

Maritime university closes its doors

by Andrew Watts

Cutbacks in education have realized a very harsh reality in Nova Scotia: the outright closing of an educational institute.

The Atlantic Institute of Education in Halifax, Nova Scotia was closed in accordance with a province-wide five million dollar budget cut in education.

"It's a very dangerous precedent, this is just the thin edge of the wedge," warns Federation of Alberta Students (FAS) President Don Millar.

The school was attended by approximately 70 students working towards their masters or PH.D. degrees. The most distur-

bing fact about the closing appears to be the timing of the announcement from the provincial government.

"They announced the closing only two weeks before the start of another term," says Millar, "some students were only three days from finishing their degrees and now they may have to wait up to three years."

The problem for the students is that the closing was announced far too late for them to transfer their courses to other universities. Many will have to wait months for their records to be analysed and processed by other institutions.

The institution operated on a

budget of one million dollars a year. The province announced their five million dollar cut after the federal-provincial transfer payments proved to be too little to continue in the same manner.

Dalhousie University have also been hit very hard by the budget cutbacks. They were promised 1.2 million dollars from the provincial government and received none of it. The university had already spent \$800,000 in anticipation of the promised provincial money.

Millar stresses that that money will have to be taken out of the university budget somewhere and students will suffer as a result.

"The money (\$800,000) has to come from somewhere so the university will have to cut its program somewhere else," says Millar.

The entire budget cut by the province was totally unexpected by any of the institutions as the provincial government was aware of the amount of the transfer payments and yet promised the money.

In response to the overall situation the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) have sent a letter of protest to the Nova Scotia Education Minister. FAS have also sent a similar letter warning of the danger of such a move.

"Once it has started to happen who knows what comes next," stresses FAS President Millar.

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