

## Increase possible

# Report on fees 'confusing and contradictory'

EDMONTON (CUP)—A report recommending that tuition fees be kept at Alberta universities and colleges may also open the way for tuition increases of up to 119 per cent at some post-secondary institutions.

The Grantham report, released to the public Jan. 25, recommended equalizing tuition for all programs at any institution, and that there be a base fee level for universities, at colleges and technical institutes, and at vocation centers.

For university students the report recommends tuition be set at \$590, up from the current \$550 for most undergraduate programs. However, there would be a 14-45 per cent drop in graduate studies,

medicine, environmental design, engineering and dentistry.

At colleges and technical institutes, it suggests a base tuition of \$385, a 40-83 per cent increase for colleges and a whopping 119 per cent at technical schools.

The report proposes a 55 per cent fee hike at vocational schools.

While the province's education minister Bert Hohol was pleased with the report, Blair Redin, Federation of Alberta Students president and a student representative on the task force was not as congratulatory.

"Although there are some positive aspects in the report, in the section concerning tuition fees there are confused,

contradictory and unsubstantiated claims," Redlin said.

The report points out that the total costs to the student reduces the accessibility to a post-secondary education, and that tuition is a factor in student costs.

"The facts presented to the committee showed that tuition fees are a definite financial barrier to a post-secondary education, yet the committee chose to ignore those facts," said Redlin.

The task force, comprised of Edmonton engineer Ron Grantham, two students, two representatives of post-secondary institutions, four members of the public and a department representative, was set up by Hohol in Jan. 1978 to review the role of student contributions toward

paying the costs of higher education. Over 100 briefs and letters were presented to the task force by administrators, labor representatives, student organizations and private individuals.

Tuition levels should remain stable for the two years following the implementation of the report, if it is accepted. Subsequent change should be made on recommendations made by a standing committee on student costs, the report said.

The report also outlines major changes to the provinces student aid. Loan money would be made available to all students regardless of their parents' income and would be repaid as a percentage of student's annual income plus a 50 per cent surcharge.

The task force also recommended students be declared independent at 18 whether or not they still live with their parents.

No policy on differential fees for international students was reached as the task force was evenly split on the issue, the report said.

Those commission members favouring the removal of differential fees pointed out the extra revenue gained in charging the higher fees are exceeded by the cost of administering them. They also noted Alberta is one of the few jurisdictions to have such a fee.

According to those who supported differential fees, Albertans should receive a greater benefit for their investment.

# Spectre of Union rises again

by Mike Burns

On Tuesday evening, the spectre of a Maritime Union was raised to the delight of at least six Maritimers who attended the lecture given by Professor David Cameron of Dalhousie.

Cameron, somewhat moved by the impressive turnout of concerned Maritimers, began his lecture on Maritime Union with a brief explanation of the term. He said that Maritime Union means the full political integration of N.S., N.B., and P.E.I. through the dissolution of provincial status in the region. And to some extent, he went on, a tacit union

already exists as a central direction rather than in the form of a state.

It is true that the notion has been tossed around the provinces on an informal level for a century before former N.B. Premier Louis Robichaud commissioned a study of the subject in 1968. The study recommended union on the strength of three arguments:

1. Union would give the Maritimes a stronger bargaining hand in Confederation.
2. Union would reduce the cost of government and increase efficiency, and
3. Union would enhance the

region's capacity to seize and act upon economic opportunities as they present themselves.

However, as Cameron pointed out, at least two of these arguments are questionable, especially today. Since standards of government service could not be expected to be reduced, the new cost of government could hardly be expected to be any lower. Secondly, in consideration of a stronger "bargaining hand", it must be recognized that although there is a safety "floor" of representation in confederation (such a floor is designated to be equal to the number of senators from each province), the voice of the region could well be dampened because there would be one voting premier as opposed to three. But, as Cameron

submitted, it is hard to determine the relative effectiveness of one loud voice compared to three lesser voices. The question of political clout notwithstanding, Maritimers must decide whether or not they are prepared to accept the implied trade-off between "traditional maritime parochialism and a slower pace of life", and an accelerated pace of life with the associated social costs which would necessarily accrue to greater economic growth in the region.

It is perhaps worth noting that, even if no serious developments occurred in the direction of a Maritime Union itself, the study in 1968 is viewed by some to have been the conception of the Council of Maritime Premiers, which materialized at length in 1971

and now convenes quarterly.

Finally, as Cameron suggested, the whole principle of federations and unions begs the question of the existence of Canada as a confederation. Indeed, why not dissolve all the provinces into a unitary state, just as the 1968 study sought to chart out a unified future for the Maritime Region?

## Student's fail good thing

VANCOUVER (CUP)—Almost 45 per cent of first-year University of British Columbia students failed "a very good thing" this academic year—the Christmas English 100 exam.

"We want students to write in a clear-cut, well-organized way or else they won't be able to cope with normal university life," English 100 Chairman Andrew Parkin said January 10.

"It (the exam) is a very good thing."

## DRAG explodes booby traps

TORONTO (CUP)—An underground group, Direct Revolt Against Government (DRAG), said it wanted to 'bomb out cutbacks', when it claimed responsibility for a series of small explosions at the University of Toronto's Scarborough campus January 24.

A filing cabinet, a desk and a soft drink can were found booby-trapped with an iodine mixture, prompting visits from the Toronto Emergency Task Force and Bomb Squad.

A college employee first discovered the booby traps that morning when she went to open a filing cabinet. Upon inserting the key, she heard a loud bang, saw a cloud of smoke, and found her hand and wrist covered with a yellowish substance. The substance was also found on a nearby desk, and in a soft drink can which later rolled out of a nearby machine and exploded.

Police said the compound was an iodine mixture which blew up on contact.

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