



Almost-Base Funding Increases Recommended for Atlantic

HALIFAX (CUP) — The 6.5 per cent increase in post-secondary funding recommended by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission falls below what universities say they need to maintain the status quo, but Nova Scotia minister Tom McInnis doesn't believe even that hike will be granted.

And Ken Ozmon, chair of the Association of Atlantic Universities, said the commission is only paying lip service in urging governments to make up for 10 years of post-secondary underfunding.

McInnis said although a 6.5 per cent grant raise may be realistic, "obviously in today's world, it's a bit high." A decision will be announced in February.

The MPHEC report, released Jan. 20, suggested post-secondary institutions require four per cent more money than last year to maintain current level of activities, one per cent more in "catch up" funds, 0.5 per cent more in equalization payments for poorer universities, and 0.7 per cent more for program expansion.

In contrast, the 19-member AAU requested a base funding increase in its November brief to the MPHEC. The AAU estimated 4.8 per cent more alone "will be required simply to maintain the universities as badly off as they are at present."

The AAU brief said universities would still not have enough money for salaries, building maintenance, equipment and new book acquisitions.

The AAU study showed that although government spending has increased dramatically in the health sector over the past 10 years, post-secondary education has been purposely ignored. Per-client comparisons with elementary and secondary schools as well as hospitals "clearly indicate that the underfunding of universities has been a matter of govern-

ment choice; it was not inevitable," according to the AAU.

Dalhousie University vice-president of finances Brian Mason is pleased catch-up grants have finally been accounted for. "It's a beginning perhaps of a renewed commitment," he said.

But the AAU's Ozmon, also president of St. Mary's University in Halifax, claims although MPHEC has recognized the systematic underfunding for the first time, its response was more political than meaningful.

Ozmon said since the commission's status quo figure of 4.8 per cent is almost one full percentage point below universities' real costs, the catch-up grant leaves post-secondary institutions with just what is needed.

"I give them high marks for rhetoric, low marks for follow up," said Ozmon.

According to the AAU, an additional \$85 million — a 35 per cent hike — would be required to bring per-student grants back to 1979-80 spending.

Other MPHEC recommendation include an increase in tuition fees equal to the rate of inflation. If accepted, this will bring Nova Scotia's tuition fees to among the highest in Canada.

The commission will also review accessibility to Nova Scotia institutions.

Ozmon isn't optimistic the Maritime governments — Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island — will accept the MPHEC report. "The chances are best for New Brunswick, with Prince Edward Island second," he said.

Curtis gives up appeal rights

By Michael Groberman, The Ubysey

he has maintained the shooting was accidental.

Bruce's father, James Curtis of Halifax, says his son was not surprised by the failure of his appeal.

"Bruce has never put any faith in the New Jersey justice system. He's been too close to it," he said.

Bruce now wants to be closer to home, said Joanne Legano, his American lawyer. "Bruce would like a transfer to Canada," she said, explaining the move would bring Curtis closer

to his family and make him eligible for parole after seven years instead of 10 years.

Legano said the magistrate justified his denial of Curtis' appeal in a "very analytical" 16-page recommendation. She said Curtis will not file an objection or pursue any further appeals in order to comply with transfer regulations.

However, Curtis' July 1986 petition for clemency from the governor of New Jersey would remain valid even after the

transfer, she said.

In November, the New Jersey Department of Corrections informed Legano the move may take as long as 18 months, as the department has yet to complete transfer regulations pursuant to a bill passed last summer. Late last year, Legano wrote to the department asking for the transfer and that the request to expedited.

Legano said the Canadian government is in a position to speed the move up. "If the Canadian government calls the governor of New Jersey and says it wants it done quickly, it will do more than my phone call, she said.

Curtis' aunt, Lorriane Peever of Brantford, Ont., is skeptical of the 18-month estimate for the move. "It's odd that a transfer to Maine would only take two weeks," she said, referring to an offer made by the Department of Corrections before Christmas. "I think the 18 month is a bluff."

She believes it is a deliberate stall, initiated by the prosecutor's office of Monmouth County, N.J., which is currently lobbying the New Jersey legislature to allow the prosecutor's office to veto prisoner transfers.

Jennifer Wade, an active member of the Vancouver Bruce Curtis Defense Committee, said she hopes Bruce receives his transfer to Canada soon. But she added that Bruce has still not received justice. An annual vigil for Curtis was held across Canada January 24th.

Rocky Less of a Horror This Time

THE ROCKY HORROR Picture Show was shown Friday night as part of the Winter Carnival celebrations, this time without major incident.

The film, a cult favorite from the 1970's, had to be closed down at its last university showing three years ago as a result of a beer-throwing riot. The cause of the riot was seen to be that the film was shown after an SU-sponsored drinking contest. It has become a widely-held custom to throw items like toast and toilet paper at certain points during the film, but several drunken student at the last screening turned the event into a beer-drenched, bottle-throwing row.

Fears were raised this year that an incident may happen again when the showing of the film was scheduled after a pub-crawl. However, student police kept tighter control this year and actually ejected a very loud group of students during the film, much to the applause of the rest of the audience.



Bruce Curtis, the Nova Scotia university student imprisoned in New Jersey