

AUCC requests increase in federal grants to support universities

By RICHARD BLAIR

VANCOUVER (CUP)—The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada has called for an immediate increase of \$3 in the federal government's per capita grant.

This increase, proposed by the Bladen report, would raise the grant for education from \$2 to \$5.

The AUCC last Friday passed a resolution: "That the government be urgently requested to authorize this increase within the present fiscal year."

The resolution, moved by Dr. J. A. Corry of Queen's University in Kingston, asked for the immediate increase because "the present state of university financing is critical."

The AUCC also asked their board of directors to establish a committee to study all aspects of accessibility to post-secondary education.

This would include "financial assistance to students."

Dean Vincent Bladen said here Thursday: "The recommendation of a \$5 grant is based on the funds available to the universities, including fees at the present level."

NO LOSS OF QUALITY

"This grant would not put any province in so strong a position that it could, without loss of quality or development, abandon revenue received from fees."

"To eliminate fees, the universities must find money elsewhere," said the author of the Bladen report.

"If the federal government provides only \$5 then the provincial government must provide more if fees are eliminated."

On student demonstrations against the report, Bladen said: "All the criticisms made of the report were made to us in the course of our inquiry."

"We heard them and we considered them and made our recommendations."

"Nothing I have heard since makes me want to apologize for them or reconsider them," he said.

The grant and student aid resolutions were passed during the final session of the five-day conference which attracted 300 delegates from universities and colleges across Canada.

The conference opened Monday, and for the first two days committees met behind closed doors.

OPEN SESSIONS

The open sessions began Wednesday with an address by Corry, the association's president last year.

He said university students must continue to pay fees.

"If our resources were limitless and the governments boundlessly generous, the considerations for free tuition would be different."

"But we have no evidence that either of these conditions can be met in the near future."

"If we are to have enough government support to keep the university a worthwhile place to go, those who can bear a share of the cost of their education must continue to do so."

"Student aid needs careful attention and more money, but the current campaign for free tuition and 'universal accessibility' tends to obscure the fundamental issues."

Corry also warned that increased support from governments might result in increased intervention in university affairs.

BIG EXPENDITURES

"If the taxpayer is willing to concede big expenditures on universities, he may well say the government should stop some of the nonsense he thinks goes on there," he said.

Corry's speech was followed by a report from the AUCC's executive director, Dr. G. C. Andrew.

His report gave an outline of the work done by various AUCC committees during the year.

He also said plans are underway for a survey "of the development needs of university libraries to 1980."

"A committee on corporate aid to higher education with representation from the universities and business has also been established," said Andrew.

During Thursday's meeting, Bladen also advocated income tax concessions to enable married women to fill university teaching posts.

"The number of highly educated women we have in the country is a grossly untapped source of staff for universities."

"Perhaps the federal government could make some tax arrangement so women teachers would be able to make a deduction for costs involved in employing a housekeeper to look after husbands and families."

NO DOCTORATES

He also suggested universities should not insist on lecturers having doctorates before being allowed to teach.

He was commenting on Dr. Claude Bissell's statement that the problem of recruiting staff to meet the needs forecast by the Bladen report was terrifying.

Bissell is president of the University of Toronto.

The report says that during the next 10 years, 2,800 new staff will have to be recruited annually across Canada to meet universities' needs.

Bissell said he felt there had not been enough emphasis on the problem of meeting the needs stressed in the report.

Dr. Edward F. Sheffield, research director for the AUCC, said he "expects the teaching supply to keep up with the demand."

"In the past 10 years university enrolment in Canada has almost doubled and we have been able to find enough teachers to staff the universities," he said.

Sheffield also proposed two steps to stop the "brain drain" to the U.S.

The first is an information program to tell Canadian students in the U.S. about job opportunities in Canada.

SEEK OUT STUDENTS

The other is for individual universities to seek out students studying in the U.S. to offer them jobs.

The final session last Friday discussed the association's brief to the federal and provincial governments on the Bladen report, passed resolutions and elected officers.

The proposals suggested by the brief and the report about financing medical education came under severe criticism from the Association of Canadian Medical Colleges.

The colleges objected to the weighting formula proposed by the Bladen report.

Under this weighting formula medical and dental students would have a weighting of three, first and second year arts student one, and graduate students a weighting of five.

(Under this formula financing program, grants to universities would be based on the number of students in graduate and professional schools rather than on the total number of students in the university.)

(For example, a university with a large number of graduate students would receive more than one with many undergraduate arts students even though the two might have the same total enrolment.)

U of A president Walter H. Johns was elected vice-president of the AUCC at the Vancouver conference.

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