

gressive in tough times is one thing. Keeping it happy is quite another.

MacKay has said that as young man jobbing across the country he learned something valuable: Before you enter any new situation, you should always "find out what the rules are." Apparently, when dealing with faculty and students, he still remembers that lesson.

Students and faculty alike were outspoken in their criticism.

In April, 1982, the administration opened contract negotiations with the DFA. Though most expected talks would be difficult in the depressed financial climate, everyone felt a reasonable settlement could be made through collective bargaining. But by November negotiators had reached an impasse. Dr. Michael Cross was appointed to mediate the dispute. "All the gut issues remained unsettled," Cross recalled. "Union security, travel funds, benefits, salaries, salary structure, management rights: all unsettled. It was a total failure of the bargaining process." The DFA finally settled with the administration in December for an eleven per cent salary increase and a loose promise of union security.

Precisely why collective bargaining broke down remains a mystery. But it is clear the administration, concerned with Dalhousie's galloping deficit and further cutbacks, was for months

unprepared to grant any more than a ten per cent increase, well below what other Atlantic universities were paying their faculties. A more intriguing matter is the administration's strange optimism just prior to mediation. In an interview in the student newspaper, Board of Governors negotiator David Cameron said binding arbitration was unnecessary because "We hold the view that negotiations have not broken down."

The administration's record with students, though less desperate, was no less cryptic. When the provincial government announced its cutbacks MacKay's report of his own cost-cutting measures was sketchy, alluding to higher tuition and course reductions, and came well after he had worked out the details of "restraint and renewal".

Colleagues say MacKay's thoughtful administration has been effective. "A president must judge which style is suitable for the requirements of the age", says David Cameron. "MacKay's style is to be careful and deliberate. He deals more directly with ministers." Cameron may be right. MacKay has always known MacKay has always known how to handle society's rule-makers.

But in the eyes of his community, he is a rule-maker. His unwillingness to deal swiftly with the problems that besiege his campus links him uncomfortably with what appears to be government's laissez-faire attitude to higher education.

MacKay looks at Dalhousie's future with some caution now. "What has become evident," he says, "is that no group in our society is immune from financial problems." He sees a day when government will not be able to



support the heavy costs of higher education. "It is a western world trend for individuals to pay more for their studies." That day may come sooner than he expects.

This year, tuition has risen an average of 15 per cent and the provincial government may begin setting all university fees. MacKay may discover that good

intentions and even hard work are no substitutes for a loud, honest voice at the provincial government's bargaining tables.

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