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Senate

Registrar

Founding Conference: Service on Admission to Universities and Colleges,
Ottawa, April 26-27, 1966.

May 20, 1966.

The President was invited to send representatives to this Conference. The Registrar was asked to attend as a delegate, Dr. Lorne Kendall, Head, Department of Psychology went as an observer. (Unfortunately, Dr. Kendall became seriously ill on arrival and was hospitalized and therefore was unable to attend any of the meetings).

The Conference was called under the auspices of the Standing Committee of Ministers of Education of the Provinces and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. Its purpose was to consider a recommendation to establish a Canadian Admissions Test Service similar to the College Entrance Board in the U.S.A. The Conference, which was attended by 85 delegates and 50 observers, representing every group interested in admissions problems, endorsed the recommendation of the planning committee.

The Conference then elected a Board of Directors and instructed it to proceed with the incorporation of the Service

The Service intends to develop standard aptitude tests and achievement tests, both in the English language and in French, which can be administered to any student in any part of Canada and the results of which will be given to the Universities subscribing to the Service

It is not at all clear what the development of these tests will mean to Simon Fraser. The Universities and the Department of Education in B.C. have been cool to the idea ever since it was first raised in 1962.

The advantages of the Service over the present system of Departmental examinations for University Entrance are claimed to be as follows:

a) It will make the admissions decision on out of Province students much easier as there will be a standard test for all of Canada. (Some ask - for what Universities is this a problem, and what are they doing to solve it now?).

b) The Departmental examination results are coming out so late in the summer that Universities cannot process the applicants fast enough; the standard test results would be available much earlier. (Some ask - if it is possible to give standard tests earlier, why can the departmental tests not be given earlier; what is inviolate about a September to June school year?).

c) It will provide an additional criterion to be used in the selection of students for admission to University. (Some ask - granted, it is an additional criterion, but so is the length of the student's foot, but nobody has advanced that as a good criterion- what does the test result predict?).

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There are a number of additional questions about the Service, such as: how is it to be a national test when the Provinces vary in the number of years required for Senior Matriculation (Grade 13 in B.C., grade 12 in Alberta)? What effect will a standard test have on the curriculum in each Province (will we end up with a standard curriculum?)? Is the idea of one big test going against the trend in education to innovate, to create and experiment, to diverge from other institutions? Will the test be too expensive for the student to take (the aim is a \$15.00 cost for the student)? Will the administration of the tests have to be done by "experts" in central locations which will mean travel monies for the students in outlying districts of B.C.? If the tests are not centralized, who will administer the test and will they be competent? If the tests are adopted as the criterion or even as one of the criteria for admission to Universities, will the Department of Education pull out of the testing field altogether?

All these questions are related to indicate that we will be taking a hard look at the development of the proposal and working closely with the other Universities and the Department of Education through the B.C. Board of Examiners before a recommendation is brought before the Senate to adopt or reject the use of these tests as a requirement for admission to Simon Fraser University.

Any member of Senate who wishes more detailed written information on the tests and the Service, may obtain it from my office.

D. P. Robertson
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