

British Columbia ignores Environment issues

By MARINA ANTUNES

(CUP) — British Columbia's provincial government is quickly losing interest in environmental issues, critics say.

They are concerned with Premier Glen Clark's cabinet shuffle that gave rookie MLA Cathy McGregor the environment portfolio in January. For much of the NDP's first term the portfolio was held by the high-profile Moe Sihota.

"[The government] is saying 'We've done a lot for the environment and we're putting it on the back burner,'" said Doug Ragan, director of the Environmental Youth Alliance.

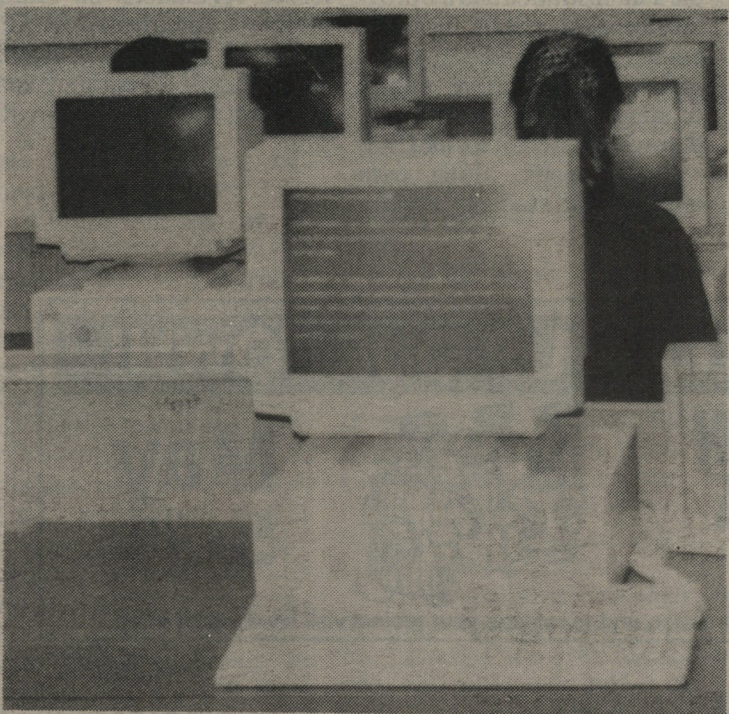
Joe Foy, of the Western Canadian Wilderness Committee, agrees the NDP has

pushed the environment aside and shifted priorities.

"It's clear to me that right from the get-go Premier Clark supported organized labour and that he is definitely turning a course away from environmental protection," he said.

But McGregor disagrees, and defends the NDP's environmental record. "Our government has clearly not put environmental issues on the back burner," she said. "That has been demonstrated by the continued commitment to many of the programs that were begun as a result of our first term in office. An example is the protected areas strategies and the land use planning process."

Instead, McGregor argued, the nature of the environment portfolio has changed. "I think we're understanding that the arguments are and issues are much more complex and that there are relationships in all of our activities and we need to have a coordinated approach to dealing with sustainable development and a sustainable economy," she explained.



Computer fees

By JULIE CLOW

There is a new idea in the workings at UPEI to control non-academic use of the computer terminals and create revenue. The idea is implementing a user fee for the time spent at on-line. This would mean having the students pay for the time they spend using the computers through a method which has not been decided upon yet. This idea is still relatively new and no decisions have been reached.

David Cairns, Assistant Manager at Computer Services expressed that this is not a likely possibility for the forthcoming year. There will be monitoring next year to create a base line for the research it would take to implement such a fee. "There has been considerable discussion going on in the committee, and we are

very concerned about a new fee for students."

There are different ways for the fee to be implemented. There are three main routes administration could take.

The fee could be included in tuition on a per course basis. Tuition would rise a small amount in every separate course students registered in.

Another course of action that the fee may take is to go by an hourly rate. Students would be given a certain amount of hours using the computers at the first of the semester and any use on-line beyond the specified time period would be charged to the student.

The other route would be to not change the present situation and create a new method of control.

There are a variety of

purposes for this fee. It would cut down on non-academic time spent on the computer, therefore making the computers more accessible for academic uses.

"The purpose is not to raise money, it's to control use," said John Crosely, Vice President of Academic Support.

Some other purposes for this fee are to cut down on wear of the computers and, therefore reduce money spent of the maintenance of the terminals and to create revenue to maintain an acceptable level of technology on the terminals at UPEI.

Cairns expressed that faculty and school orientated organisations would probably not have to pay the fee. This idea is still in the discussion phase in the committee and there are no definite plans.

Differential fees a possibility for the future?

By JULIE CLOW

A developing trend at Canadian universities is the appearance of differential fees. Differential fees are fees that will vary according to what program you are registered in.

In Canada, schools like Dalhousie University and Manitoba University already have the fees. At Dalhousie an Arts student taking a full course load would pay \$3,395 in tuition. A student in the Science faculty pays \$3,895. That is a difference of \$500.

As yet, there is no mention of differential fees at UPEI. When discussing the issue with John Crosely he expressed that in his opinion the idea is not inherently wrong, just not yet necessary here at UPEI.

"I suppose it would depend on how tight the fiscal situation is."

He expresses that someday there may be pressure to use the fees, but that he can not see that pressure being strong enough to use them.

There are many circumstances taken in to account when discussing the policies. The fees can be based upon things like: scale of family income, expected income of the student after graduation, province of residence or cost of providing instruction for the particular faculty.

This would mean that an Arts student would pay less for their education than a Science student on account of the cost and amount of equipment for the faculty. It would also

mean that a music student would pay more because of the individual attention that the program requires and that your next door neighbour will be paying less because their family income is less than yours.

Wendy Venema, VPL, expressed that the Student Union as a whole is against differential fees.

"Personally I am against it because it limits the choice of high school graduates regarding which faculty they wish to pursue. Someone from a low income family, for instance, could probably not afford the music faculty."

Venema feels that differential fees are discriminatory and that they would, in the end, split up school unity. Some faculties would grow strong