

# NUS calls for planned education

OTTAWA (CUP)—A National Union of Students (NUS) brief calling for a stronger federal presence in post-secondary education has been favorably received by the Canadian Labour Congress and the New Democratic Party.

"We agree with the general thrust of the brief," said Claire Booker of the CLC's education office. "We are quite concerned at the lack of access to post-secondary education, and we see the need for rational national planning."

The brief, entitled "Education: A System in Chaos" was released Mar. 15. It outlines the decline in the quality of post-secondary education in the last decade and calls for greater federal involvement in planning educational priorities, removing barriers to accessibility, and ensuring adequate funding.

NUS and the CLC discussed "the possibility of joint action to publicize the problems faced by post-secondary education," said Booker. CLC speakers will also discuss educational matters at union forums and other meetings, she said.

A high priority of the CLC is paid educational leave, which NUS also supports.

NDP member of Parliament David Orlikow said "it was a good brief". He also asked Secretary of State John Roberts to respond to questions raised by the brief, in particular whether the government would meet with the Council of Ministers of Education to discuss remedial action.

PC representative Flora MacDonald was not available for comment at presstime. However, NUS president John Tuzyk said members of the PC caucus described the brief as "excellent" when they met with NUS representatives Mar. 20.

He said MacDonald was "sympathetic" to developing national criteria on how federal transfer payments to the provinces should be spent, although the PC MPs seemed "less committed" to removing financial barriers to education.

John Helliwell of the Canadian Bureau of International Education said he agreed with the "general thrust" of the report, and specifically the section concerning international students.

"NUS feels the same way we do about the international exchange of students," Helliwell said. Its analysis seemed somewhat superficial, he said, but that was to be expected as

the brief dealt with many other aspects of education.

NUS has also already presented the brief to the Canadian Association of University Teachers and the Association

of Universities and Colleges of Canada. Both the CAUT and the AUCC are expected to come up with official positions on the brief in the next few weeks.

## Greatest resource

ST. JOHN'S (CUP)—Ralph Trask, council president at Memorial University of Newfoundland, said he had no interest in becoming premier but recently ran for the leadership of the province's progressive conservative party in an attempt to make education an issue.

At the leadership convention Trask said Newfoundland's greatest resource is its young people. "No firm education policy has been put forward by government so far, and the future of students and education in general has been put in question as a result."

"We are not a rich province", Trask said. "The average Newfoundland parents

cannot provide expenses for their sons and daughters to attend university. The money is just not there."

Trask condemned the Canada Student Aid Program that "purports to equalize chances for obtaining education". "This masquerade should be revealed for its inefficiency and inadequacy," said Trask.

"The expense of education in general to the student, Trask said, amounts to about \$10,000 in all. On top of it all, the graduate student faces poor chances of employment."

Trask urged the government to make definite education policies and to bolster job

prospects in order to make university education a more enticing venture. "The onus is on government", Trask said.

Resource development, however, was the major issue in the election campaign and few candidates addressed the topic of education.

But premier-elect Brian Peckford later told Trask that education would receive due attention. He said the student aid program would be reviewed and perhaps changed.

Trask feels his point was made and that a progressive attitude towards education was initiated.

The student union president received 2 of 636 votes cast, placing ahead of St. John's mayor Dorothy Wyatt and a Deer Lake farmer.

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