

## NUS refused entrance at student aid meeting

OTTAWA (CUP) - The National Union of Students was refused entrance to the meeting of the federal-provincial task force on student aid here on Feb. 13.

NUS had sent a letter requesting an opportunity to speak in favour of seating student delegates on the task force.

Hilda Creswick, research secretary for NUS, made it no further than the ground floor of the conference centre where the task force was meeting.

She met briefly with task-force co-chairmen R.J. Lachapelle and G.M. Davies, together with Robin Skuce of the Department of Secretary of State.

They informed her that the task force, set up early last fall to review and recommend broad changes in student aid for future years, did not have the authority to seat students

as members. Any decision on whether students could sit as members, they said, would have to be made by the Council of Education Ministers. The Council, which consists of education ministers from each province, has a standing policy of not allowing for "professional group" representation on sub-committees.

According to the task force chairman, students are a professional group. They suggest NUS send a written request to the Council about student representation.

The two co-chairmen and Skuce stated that they saw a need for student input into student aid policy changes, but were less emphatic about actual participation on the task force.

"I think it would be foolish for the federal government to imple-

ment any changes in student aid without a good deal of discussion with students," said Skuce.

"We are intending at the appropriate time to consult students," said Lachapelle, adding the NUS would at least have the chance to present a brief on the task force recommendations after they are formulated.

He also said that Secretary of State, Hugh Faulkner, is prepared to meet with NUS about student aid if NUS wants a meeting.

Hilda Creswick later said, the meeting "wasn't very encouraging," but added that NUS would take the advice of the co-chairmen.

She said NUS would send a letter immediately to the Council of Education Ministers asking that students be seated on the task force, "because that's where the real changes in student aid will come from."

She also intends to ask that the Council make available reports and records of the task force for study by students. So far the task force, which meets in closed sessions, keeps all records "Confidential."

Creswick feels that NUS cannot make a very effective contribution to the deliberations of the task force by presenting a brief to the Council of Education Ministers, particularly when NUS is unable to know what is being discussed and decided at the meetings.

Maurice Richer, the CEM Secretary General, said in a telephone interview that the decision of whether to seat students on the task force as either members or observers is "political." He said the NUS request will

be forwarded to Council chairman Thomas Wells, Ontario Minister of Education.

According to Richer, Wells could decide to refer the question to the next CEM meeting, scheduled for early June, or he could contact other ministers to find out their positions on student representation.

The NUS campaign to get students seated on the task force has been supported by the Ontario Federation of Students and the newly formed Atlantic student federation.

NUS has also requested member campuses to write, to their provincial governments urging support for the seating of student representatives on the task force.

## UBC students face price increase

VANCOUVER (CUP) - Most students in residence at the University of British Columbia face an 18.6 percent increase and probably a 20 percent food price increase next September, according to housing administration documents.

Brian Dougherty, Gage residences committee, said the administration wants students to pay more rent to reduce an accumulated operating deficit and catch up to inflation.

He said residence committee members have calculated residence students will have to pay at least \$29 extra to meet the administration's attempt to reduce its operating deficit.

Money gained through rent increases would be used to reduce an operating deficit of \$168,911 this year to \$66,550 next year.

But student Board of Governors member Svend Robinson, said the 18.6 percent increase will contravene the B.C. Landlord and Tenant Act, which restricts rent increases to 10.6 percent. The board will vote on the joint committee's recommendations at a meeting in late February.

The projected rent increases are more than double last year's 7.2 percent increase.

Dougherty said the allied food price increases are also intended to accommodate rising costs, but at least one plan for the additional money is to renovate the Place Vanier dining room to make it more attractive to summer convention customers. But he

added, "the cost will have to be borne by students."

Dougherty said he couldn't give specific figures about proposed food price increases but said they would be "over 20 percent." Current residence meal ticket prices cost \$2.01 a day.

Robinson said he believes the university administration cannot claim it is a non-profit organization and therefore is not exempt from the Landlord and Tenant Act.

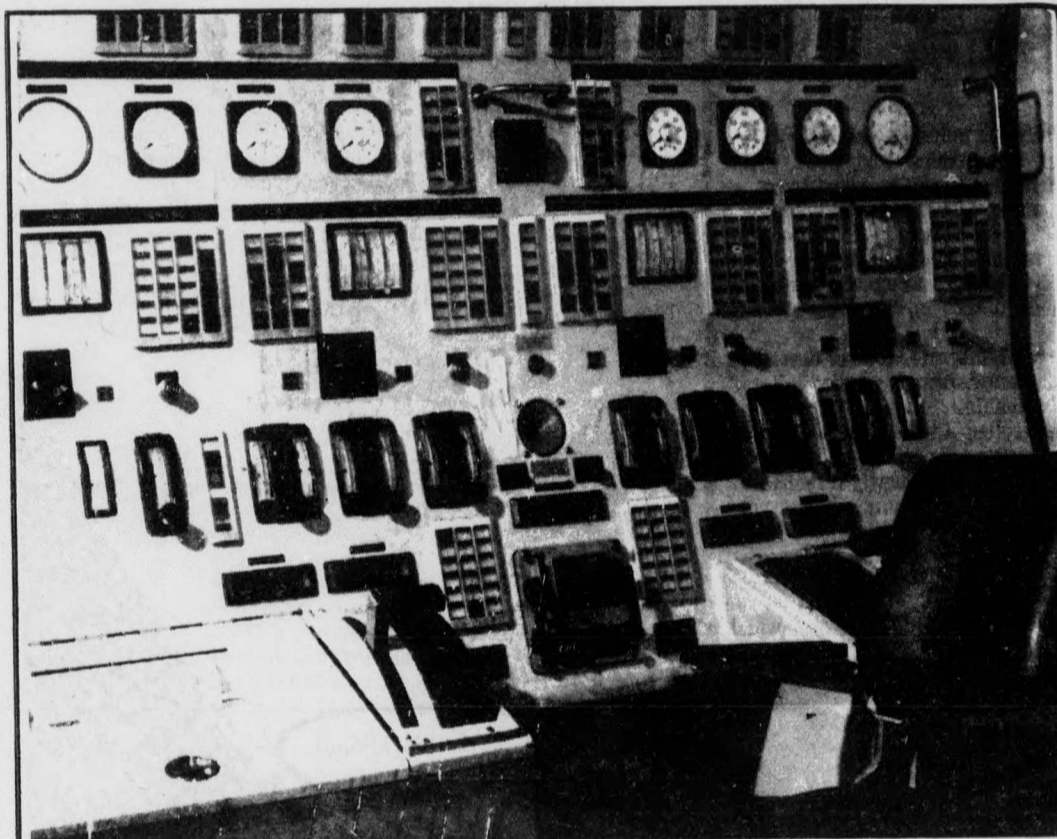
However, Dougherty said he thinks the UBC administration can appeal to rentalsman Barrie Clark to increase the rents beyond 10.6 percent because residences are currently losing more than \$100,000 a year.

Robinson also said he plans to ask the board to support a request for government-subsidized residence room and board.

Dougherty said he is satisfied that housing costs are rising and a substantial rent increase is justified but said "we haven't been able to find what the specifics are."

He said the large scale financial breakdowns received by the committee don't show possible waste and inefficiency in the residence operation.

The budget figures show the bulk of residence funds are being used to pay mortgages, at \$1,277,934 this year. The mortgage repayment figure, which counts for about 50 percent of this year's \$2,029,636 operating budget, won't increase next year.



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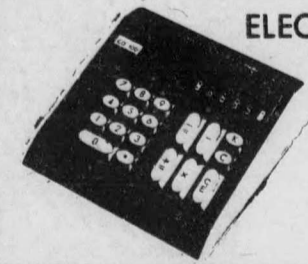
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