

Universities go fishing

when making the year under last year recom- ments increase institutions for this cent. In its presen- the commission concern that "the support for post tions between the est of Canada is

fall far short of the requests made by the institutions. The administra- tion's obvious concern that the MPHEC is a government red herring being used to cover up govern- ment's inability or outright unwill- ingness to increase funding to post secondary education is shared manifold, by students and faculty.

Much of the workings and deci- sion making processes of the MPHEC are secret with close ties between the administrations, the commission and the governments. The funding decisions are kept secret from start to finish. Both the Atlantic Federation of Students (AFS) and the Atlantic Conference of the Canadian Association of Univer- sity Teachers have in public sub- missions to the commission deplored the lack of either student or faculty representation on the MPHEC through their respective federations. Both groups have called for more public information on the final allocation criteria and the funding decisions throughout the process, and condemned the fact that the entire university com- munity is not consulted or represented by the MPHEC.

Policy

The need for faculty and student representation on the commission is more pressing when the MPHEC is becoming established to the point where it further expands its scope to initiate policy studies and subsequent recommendations to the council. The commission compiled a major report last spring outlining the results of policy deci- sions and studies made during the two years of its existence to that point. Major concerns of the com- mission until that point were con- nected with developing a regional information base on post-secondary institutions, completing inventories on available course programmes and space in the region, finalizing the funding decision making pro- cess, and arriving at a number of

policy statements for submission to the CMP.

The commission reported policy recommendations in three major areas in the report, which was released in the late summer, Ac- cessibility, Funding, and Student Aid. The major policy statements

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dealt with the accessibility ques- tion where the commission as- serted the principle of accessibility by merit, if only in vague terms, and left the premiers with the option for introducing differential fees for foreign students in the region at some point in future. The policy states, "post secondary education is to be accessible to all Canadian Students who qualify and for whom there are places available: **however funding related to such students may be on a reduced basis.**" The commission pointed to the differ- ential fees recently implemented in Ontario and Alberta and suggested the CMP would have to monitor the effects of those moves to gauge the need for action in the Maritimes.

The statements on funding are largely concerned with how the MPHEC is going to use its allo- cations and how the institutions can relate to items not necessarily under the control of the commis- sion.

The commission also recommended the CMP establish a uniform student policy for the region in conjunction with the development of a truly national stu- dent aid plan. The recommenda- tions include a regional committee to monitor and eventually ad- minister a program that would be consistent throughout the region.

The report said the Maritime prov- inces were not offering uniform pro- grams of student aid and had ig- nored MPHEC recommendations made a year earlier that were intend- ed to somewhat unify the provincial programs.

The MPHEC has its hands tied in many areas of concern. As far as telling government who needs how much money and when, the govern- ments politely listen and, acutely aware of the electorate and their own precarious position, reply to MPHEC with grants that more often reflect their own position much more than that of those involved in education. On the other hand the commission has to walk the line

with the institutions to the govern- ments modifying the position from either side ultimately playing a give and take game with both.

Though its real effectiveness is questionable, the commission is entrenching itself in the bureaucracy, and establishing decision-making processes, that are being used and recognized by the key groups in the university community.

Whether the MPHEC will become the real policy group in the post- secondary/political relationship in the maritimes, perhaps even the Atlantic, will depend on what type of stance the commission is prepared to take on crucial issues. As it now stands the body is little more than a political fish-pond from

tions in lieu of a straight face to face handout.

Unless the student regional group, AFS finds some way to radically infiltrate the organization within a relatively short time, the ex- istence of the MPHEC will matter little to students on campuses throughout the maritimes. Govern- ments' unwillingness to accept the commission's recommendations that tuition fees be frozen, and a refusal to recognize the need for a special bind for some time to come, and will undoubtedly look to the perennial "last resort", the students, for more money.

which the governments annually continual funding increases will mean the universities are in a finan- toss out grab bags to the institu-



Meinke: soon he'll be doing UPEI's casting

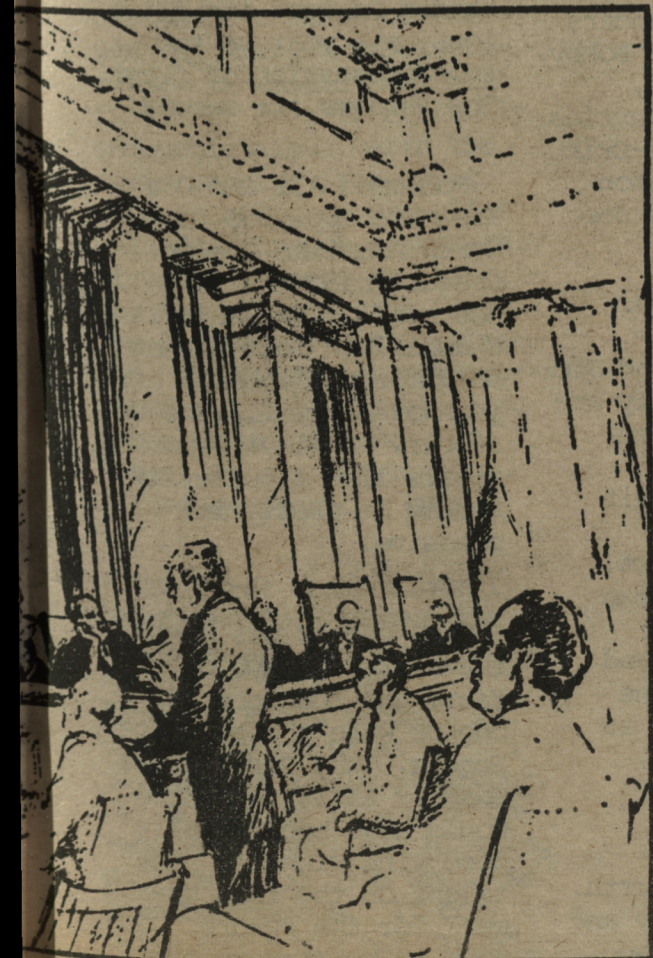
This Page is Typeset

Yes. That is the reason this page looks differ- ent. So does page 8.

Both stories were typeset for Canadian Univ- ersity Press' Atlantic Bureau and sent to papers. Not only does the end product of typesetting look neater but is a great time saver for the paper's staff. The UPEI SUN is the one and only news- paper in CUP that isn't typeset. This means we have to do lots of time-consuming, boring shit- work typing stories in long, narrow columns that no one else has to do. Is that fair?

Currently we're getting estimates from type- setting shops. Whatever the figures, typesetting will increase our costs. But the end result will be more professional-looking, easier to read and more fun to produce in less time.

We hope student council agrees.



se for more money, no cutbacks.