

# 4,000 students march on Parliament Hill

OTTAWA (CUP) — About 4,000 students confronted Secretary of State Gerald Regan on the steps of Parliament October 29, demanding an end to cabinet plans that, they say, will reduce funding to post-secondary education drastically.

Students from Carleton University, Algonquin College and the University of Ottawa marched through city streets shouting, "No way, we won't pay!" They stopped on the Parliament lawns, and were addressed by Regan, Conservative house leader Walter Baker and Bill Blaikie, NDP education critic.

Regan said he has "no knowledge" of the planned cutbacks, telling students in a letter distributed at the rally that "some may say that the Federal Government plans to drastically reduce its support for post-secondary education. This is simply not true."

He blamed the provincial governments' shrinking role in funding education as the cause of federal concern. Regan said the federal government intends to continue "doing its part to support post-secondary education."

He was shouted down by chants of "bullshit, bullshit..." from the angry students.

PC house leader Baker condemned the minister's statement that no cutbacks would be

made. "The government of Canada wants to take \$1.5 billion off the Established Programs Financing. They want to do it in the face of the unanimous decision of a committee of the Parliament of Canada made up of not just Progressive Conservatives, not just New Democrats, but of Liberal members of parliament who said it couldn't be done."

Baker, too, was interrupted by students who cried, "What about Davis?" referring to the track record of the Ontario provincial government in post-secondary education.

Bill Blaikie, MP for Winnipeg-Bird's Hill, attacked the government's proposed cuts in education financing while doling out generous tax concessions to corporations. He said Liberal criticism of the mismanagement of money given to provinces was no excuse for federal cutbacks. "They might have some basis for questioning the provincial funding commitments to these programs, but two wrongs don't make a right and that's no reason for them to begin their own program of cutbacks."

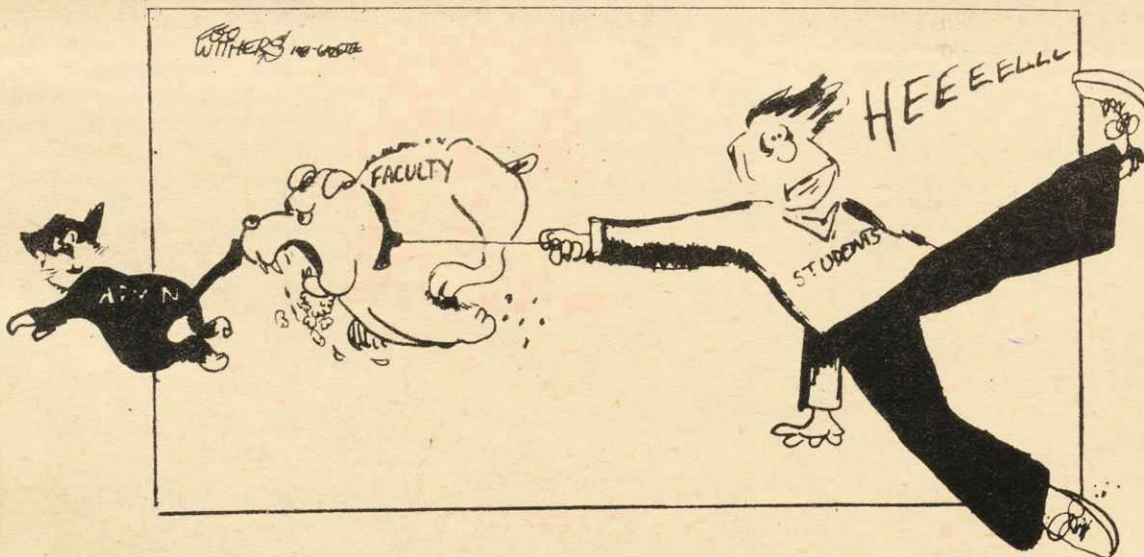
The protest was organized as part of a province-wide day of protest on university funding, spearheaded by the Ontario Federation of Students. OFS says any reduction in funding to colleges would limit the access of lower income students to higher



Vradenburg

education. They fear what could prove to be doubled tuition costs and disruptions in services on their campuses.

Extra RCMP officers had been placed at the House of Commons entrance during the demonstration, though no incidents took place. The RCMP said they estimated 4,000 students took part in the rally.



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