

The Dalhousie GAZETTE

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NFCUS at Home . . .

Students are returning to Dalhousie this September after a summer during which student unemployment reached an unusually high level only to face an increase in fees amounting, on the average, to 20 dollars per course, or 100 dollars for the year. Some students who attended classes last season are unable to continue their studies because of the heavy financial burden involved. Moreover, a recent study in Ontario, one of Canada's wealthiest provinces, indicated that approximately one-half of the students in Grade XIII whose chances of university success were rated as higher than average failed to go to university, and that in a large percentage of these cases the reason was lack of funds.

NFCUS has been requesting government action on the problem of the high cost of education for some 14 years. Their efforts, however, were intensified in 1958 following the general election, prior to which both of the principal contending parties had promised to institute, in effect, a national scheme of scholarships. NFCUS delegates met with Cabinet members and submitted a detailed brief indicating the need for such a plan.

An appendix to this document, together with a specific study of income tax exemptions, was submitted to the government in 1959, and at the request of a minister, a proposed method of distributing government scholarships was later added. In April, the question of income tax exemptions for students and their parents was discussed in the Commons, but Finance Minister Fleming's remarks on the subject proved so objectionable that the 1959 NFCUS Congress condemned them in a resolution.

The government remained inactive, and this year NFCUS Secretary Andre L'Heureux wrote letters to Msrs. Diefenbaker and Fleming asking whether the problem of student finance had been dropped altogether or merely postponed because of difficulties. Mr. Fleming's complete reply was as follows: "No changes affecting income tax exemptions for university students were made at the 1960 session of parliament."

Mr. Diefenbaker's answer was less curt, but equally negative.

Such an attitude on the part of responsible government leaders is, to say the least, disturbing. It is true, of course, that the demands of Canada's students must compete with those of dozens of other group interests, that tax exemptions and national bursary schemes would involve sizeable government expenditures, and that federal ministers are besieged on all sides by important issues and a host of problems that increase in quantity as our expanding government takes on new duties.

But it is also true that Canada's economic well-being, her relations with other countries, her cultural progress, her social and political stability, and her internal development all depend, to a considerable degree, upon the work of her more highly educated citizens. Yet, the increasing demand for trained personnel is not being met, largely because many potential students are unable to obtain the necessary academic qualifications.

To put it in the simplest of terms, higher education costs too much.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that the Ottawa elite will act more constructively on the brief that NFCUS is preparing for 1960.

. . . and Abroad

One of the things about the 24th NFCUS Congress that has impressed *Gazette* editors most has been the attention paid to international affairs, and to the role of the student in this field. Considerable interest in the International Student Conference and its relations with the left-wing International Union of Students was evident. There seemed to be a prevalent feeling that Canadians in university are ill-informed about international issues and problems, and many delegates appeared anxious to do something in the way of correcting this unfortunate circumstance.



We support them heartily.

A glance at a daily paper, at any time, will suffice to convince even the most complacent individual of the importance of effective and constructive international relations in the coming decade. There is strife in Germany, conflict in South Africa, civil war in North Africa, disruption in the Congo, aggression in Tibet, conflict in Cuba, squabbling in the Middle East, suspicion in Formosa. There are ideological issues, boundary issues, racial issues, sovereignty issues, human rights issues, colonial issues, imperial issues, all of them interlocking, and all of them involved in a series of mutual causes and effects sufficient to baffle the most accomplished of experts. If there is order anywhere, it lies solely in the fact that the whole is rapidly being divided into two opposing camps, strangely reminiscent of similar fronts that ended disastrously twice before in this century.

And overshadowing it all is the mushroom cloud that has done so much to make international relations the vital (the word to be taken literally) factor in human welfare.

Melo-dramatic? Perhaps. But let us suppose, for the sake of argument, that one of the two leading powers discovered a sure defense, in the event of war, against atomic retaliation (not an impossible supposition). Reasoning that its military advantage will probably be short-lived, it might be very tempted to wipe out its opponent, using any of a dozen current issues as an excuse. Those who, believing in the power of human reason, scoff at our example, we can only answer by saying that we admire your faith, but deplore your lack of realism.

The subject of international affairs is, then, truly of supreme importance, and for this reason we urge Dal students, as well as NFCUS personnel, to make every effort to inform themselves on world problems. We would like to see NFCUS continue its participation in international student meetings, and hope that it will support efforts undertaken by any government or organization to create opportunities for individuals and groups to meet across national boundaries. We hope, too, that our national student body will confine itself to the study of external affairs and to the circulation of its findings, rather than to making ill-informed resolutions on matters whose ramifications extend far beyond the interests of students alone.

No man can understand international relations without studying them, and no government expert will respect the views of a man who has no understanding.

A Respectful Press

The editorial columns of the *Dalhousie Gazette* are not particularly noted for their eulogies. In fact, the paper's presses generally groan in outraged protest at the first sign of an applauding superlative.

But for once the presses are remaining respectfully silent as *Gazette* editors sincerely congratulate Peter Green and his NFCUS Congress Planning Committee for their excellent work in organizing the student conference. Anyone who attended the Congress, which resembled a sort of United Nations in miniature, could only marvel at the attention to detail and the clock-like working of events.

To the busy staff behind it all, we say thank you, and congratulations.

LETTER

. . . The NFCUS Role . . .

Sir:
On the occasion of the 24th National NFCUS Congress at Dalhousie I would like to state my views on the role of NFCUS in the Canadian university community, and attempt to relate them to the individual university and to the university student.

NFCUS is a means of communication. I see this as its main role. The communication of opinions, information, and ideas between university students in Canada is made possible by the NFCUS organization. We cannot afford to be provincial or regional in our attitudes. We must consider the views of Canadians from British Columbia to Newfoundland, and NFCUS, with its many facilities, keeps us in touch with the Canadian Campi.

NFCUS activity falls into three main divisions. National student affairs is one of these, and it involves such items as the National Seminar, literary contests, photography competitions, a life insurance plan, student discount services, the NFCUS Debating Association, and regional projects. NFCUS also operates a successful travel bureau, which organizes tours and makes travel arrangements for students going to and from Congresses, Seminars, etc. In short, the role of NFCUS on the national level is of considerable importance, and adds greatly to student activity. Student interest and participation is all that is required for the success of our undertakings.

The second main area of NFCUS activity is in the field of education. Its role here is of major importance for NFCUS is really the only student body which can express its views to the federal government. As students, we should be interested in education and in the role of national organizations and the government when they are planning educational programs and finance. But before we can express our opinions on these pertinent subjects, we must have the detailed information that can come only from expert research. NFCUS is the one organization that has the personnel and money necessary for this work. Students, therefore, can best express their ideas concerning educational issues to the government through NFCUS.

The third area of activity concerns international affairs. NFCUS is a member of the International Student Conference, which is pro-west, as opposed to the communist orientated International Union of Students. International student cooperation and representation is essential to an ever-shrinking world. International student affairs are not only inherently interesting, but are also an integral part of national student unions in every country.

I have used some space in explaining YOUR federation. Because NFCUS has many facets and is involved in many other areas of activity, I could continue at some

(Continued on Page 4)