MRS WILLIAMS’ REPLY

The Bulletin of May 10 printed the text of the Vice-Chancellor’s Letter to the Secretary of State for Education. Mrs. Williams has now replied and the text of her letter is set out below.

Dear Sir Denny,

Thank you for your letter of 5 May in which you convey the University’s strong opposition to my recommendations for student tuition fees in the academic year 1977-78.

While the Government’s objective was not, in your words “purely financial”, the overriding consideration was certainly the need to reduce public expenditure. I think you will accept that neither education in general nor higher education in particular can be exempt from the need to make savings. However, education should not, nor is it being asked to, bear a disproportionate share of the burden.

The savings resulting from my tuition fees recommendations will, as my Minister of State, Gordon Oakes, said in a Commons reply to Jo Richardson on 24 March, amount to £2m at 1975 prices, calculated as follows:

- Extra fee income from self-financed students: £m 22.3
- Resource cost savings attributable to assumed reduction in total student numbers 5.7
- Total estimated net savings 28.0

I cannot accept that I arrived at my recommendations without consultation with the educational interests. First my predecessor, Fred Mulley, announced his proposals as a basis for discussion last July. He made it clear that he had reached his conclusions after having had the benefit of advice from many quarters, including the final report of the Joint CVCP/UCC Working Party.

Following that announcement we had formal consultations with the UCC and the local authority associations and in addition received advice from a wide cross-section of the educational world on all aspects of the proposals. It was only after carefully considering all the advice I received that I announced my final formal recommendations in November.

The fact that I altered the original proposals in several significant respects indicates that I took that advice seriously.

I consider that in the circumstances I reached sensible and fair conclusions. Nevertheless I recognise that there are unfortunate consequences; in particular some students without awards will be in difficulties. However the great majority of home undergraduates will have their fees paid through the awards system. Over 60% of home postgraduates will be supported by public funds while many of the remainder receive awards from their universities, industry or charities.

I could have exempted existing students from paying the increased fees only if I had made the fees for new students even higher; this I preferred not to do. Similarly the provision I was able to make for dealing with special hardship could have been increased only by even higher fees. I am informed it will be possible, nevertheless, to help a substantial number of students from these resources.

I can assure you that the case of the overseas students was very carefully examined. You will know that although I could not completely eliminate the overseas differential, it remains my firm policy to do so as soon as economic circumstances permit. On the other hand it is clear that some reduction in expenditure on overseas students must be achieved. Their total in higher education as a whole has increased from 31,000 in 1967-68 to 83,000 in the current year.

I agree that in general our tuition fees are higher than those of other West European countries; this has been true for many years. However, such a comparison is of little value given the substantial differences that exist between our higher education system and those of other West European countries. For instance in some countries admission to university guarantees little more than access to lectures, courses leading to first degrees are longer than our 3 years, and staff/student ratios are vastly inferior to ours.

Any special arrangements relating to exchange students are for individual universities. In my letter I have referred to a link with a university overseas.

Yours sincerely,

Shirley Williams.
SENATE

Vice-Chancellor's List
The Vice-Chancellor reported at the meeting of Senate on May 25 that, as Chairman of the Students' Progress Committee, he had noted with interest the criteria and procedures used in the Schools of Studies for placing undergraduates on the Vice-Chancellor's List. He had initiated consultations with the appropriate University officers. Concern had more recently been expressed within the Students' Union concerning these procedures and he had had contact with Union officers.

The Students' Progress Committee's procedures were, in the opinion of the Union, highly unsatisfactory, a student member of Senate commented. The criteria for placing students on the list were so haphazard as to destroy credibility.

The Vice-Chancellor is to examine the procedures and discuss matters informally with Students' Union representatives for purposes of clarification and explanation.

Tuition fees
The 13 resolutions from the conference of representatives of university senate held at Bradford, were adopted by Senate. The President of the Students' Union stated earlier in the discussion that neither the resolutions nor the University's fee waiver fund reflected the Union's views that fees should be frozen in 1976-77 at their 1976-77 levels.

Election of non-professorial members of Senate and Senate Committee
Following a lengthy discussion of points raised challenging part of the procedures for Senate and Senate Committee elections, the elections are now to go ahead. Notices of candidature previously submitted have been declared invalid and new notices invited by Wednesday June 15. Ballot papers will be issued on Tuesday June 21 for return by Friday July 1. There are 30 vacancies to be filled in the membership of Senate and 32 vacancies on Senate Committee. The results of the elections will be announced at the first meeting of the Senate in the Autumn Term.

Recurrent finances
The reduction in resources was not temporary but permanent, the Vice-Chancellor said in introducing a report containing recommendations of the Planning Committee's Consultative Group on recurrent finances in 1975-76. He added that discussions between the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and the Department of Education and Science on tuition fees in 1976-77 revealed that if fees were not to be increased again for that year the savings otherwise made in that way might have to come from the block grant. The only responsible assumption to make was that the severity of the cuts would not be mitigated in 1976-77, and might be increased.

A number of comments were made on the report which has yet to be submitted to Planning Committee.

Attendance at committees
Senate received a report on attendances at Senate and other committees in the period Summer Term 1976 to Spring Term 1977. The report showed that faculty members overall attendance rate at Senate meetings was only 53.2 per cent. Out of total possible attendances, at the six meetings of 959, actual attendances registered were only 511. Twenty-two faculty members, eleven of them professors, failed to attend any of the meetings. Students, on the other hand, had a high attendance rate of 81.6 per cent, with 98 actual attendances out of a possible 120.

Union Shop
The Union Shop which started life three years ago selling a few pads and cheap biros in a small room next to the Travel Service in Palmer House, is now located in the Glasshouse - over the wooden bridge from the Palmer Court Yard - and offers a wide range of stationery and other products which are difficult to better price-wise anywhere in Brighton. It still stocks the 200 sheet magnum pad - at 59p - but has now added a range of specialist rulings, shorthand notebooks, Lion Brand and Basilson Bond writing paper and envelopes, exercise books, as well as a stock of pens ranging from the gold-plated to the throwaway.

Greetings cards, posters and customised notepaper are also stocked, together with an excellent selection of hessian bags, belts, Champher and Kalka mats, Cameroun Cups and hanging baskets handmade by Third World craftsmen. These are sold on behalf of the World University Service which provides scholarships with the proceeds.

Ring-binders, guide cards, document wallets, lettering pens, rulers, staplers, hole punchers and twin-lock files are also available and the Shop can even offer portable typewriters at around £38.

Two new lines were introduced recently and are proving popular. Firstly, the Shop is now able to offer a reasonable photographic developing and printing service, and secondly, long playing records are now on sale. The top fifty LP's, according to the NME charts, are stocked and these sell at prices well below the recommended retail price. For example, the following are among those currently on the shelves:

The Best of Status Quo - £2.57
A Night on the Town - Rod Stewart - £3.28
A Star is Born - Breiszand/Kristofferson - £3.28
Yellow Dog - £3.00
One of the Boys - Roger Daltrey - £3.17

Records will also be ordered on the payment of a small deposit.

The Shop currently employs two members of staff - Marion Guy who manages the service and Jane Russell who provides, inter alia, the expertise on records - who will be pleased to advise you on any stationery queries you may have. Like all Union services, the Shop is not only for the use of students but welcomes members of staff and faculty, many of whom have already found that it can offer some good suggestions for last-minute gifts, as well as normal stationery requirements.

The following prices can only give a small indication of the stock held, but may serve to indicate the pricing system of the Shop.

Magma pads (200 leaves) 59p & 64p
Shorthand notebooks 14p
Biros from 4p to £4.45
Fountain pens from £1.15 to £8.55
Typing paper (50 sheets) 16p
Ball Pens 27p
Pencil pens 23p
Baedeker Fibre tip 5p
Rulers 12p
Exercise books 10p
Postcards 4p
Honey glazed scatter dishes 50p
Ring binders 36p & 46p
Cassettes from 41p to 73p
Twin spring files 16p
Lever Arch files 64p
Foolscap double wallets 11p

In addition, as members of the Student Purchasing Consortium, the Shop has access to a wide range of discounted goods not only in stationery but also in areas such as sportswear, catering equipment, office machinery etc., and the staff will be glad to advise on the best deals available.

During term-time the Shop is open from 0930 to 1700, Monday to Friday, and will be open at least one day a week during the long vacation.

Paddy O'Reilly
Union Administrative Officer.
WANTED

The University Search and Rescue Team is looking for new recruits to be trained in the use of breathing apparatus and to learn search and rescue techniques.

If there is a fire at the University, it takes at least eight minutes for the local Fire Service to arrive. In that time the University’s own Search and Rescue team, equipped with breathing apparatus, can set up an entry control point and begin the rescue of people trapped in smoke-logged parts of a building.

The team is also able to deal with other emergencies, such as the making-safe of leaks of toxic gasses or vapours.

New recruits are now needed to bring the team up to its fully effective level of 16 to 20 members.

Training is to full Fire Service standards and is open to any technicians or first-year postgraduates interested in spending two days a year on initial training and two hours each month on exercises in the use of self air breathing apparatus and search and rescue techniques in a hostile environment. The offer of training is open to both men and women.

Others are also needed to act as entry controllers, which involves keeping a log of team entries to a hazard area, and the team would also be grateful for this type of membership.

IN BRIEF

NEW DEAN OF ENGAM

Mr. J.S. Whitley, Lecturer in English, has been elected the next Dean of the School of English and American Studies. He will succeed Mr. M.J. Hawkins on January 1, 1978.

CARIBBEAN NOVELIST VISITS SUSSEX

Wilson Harris, the Caribbean novelist, poet and critic is visiting the University tomorrow, June 10.

He will discuss his most recent works and give a lecture entitled "Aspects of Amerindianism in Modern Twentieth Century Literature" in Arts G33 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Wilson Harris was born in Guyana, South America, in 1921 and has been living in London since 1958. Faber and Faber has published fifteen of his novels since 1960, most recently "Companions of the Day and Night", "Da Silva da Silva's Cultivated Wilderness" and "Genesis of the Clowns". Harris's novels are among the most challenging and innovative pieces of English language.

HONORARY DEGREE FOR PROF. FREEMAN

Professor Christopher Freeman, Director of the Science Policy Research Unit, received an honorary degree from Linköping's University in Sweden, in a ceremony held at the end of last month.

SWIMMING POOL

Building work on safety improvements at the Isle of Thorns swimming pool is now completed and the pool will be open at weekends from now on throughout the summer. However.....

ISLE OF THORNS CLOSED JUNE 18 AND 19

June 18 and 19 are the Isle of Thorns Trust weekend dates when the Isle of Thorns and all its facilities will be closed to all members of the University.

STAFF SPORTS DAY

This summer's Staff Sports Day will be on Wednesday, July 13, starting at 4 p.m. with various sports and games. And in the evening there will be a folk group, food and drink outside.

FORMER SUSSEX STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The first Annual General Meeting of the Former Sussex Students' Association will be held on Saturday, June 18, at 2.30 p.m. in the Strugglers Rest in Falmer House. The bar will be open from 12 noon and coffee will be served after the meeting.

Included on the agenda for the meeting will be a presentation of a draft constitution, election of officers, and a discussion of the Association's relationship with the University and the Students' Union, as well as a preview of future social and other activities of the FSSA.

Further information about the FSSA is available from Steve Carter (Sussex House), Paddy O'Reilly (Falmer House) or Wal Simon (Arts Office).

SUMMER GRADUATION CEREMONIES

Members of faculty are reminded that they should let the Secretary's Office know by tomorrow (June 10) if they will be attending one or both Graduation Ceremonies at the Dome on July 19, and if they will require tickets for their guests.

It will be assumed that members of faculty who do not reply by tomorrow will not be attending and will not require tickets.

FATHER MAURICE TO LEAVE SUSSEX

Fr. Maurice Counce de Murville, Senior Roman Catholic Chaplain, is leaving Brighton to be Chaplain at Cambridge.

Fr. Maurice established the Roman Catholic Chaplaincy at the birth of the University and it has built up under his leadership into a model chaplaincy which is widely emulated.

UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS IN THE COMMONWEALTH

The Association of Commonwealth Universities has just published its 21st edition of “List of University Institutions in the Commonwealth". A total of 297 institutions are listed, including full postal addresses, the personal names of the executive heads of universities and of the officer at each to whom general enquiries should be addressed.

Copies of the List (up to six copies free, seven or more charged at cost) are available from the AUC, 36 Gordon Square, London, WC2H 0PF.

GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

GARDNER ARTS CENTRE

* Oscar Wilde's play "Salome" will be presented by the University of Sussex Theatre Club at the Gardner Centre for the rest of this week. This revival emphasises the satirical and the bizarre mood of Wilde's famous play.

The Theatre Club returns to the Centre on June 19 with "Habeas Corpus" by Alan Bennett. This play - set in darkest Hove - is probably one of Bennett's best-known comedies. He takes the stock stereotypes of traditional farce but furnishes them with the verbal elegance for which he has become famous.

* The internationally famous Melos Ensemble of London will give a concert at the Gardner Centre next Monday, June 13, of works by Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms. The ensemble has throughout its existence been in the forefront of the world's leading chamber music groups. Its fame is based on its many recordings and countless live performances, as well as on the individual artistry of its members.

The University of Sussex Chamber Orchestra, under its conductor David Osmond-Smith will give a concert of summer music at the Gardner Centre on Wednesday, June 15. They will play music by Handel, Rameau and Mozart, as well as a new work "Four Monticelli Studies" by Barry Mills, a postgraduate composition student at the University.

The following evening, June 16, the Strange Quartet, the University's Quartet-in-Residence, will play a new work commissioned for them from the composer Gordon Crosse with funds made available by the Arts Council of Great Britain. Their programme will also include Purcell - Chaconne, and a Haydn Quartet.

Jazz entertainer George Moly - Britain's Number One Jazz Singer - will be at the Gardner Centre on Friday, June 17, with John Chilton's Feet-Warmer.

And in a different mood, the University of Sussex Early Music Group will give a concert on Monday, June 20.

Summer Conferences

A full programme of conferences and courses is planned for the summer vacation, including a number of regular visitors to the Sussex campus and many new and unusual ones.

As in recent years, the Open University will be Sussex University's largest summer conference customer. Three hundred and fifty students will be on campus each week for six weeks attending six different summer schools including Art and Environment, Science and Psychology. Language schools always provide a considerable amount of summer conference business, and two schools will run English language courses for an eight-week period, including the Language Tuition Centre, which for the fourth year in succession will bring an increasing number of students for a longer period of time.

Dr. Laci Lbb's popular English Summer School will again take place in September and the British Council is arranging an English course at the University in August.

The Chemical Society will be paying one of its regular visits in July, and the Institution of Electrical Engineers returns in September, as does the Institute of Physics with its large Esserc Conference. Other conferences and meetings of academic bodies include the Inorganic Biochemistry Discussion Group, European Molecular Biology Organisation, Institute of Mathematics, Institution of Mechanical Engineers and the British Society for the Philosophy of Science.

Several professional bodies will be meeting at Sussex, including the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Sports Medicine and the Association of Chief Chiroprody Officers.

Organisations which bring together people concerned with a particular hobby or interest will also be visitors to the University - the Monumental Brass Society, the National Trust Tynesian Centre, the Wanderers' Club (not football fans, but ramblers and sightseers), and Summer Music in Sussex (which - unexpectedly - is arranging a bridge weekend).

This summer the Council of Local Education Authorities' annual conference is to meet in East Sussex at the University. Three hundred delegates are expected to attend the conference, due to be opened by Lunchtime Concerts

The Chamber Choir will perform Coronation Anthems at tomorrow's Friday Lunchtime concert in the Meeting House. Next week, June 17, there will be a concert by the Meeting House Choir.

From Monday to Friday next week there will be music in the Gardner Centre each lunchtime. June 13 - Robin Hartwell composition recital; June 14 - Strange Quartet and Barney Priest composition recital; June 15 - Ergalt Music; June 16 - Lucy Burns, soprano, Carol Chambers, violin, and Julian Elloway, piano; June 17 - Ergalt Music. On Tuesday, June 21, there will be a recital by Rita James, violin, and Christine Pembudge, piano.

Lunchtime concerts begin at 1.15 p.m. and admission is free.

* Opening tomorrow in the Gardner Centre Gallery is an exhibition from the Victoria and Albert Museum of photographs by Ansel Adams, the great American photographer. Kathleen McFarlane woven structures will be on view in the foyer from June 13.

Mrs Shirley Williams, Secretary of State for Education and Science.

As mentioned in an earlier issue of The Bulletin, the University is organising a conference on safety in universities and polytechnics - SCOPU 77. This is the first of its kind and it is hoped from the initial interest shown that this will be a most successful event.

Moira Allan, Conference Officer.

George Akehurst

Mary. Jo and family would like to give our heartfelt thanks to all George's friends for the many letters, cards and floral tributes sent to us, on our sudden loss of such a wonderful husband and father.

These thoughts of love have helped to ease our pain.

A heart of gold stopped beating, Two working hands at rest, God broke our hearts to prove to us, He only takes the best.

Mary Akehurst.