

Single parents to get more on UI

Single parents have a hard time making ends meet

BY C.A. SCHNEIDER

THE NEW FEDERAL GOVERNMENT announced their first budget one week ago. This budget made many cuts and changes, some for the better, some for the worse. One of the better changes made in this budget was the raising of the Unemployment Insurance benefits for single mothers, from fifty-seven percent to sixty percent. It is a positive change, however small, but the obstacles facing single mothers are still great; moreover, the government's fiscal policies retain policies detrimental to single mothers as well.

The reasoning behind this change is quite obvious when one looks at the statistics involving single parent homes, especially when the parent is a woman. In 1986, over one half of single parent families fell below official Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-off Lines. At that point more than fourteen percent (1.2 million children) were in single parent families.

Eighty two percent of these families were headed by women. It has been over seven years since these stats were collected. Since then, the divorce rate teen pregnancy rate have both continued to rise, leading to more and more single parent families.

One of the better changes made in this budget was the raising of the Unemployment Insurance benefits for single mothers, from fifty-seven percent to sixty percent.

This increase in single parent families is made much more difficult because women are left to provide for their children with less and less as unemployment increases. Women are the lesser-paid and lesser-employed of the sexes, and they are also often the less educated. Many single mothers bore their child or children

at a very young age and had to put their education on hold for the sake of their children. Uneducated, many single mothers end up working at dead-end, poorly paying jobs and have to depend on Social Assistance to help them pay for rent, food and clothing. This

dependence on Social Assistance has been cut back, along with the jobs available to women. Compounding these difficulties are the newly increased minimum requirements for unemployment insurance benefits, as detailed in the Liberals' budget. These cutbacks have hurt more than just the mothers-- they hurt

the child.

The children of single parent families are growing up under stress-- the stress that permeates a household where money matters are concerned. The child of a single mother may indeed learn the value of a buck, but at what cost? Children are sensitive creatures who pick up on every nuance of a parent's emotions. If a mother is scrambling to get her twelve weeks of work in so she can afford to pay the rent, the child will know that.

That is where the government has failed the single mother, instead of making it easier for her to live they just made it harder. The cutting of the Social Assistance needed to survive, and the lengthening of the time one must put in to receive UI has simply made many women's lives more difficult. Canada needs to lower its debt, but should it be at the expense of its future, the children?

Prof gets job back in spite of slapping student

Assault forgiven by administration

(CUP)

A PROFESSOR FIRED BY THE University of Manitoba for hitting a student returned to work last month after an arbitrator ruled he deserved a second chance.

Architecture professor Jacques Collin was dismissed by the university's board of governors in September of 1992 for striking a student on the side of the face during a critique session a year earlier.

Collin, who teaches primarily at the graduate level, filed a grievance and the dismissal was reversed through arbitration.

At the time of his dismissal, Collin was serving a one-year suspension without pay from the university for using sexist, racist and profane language in class. In a separate arbitration hearing, that suspension was reduced to six months.

Many architecture students said they are pleased to have Collin back.

"He's an excellent and very intelligent man," said one of Collin's students, who asked to remain anonymous. "I just think Jacques stepped over a boundary that he shouldn't have."

Kent Woloschuk, president of the

Collin was serving a one-year suspension without pay from the university for using sexist, racist and profane language in class.

university's Association of Architecture Students and a student of Collin's, said his association supports the reinstatement.

"Personally, I love it, I think it's great," Woloschuk said.

Like many architecture students, Woloschuk downplayed Collin's assault.

Collin's reinstatement is conditional for one year. In that time he must refrain from

using inappropriate language and not touch students physically in any way.

Collin, who resumed his teaching duties January 3, said he does not want to discuss the assault: "It's in the past and I don't want it to interfere with the future."

Modifying his teaching style has been difficult, Collin said, but adopting "a language that is more correct and less detrimental" is not an insurmountable task.

With his ruling, arbitrator David Bowman said Collin showed a strong willingness to alter his behaviour and that he deserved the opportunity to demonstrate his intent.

Bowman also said Collin's progress during

psychiatric therapy and his lengthy career as a respected professor weighed in his favour.

Collin was experiencing a painful marital break-up at the time of the incident and Bowman identified that as a mitigating circumstance.

Faculty Association president Robert Chernomas said if the administration had given Collin the opportunity to change his behaviour in the first place, a costly arbitration procedure would have been avoided.

Instead, the faculty association spent over \$100,000 to represent Collin.

"If [Collin] does this kind of stuff again, he won't be defended by us," Chernomas said. "He's been warned, he knows."

University vice president James Gardner said he does not understand the logic behind the arbitrator's decision but added that the university must go along with the ruling.

Student gets boot for bogus harassment complaint

(CUP)

CRYING WOLF CAN HAVE HARSH consequences.

A University of Manitoba student who filed a false report of sexual harassment against a professor has been expelled from the school for five years, according to a report from the university's discipline committee.

The student filed a complaint in an attempt to extort higher grades after unsuccessful

grade appeals, the report says. Upon investigation the sexual harassment office found the complaint to be unsubstantiated. During the investigation the student indicated she would drop the charge if the professor would raise her grades.

According to Marilyn MacKenzie, the university's sexual harassment officer, false complaints are extremely rare and her office has only received a handful since it opened nine

years ago. She said the university's policy specifically outlines how false complaints are to be dealt with.

"It is not used very often and individuals who are only out to destroy someone may face disciplinary action," she said.

Megan Bowman, a member of the university's women's centre, said it is unfortunate that someone would abuse the system. She said she worries the attention the

incident is getting will make it more difficult for students to come forward and file a complaint for sexual harassment.

"This incident puts the emphasis on women filing false rape and harassment charges. False complaints of this kind, as with any other crime, have been found to be very low."

An appeal in the student's case is pending.