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ARCHIVES



CFS CHAIR MEETS BIG CHEESE FLORA

OTTAWA (CUP) — Flora MacDonald, federal minister of employment and immigration heaped roses and nightingales on her Challenge '85 student job creation program in a meeting with the Canadian Federation of Students last week.

"She's the consummate politician," said Barbara Donaldson, chair of CFS, the national student lobby group. "She said 'I've never had the honour of running a program that was so well received' and I said 'Well, you've never been a minister of employment and immigration before.'"

At the meeting, MacDonald invited CFS to the program debriefing three weeks from now, to critique Challenge '85 after final statistics come out.

"If she's sincere and she's listening to what we have to say, then we could get the program changed," Donaldson said. "They're getting ready to do the summer programs again and she's getting lots of bad press."

Challenge '85 created 100,000 jobs this summer, according to Employment and Immigration statistics. Of these, 84,500 were Summer Employment Experience and Development (SEED) program jobs.

Among the SEED jobs, 67 per cent were "career-related", 31 per cent "work experience", fifty-seven per cent were in non-profit organizations, 33 per cent in the private sector and 33 per cent in municipal government programs.

The average SEED job lasted 11.7 weeks and paid \$4.89 an hour.

Challenge '85 also provided money for RCMP hiring among other programs.

The ministry admitted at the meeting it had no way of knowing if the SEED jobs were related to careers or not. "If a student said the job was career-related on the application, the ministry assumed it was," Donaldson said.

Donaldson is mainly concerned that Challenge '85 jobs did not provide students with enough money to survive during the school year. Student aid departments in most provinces assume students have worked 16 weeks at minimum wage, and automatically deduct 45 per cent of earnings when calculating how much a student gets.

Those students who worked less than 16 weeks can't appeal for more aid, Donaldson said.

Donaldson also said Challenge '85 failed to correct regional employment disparities.

"Because Challenge '85 focused on creating jobs in the private sector it worked best in places with a big industrial base: Toronto and Montreal," she said.

Unemployment among returning students in Newfoundland was down less than one per cent at 27.9 per cent compared to the national average of 14.4 per cent. Student unemployment was up in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and British

Columbia, though down slightly in the rest of Canada.

CFS Executive Officer John Casola is skeptical of the government's claim that 85 per cent of students found summer jobs.

"I worked at a Canada Employment Centre for students this summer," Casola said. "I filled 30 or 40 jobs for the same guy: some for one and a half days, some for a few hours. Flora is going to call that 40 or 40 jobs placed."

FEELING TAXED?

by Carol Doiron

This year the university food service is serving up a new item: taxation.

Cash customers will now be paying an extra 10% on all purchases equalling two dollars or more. Pop will be taxed even if bought separately, and even if it costs less than two dollars.

This tax charge is the result of an audit carried out this summer on the campus food services.

Provincial tax commissioner, Bill Noonan, explained that the university food service is a caterer in competition with other restaurants and caterers. The cafeteria, therefore, should be charging tax. Andy Dean, manager of the campus food service, commented "I had always believed that it was an understanding: a tradition, that the students would not be taxed."

But in reality, the Provincial Tax Act contains no exemption for students. In fact, the Act makes no mention of students at all.

Bernardine and Marian Hall residents will still receive the tax exemption because they are considered on par with those students boarding at a private home and taking meals - neither are charged tax.

To all-day students, and Blanchard Hall residents, this taxation on food means they may no longer purchase a meal plan. As well, no one is allowed to sell coupons to these people. "We will confiscate the coupons with no refund," stated Mr. Dean.

Despite an appeal by the University on the taxation issue, the decisions of the Tax Department are final. The University has to pay back-tax for all pop sales and out-of-province purchases they have made since 1981.

Under the University Act originally, no part of the university paid taxes. The Act was then amended in 1972 and we had to begin paying. Other provinces do have a student exemption in their tax law, said Andy Dean.

There is speculation that an election will occur on the Island within a year. Now, is the best time to approach your local MLA and lobby on this taxation issue.

The staff consists of: Carol Doiron, Jill Warburton, Jonathan Orłowski, Don Lane, James Connolly, Bill Harwood, Danny Muller, Ron Lewis, Howard Beattie, Bob Stanley, Robert Bodrog-Goodiana, Mike Zinck, Sheila Lund, Marlene Cole, Margo Chase, Mel Wilson, Brian Linkletter, Ken Spenceley, Shelli Wheaton, Rob Kelley, Nils Connor, G.R. Boswell, Karen Coughlin, Janet Armstrong, and Heather Kielly.

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