

Tuition to increase again

by Valerie Mansour

Students in the Maritimes will be facing further tuition increases this year, according to a report issued Tuesday by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission. The MPHEC has blamed the governments of the Maritime Provinces for the deterioration of the financial position of post-secondary institutions.

The commission cited the slipping salary levels, highest tuition fees in the country, the reduction in real terms of operating grants per full-time student, and the decline in government's operating assistance as the factors that are eroding the quality of post-secondary education.

The MPHEC expressed concern that the lack of funding for new programs, cutbacks in courses, library acquisitions, and personnel will have an adverse effect on the quality of programs.

In the same report the commission confirmed figures released in last week's *Gazette*. They have recommended an 11 per cent increase in the grant for operating costs, and two 1.5 per cent increases aimed at reducing regional disparities in government funding of post-secondary education.

"The announcement is a slap in the face for all students", said Marc Allain, chairperson of the Nova Scotia caucus of the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS). "Last year they recommended that a three year freeze be imposed on tuition increases, since tuition was already the highest in the country. Now after allowing a 6 per cent increase they say we should be prepared to expect an increase in the order of 6 to 10 per cent every year. It is a blatant contradiction of previous policy. Such a move is unjustifiable to students. The

MPHEC has lost all credibility."

A representative of the MPHEC told the *Gazette* that "students should expect tuition fees to increase with the cost of living." They are recommending that this factor be considered when the student aid budget is drawn up.

The MPHEC is an organization

created four years ago by the Council of Maritime Premiers to coordinate and plan the development of post-secondary education in the Maritimes. Their most significant function is financial planning and recommendation to the premiers council.

The commission's recommenda-

tions are now being considered by the regional treasury board and the Council of Maritime Premiers. Their decision will be made in December and if, in fact, the MPHEC's recommendations are rejected, the board and the CMP will arrive at its own figure and pass it back to the MPHEC for distribution.



'His problem is that he keeps seeing Mercators in the sky.' Prime Minister Trudeau spoke in Halifax yesterday; full story next week.

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Acadia dispute nears agreement

WOLFVILLE (CUP)—Acadia faculty members cancelled a planned strike vote Nov. 2 after progress in last-minute negotiations with the board of governors.

After both sides compromised on key negotiating points during their Nov. 1 meeting, agreement seems near in the contract dispute, which has gone on for a year.

Before the meeting with the board, faculty union officials were encouraging members to vote in favour of a strike. However, at the faculty meeting the following day, faculty voted to table the strike vote and agreed to drop their demand for reinstatement of music professor Robert McCarthy, fired amid controversy in 1975.

Faculty voted to accept a \$20,000 cash settlement which the administration offered McCarthy, and will lobby for his reinstatement through the Canadian Association of University Teachers rather than in negotiations with the university.

The administration has said it is willing to give ground on several issues, including the appointment, renewal and promotion of professors, and initiation of a review procedure by faculty members dissatisfied with certain deans and department heads.

However, details of the review procedure remain contentious, because many deans have voiced objections to the faculty association's review proposals.

The apparent compromise comes two weeks after the board of governors rejected key proposals long accepted by their negotiators. The move enraged the faculty association, which subsequently called for a strike. They had previously said they didn't favour strike action as a strategy in the dispute.

Salaries have not been a major, contentious issue. The contract will be the first for Acadia faculty.

Hope remains for Carleton House

Carleton House, the lower campus lounge may still be in operation until the end of April. The building, on University Avenue, had been scheduled to be torn down by January 1 so that the government could build the new Nova Scotia Archives on the site.

Student Council President Robert Sampson is working towards keeping the lounge open. Carleton students have been fighting for four years to have an area on the lower campus with non-academic and eating facilities.

A house was finally made available last spring and expensive renovations were carried out during the summer. In the meantime the government and the university were discussing the land trade that would put the Archives on the Carleton House site.

There is also a possibility for a new Carleton House or "Professional Centre" to be made available in a building at the corner of Edward and University. This lounge would be open to members of the lower faculties and possibly to law students as well.

Inside This Week

More on Carleton House

Child Abuse

Atlantic Issues

Coming

Trudeau speaks in Halifax

Sydney Steel