of values."

Douglas detailed what he

believes democratic socialist principles are: 1) an over-riding concern for the disadvantaged; 2) a dedication to equality of opportunity; 3) the use of resources "not on the basis of profitability", but for the benefit of the people as a whole; 4) the preservation of civil liberties and personal freedoms; and 5) a commitment to socialism as an extension and deepening of democracy.

Douglas rejected the argument some socialists make that to achieve the social security our technique is capable of we must surrender some freedoms. "We can use the freedom we have now to bring about the security of a properly planned society," he said.

Douglas then proceeded to dispel any "nightmares about socialism" the audience might have. Using the example of his own CCF administration in Saskatchewan, he showed how such socialist measures as medicare, public gas and public electricity could be smoothly implemented if the industrial infrastructure needed to sustain them was first built.

As further proof that socialists are not incompetent or "wooly-minded utopians" he pointed to the good records of numerous social democratic administrations in Europe. Sweden, he noted, has attained the highest per-capita wealth in the world after 44 years of

Social Democratic rule.

"North America remains the last citadel of reaction", relatively impervious to the proven record of socialism," Douglas said. The cost is a stagnating economy running at 85 per cent capacity which, according to Douglas, results in at least 9 billion dollars of lost production within Canada each year.

Douglas said that it was only during wars that the other parties would plan production and create enough jobs. In this regard he cited his job-creation proposal of 1936, when he was a CCF MP, of half a billion dollars. This proposal flabbergasted the ruling Liberals who couldn't imagine where the money would come from. Douglas said he replied they would find the money if a war was in progress. He was proven correct in World War II when, according to Douglas, one trillion dollars was generated in Canada for the destruction of Hitler. It is this productive capacity that Douglas said a socialist government can harness for the benefit of everyone.

But, Douglas fears socialism may come too late. He said the change to socialism can come now "in an atmosphere of liberty and freedom, or when violence is in the street." If the violent road becomes necessary he fears an authoritarian collectivist solution will result.

Douglas hopes the NDP will be strong enough to institute democratic rather than authoritarian socialism "when the Canadian people in their despair decide this system is not working."

In the question period following his talk Douglas said the NDP must move beyond mere welfarism and "attack the fundamental weakness of the system . . . that the basic decision-making is in the hands of the corporate elite." Only a federal NDP administration can tackle this problem, Douglas said.

Another questioner wondered if the CIA might not block any genuine democratic socialist experiment in Canada the way they did in Chile. Douglas, while calling the American intervention in Chile and the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia "semi-fascist", said he felt the American people would not stand for such measures being applied in Canada.

When asked about the independentist movement of the Parti Quebecois, Douglas reiterated his stand of the 1960's, the federal government should realize Canada is a federation of two cultures and two nations. Therefore "special status" should be granted to Quebec to protect its cultural heritage while maintaining federal control over the country's economy, he said.



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