

CAMPBELL

negative aspects

Last Friday afternoon, two members of the U.P.E.I. Students Union met with Premier Alex Cambell to discuss the rationale, or perhaps lack of it, behind the P.E.I. Government's recent proposal to adopt a new Bursary program for University students. This new program, if accepted, will enable a student to receive a \$1400.00 Canada Student Loan and a P.E.I. Government Bursary of up to \$1000.00 if the individual shows sufficient need for it. This means that the student must borrow the full \$1400.00 in order to become eligible for a Bursary!

External Vice President Bob Gray and Vice President Comptroller Bill MacIntyre of U.P.E.I. raised a number of pertinent questions but few answers were given due to the fact Premier Cambell knew very little about the circumstances surrounding the decision of his cabinet. He said that on that day he was in Ottawa on other business. However, Mr. Cambell said he felt that this new program was "biased" toward graduate students who must have additional money to follow a Post - Secondary education.

Asked about the effectiveness of the old program Mr. Cambell said many abuses were made by students who "inflated" their needs in order to get Bursary money. Under the new program, there will be a more strict policing of applications so that these abuses will diminish. It will require the employing of two additional people at a salary of \$5000.00 a year each in order to make this policing effective. However, no definite answer was given to the question of why this policing was not instituted under the old program instead of changing the entire system now!

Mr. MacIntyre and Mr. Gray then explained that at the end of four years of college, a student who borrowed from the Government under the new plan would owe \$5600.00. If, after graduation, he decides to marry a girl who has also borrowed the maximum from the government, then their total debt would be \$11,200 with interest starting six months after graduation, not after the individual got a job. In reply to this argument, Premier Campbell said that it was up to the individual to get married and could not be considered by government as a reason for avoidance of payment. Also he felt that it was fair for the interest to begin compounding six months after graduation and not after obtaining a job because a lot of graduates would not seek employment if they didn't have to pay interest.

At the end of the discussion, Premier Campbell made an appointment for the students to meet with the Deputy Minister of Education Lorne Moase, who, along with Minister Bennett were out of town that afternoon.

The negative aspects of Plan "B" are:

(a) A young man or woman who has initiative and drive will earn from part-time work during the school year and a job during vacation and thus decrease his or her need, consequently rendering him or her ineligible for any of the bursary or free money. This is penalizing ambition and drive. On the other hand the lazy or indifferent individual realizes that he is not expected to work during the school year and, with the rate of unemployment being high as it is, this individual can very plausibly be unable to find a job and thus qualify for the full loan and as much bursary as is necessary to liquidate his costs. In this fashion his laziness and indifference are being subsidized. This would be avoided by Plan 'A'!

(b) If the individual can get free money only after he has borrowed the full \$1400, he is very PRONE to manufacture a situation where he will need more than \$1,400, so that he can enjoy some of the frosting at the top of the \$1,400 level. Plan "A" would discourage this type of approach.

It must be realized that Prince Edward Island students come from every geographical area of the province. It must be realized too that some of these areas are not lucrative as far as the family income is concerned. They are neither very lucrative in providing part time employment or summer employment to the resident student.

There are other factors which mitigate against our present system and it is our hope that an equitable solution can be introduced in which all students will be treated on a fair and equal basis. Let it not be said that in Prince Edward Island education is only for the rich and not for the poor.

DUFFY SPEAKS OUT

The recent announcement of the new bursary program by the Campbell administration, the Student Union feels will have great repercussions on the student who is presently, or in the future, pursuing a post-secondary education. We feel the proposal is geared more towards the graduate students' needs, than that of a student who is pursuing a Bachelor's degree. It hardly seems to be the type of program for a Province that doesn't have a graduate school. Now the question that we feel needs answering is: Is the decision by the P.E.I. government a direct result of recent discussions on Maritime Union, since both N.B. and N.S. are adopting the same plan? Are the people of P.E.I. leading or being lead? What do you think?

Pat Duffy
President, U.P.E.I.S.U.