

It May Cost You Even More...

By Frances Smits

On Friday, 20, the U.P.E.I. Student Union met with Education Minister Fred Driscoll, Tourist Industry and Energy Minister Barry Clark, and Finance Minister Lloyd MacPhail to discuss the M.P.H.E.C. 1981-1982 financial plan and a Student Union brief submitted to the ministers.

U.P.E.I. relies on financial assistance from the government to maintain operation. The government, on the other hand, relies on the recommendation of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission to determine its contribution. The Student Union does not feel that the Commission's 1981-1982 financial plan for U.P.E.I. is academically or financially best for students.

The M.P.H.E.C. has recommended an increase to post-secondary schooling of 10.3%. This will not be enough to meet the financial commitments of UPEI in the ensuing year. The university's operating budget is 77% salaries and wages and 23% materials and supplies. With rising labor costs and inflation, the University's expenses will soar well above the 10.3% recommended by the M.P.H.E.C. If the recommendation is adopted, the U.P.E.I. administration will have one of three choices, none of which will benefit students. They may cut programs, increase tuition, or combine the two, all the while attempting to remain price competitive with other Maritime universities.

The Student Union urges the P.E.I. Government to allow the university

a 12% increase and to improve the Student Aid Program. This would help students face increased costs in housing, tuition, and textbooks, which if the M.P.H.E.C. recommendation is approved, will continue.

Residence is one area where there has been a substantial cost spiral. The yearly rate for double accommodation in Marian and Bernardine Halls in 1975-76 was \$1,150 as opposed to \$1,806 in 1980-81, a 57% increase in 5 years. In Blanchard Hall the yearly rate for double accommodation in 1975-76 was \$550. In 1980-81 it is \$946. The

increase there is 72% in 5 years.

U.P.E.I.'s tuition fees are the highest in the Maritimes, excepting only those of Mount St. Vincent University and Nova Scotia Technical College. Last year tuition here was \$790, and now it is \$865, up 9.5%.

Despite these increases, the loans and bursaries available to U.P.E.I. students are the lowest in Atlantic Canada. Loans stand at \$1,800 and bursaries at \$1,000. The Student Union wants the provincial government to

match the \$1,700 bursaries of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

In 1980 there were 1818 post secondary students from Prince Edward Island registered with Canada Employment Centers. Only 1313 received placements. Considering the shortage of summer employment, and the rising cost of living and education, the government of Prince Edward Island must consider readjusting the 10.3% increase to a more realistic figure. Only that will help the students of U.P.E.I. and encourage them to continue their studies in this province.

Engineers Fears

By UPEI Engineering Society

Beginning this Fall Semester, Nova Scotia Technological College was officially recognized as Technological University of Nova Scotia. Following this change, other changes at TUNS have been discussed.

Since the founding of UPEI in 1969, the engineering program has been a three-two system. That is, Engineering students have attended UPEI for three years, receiving a pre-engineering diploma, followed by two years of specialization at the former N.S.T.C. with alternatives of entering the work force or specializing elsewhere.

Within the last year and a half TUNS wishes to reverse the present system. That is to change from the three year diploma and two year degree to a two year program at UPEI and a three year degree at TUNS. This has caused an enormous amount of controversy between both universities. The Engineering Dept. here

at UPEI is determined to keep the present 3-2 system.

The administration seem uncertain of which stand to take. The belief of the Engineering Dept. and students is overwhelmingly in favour of the present system.

The three-two system offers UPEI engineering students a chance to spend their first three years of university at home for financial and personal reasons.

UPEI engineering graduates believe the present system has been beneficial to their educational goals and careers. Many students, as well as faculty (ie physics, math and Chemistry), believe that a two year program at UPEI would lead to a watered-down version of the present system and will not offer the basics needed for further studies in engineering which more than likely would not be offered at TUNS. For

example, if the new system is accepted engineers would lose surveying 111, which is a major source of summer employment for engineering students.

The PEI Association of Professional Engineers believes that a strong engineering program on PEI is essential to maintain a high level of quality in the engineering profession on PEI.

On the other hand, most other associated universities have already accepted the TUNS proposal without a proper outline of courses to be offered in this new three year program. Another point of concern is that the universities that have accepted are situated in Nova Scotia with a larger enrollment than UPEI's mere 1400 students.

We as an Engineering Society, feel that all these facts should be considered before UPEI decides to jump on the band wagon, which we think would result in a substantial decline in the quality of the program if not the complete fading out.



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