

"UNB finances tight" say administrators

By DERWIN GOWAN
Managing Editor

Members of the UNB administration convinced about 100 students that the university is in a tight financial situation at a forum in Lady Dunn Hall last Wednesday night.

The forum included university president Dr. John M. Anderson, comptroller Sam Mullin, vice president (finance and administration) James O'Sullivan, dean of students Barry Thompson, dean of men's residences Peter Kent, dean of women's residences Joy Kidd, and was chaired by history professor Dr. Gillian Thompson.

They were particularly concerned that financial cutbacks would adversely affect the quality of education offered at UNB.

Anderson said fee increases would be decided on at the next board of governors meeting planned for April, but he refused to make a prediction as he had no word from the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission as to how much the university will get next year.

"It looks like next year will be a pretty tight serious year," he said, predicting Maritime governments would not go for the 12.5 per cent increase in operating grants proposed by Maritime colleges and universities. "I'll tell you what my hope is. It's that there won't be any increase at all."

"We didn't know last year until the middle of February and that was bad enough," said Anderson. "The best I can do is speculate." He said the university was in a particularly tight bind as they are supposed to tell faculty of the amount of salary increases for next year by April 1.

Anderson said that ten years back tuition fees paid for 35 per cent of educational costs next year, and this has been more than halved, despite fee increases. Although Anderson said there was a philosophical argument that students should pay a fixed percentage of university costs, he drew reference to a speech by New Brunswick premier Richard Hatfield in Saint John last week that tuition fees might be eliminated by 1987.

Anderson said "very severe measures" had to be taken this year to make for \$400,000 in revenue the university was short of due on overly optimistic prediction of enrolment figures.

He said the university had to take \$300,000 out of funds allocated for non-space capital expenditures. This category includes capital funds not allocated for new buildings. Items cut back



Photo by Jack Triffts

on include lab equipment, typewriters, books for the library, and more.

Anderson claimed this was not readily noticeable but departmental heads were aware of these cutbacks.

"What we are doing is building up a debt," he said, in terms of depreciation on old equipment, and could affect the quality of education at UNB adversely in five year's time.

"We're very conscious of the fact that at some point, tuition fees don't do anyone any good," Anderson said. He said that Munt Allison University and the University of New Brunswick have the first and second highest fees respectively in Canada, and, although Ontario will approach the same level next year, "There is no question that it's a pretty sizeable sum."

Mullin echoed the same idea earlier in the meeting when he said, "If we push tuition fees up, we will drive you out of here."

Anderson claimed the reason for this situation was the low level of government support given to Maritime universities compared to other parts of Canada.

"Where our money ultimately comes from is from the people," explained Anderson.

All dealings between the university and the government is done through the MPHEC, which since 1974 has been responsible for 24 post secondary educational institutions in the Maritime Provinces. Nineteen of these institutions were universities.

The MPHEC is an advisory committee to the Council of Maritime Premiers. After consulting with the universities, the Commission recommends the level of funding each institution should receive, and the government acts on this advice.

However, said Anderson, "The

operative word is advisory."

Last year the New Brunswick government did not accept the advice of the commission and universities in the province received only half the increases of their Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island counterparts, he said.

Although the university receives its funds from the MPHEC in lump sums and has no further control over its expenditure, Anderson said the Commission has two forms of control over UNB.

First, operating grants to the university are awarded by a formula based 75 per cent on a fixed grant and 25 per cent on enrolment. Second, the commission has some control over capital expenditure as they must approve new programs. The only other stipulation is that the commission asks the university not to deficit budget.

Anderson said UNB is presently considering offering a doctoral program in psychology and a bachelor of science program specializing in marine biology.

Anderson said the university has three sources of revenue - the provincial government, the federal government, and private sources.

The province is the source of approximately 80 per cent of the university's operating budget via Anderson, and he said this was exclusive of \$1,750,000 in research grants.

Anderson said, however, that between 65 and 75 per cent of the provincial grant comes from the federal government under the Fiscal Arrangements Act which controls federal provincial transfer payments.

He said this act is due to expire March 31 and the new version, Bill C-37 is presently before Parliament.

He said other federal monies come to the university in the form of sponsored research grants from the Canada Council, National Research Council, and some grants from individual federal departments.

Private sources of revenue include tuition and residence fees, endowments and bequests, and services offered to the community.

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enue, and usually has stipulations controlling its expenditure. Services offered to the community include use of the computers and work done by the physical plant for Saint Thomas University and the provincial archives. This provides the university with about three per cent of its revenue, said Anderson. Residence fees are supposed to be set on a break even basis, and losses have to be absorbed elsewhere.

That leaves 15.5 per cent of the operating funds to be raised from tuition fees.

Anderson and Mullin agreed that the university's income was relatively inflexible, particularly since the government will not provide funds for ancillary services such as residences and bookstores.

Mullin said it would cost over \$29,000,000 to operate UNB this year. The provincial operating grant was \$25,102,000 and regular session tuition fees amounted to about \$4,350,000.

Mullin said two-thirds of the operating costs are in the academic and related areas. Seventy per cent of this total, he said, was taken up by salaries and a substantial part of the remainder was "out of our control". He said this included such things as employee benefits and lighting bills.

Mullin said this meant the university was limited in the areas where cutbacks could be made if educational standards are to be kept at the present level. The university, he said, was trying to keep these cutbacks to a minimum.

Hatfield offers us nothing

By TOM EVANS

The forty-eighth session of the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly opened on March 1. The Speech from the Throne did little to encourage students in Post Secondary Education. The speech contained three frivolous statements on education. (1) To include a second language as an official part of the school curriculum (still will be optional), (2) Driver education to be expanded (3) To permit school boards to retain fees paid for use of school facilities.

In a news conference held by the Legislative Press Gallery the Premier stated that the government planned no new policies or programs to assist students further their education in New Brunswick. Hatfield, in response to

a question concerning the forecast of high student unemployment this summer said his government will do nothing to improve this potentially adverse situation. He said it is a time of restraint and his government will implement no new employment programs. The regular employment of students by the provincial government will continue during the summer of 1977.



Hatfield gave little moral encouragement to students in the

Province concerning declining student enrolment at most Provincial Universities. It looks like the policies of the Hatfield Government will accelerate this trend.

Other highlights of the Speech from the Throne were similar to a collection of government news releases.

An Introductory Paper dealing with the need for access to Government information by the public, will be presented. A new Police Act will be introduced. Legislation will be presented reducing the speed limit on most sections of Provincial highways to 55 miles per hour.

An Employment standard code covering such matters as minimum wages, wage protection and recovery, vacations, etc. will be introduced. Negotiations will continue with Ottawa on energy conservation programs for the Province. A small business section will be set up in the Department of Commerce and Development and a small business management advisory program will be established. Discussions are being held with Ottawa to establish property register and to provide financial assistance to owners of endangered property of historical significance.

In retrospect the Speech from the Throne gives little leadership in a time of transition.

Calendars for Intercession and Summer Session will be available on March 14, in Rm. 125, MacLaggan Hall.

Registration forms are inside the calendars.

Due to a new policy instigated this year payment for the courses, (\$74 — \$148) must be made upon registration.

Deadlines for registration are April 22 for Intercession and June 24 for Summer Session.

Centre deficit to improve

UNB president John M. Anderson said he was "hopeful" the Aitken University Centre would not operate at a deficit in 1977-1978.

He made the comment last Wednesday at a forum on university financing in Lady Dunn Hall, answering a question by ex-Students' Representative Council member Allan Hildebrand.

"I'm confident that if we can

hang on for three or four years we can make money," he claimed. He added, however, that UNB is not in "the private enterprise business."

He said there were some possibilities of sources of funds to cover the deficit on the initial costs of the building, but that it would be "inappropriate" to make these possibilities public at that time.

He said the centre ran an operating deficit this year.