

VIA Cuts To Hurt Students

WINNIPEG (CUP) - Post-secondary students - who use the train three times more often than the rest of Canada - will be hit hard by Via Rail service cutbacks, the Canadian Federation of Students says.

Federation chair Jane Arnold said the cuts will hurt students' ability to move around cheaply and will serious affect students who depend on Via Rail to get home.

About 11 per cent of Canadian post-secondary students use the train, compared to about three per cent of all Canadians, according to a survey conducted by Campus Plus.

"It is important to factor in the cost students are faced with today as they attend post-secondary institutions," Arnold said. "In recognition that students use the train extensively, Via Rail has offered a student discount of a third in savings on a ticket."

Deborah Boardman, a Via employee and coordinator of 'Keep Via Moving,' said more students will end up taking the bus.

"(The train) is good because we have the facilities. We get people who come on with canoes, snowshoes, backpacks. There's no limit to what you can bring onto the baggage car.

"Most of what we get are students who take their bicycles and they take bicycling expenditures. Now if you have 100 students on a bus there's no way you're going to get bicycles on a bus."

More people will likely travel by air, but Boardman said they shouldn't expect cheaper rates. She said over the last few years Canadian airlines have been reducing their available capacity - the Via cutbacks will mean a higher demand for air travel which will push prices higher.

With the train effectively gone in many parts of the country, Boardman said Canada will end up as a nation dependent on gasoline.

"What if there's a bus strike, what if there's an airline strike. There are all things you have to

consider. There are no options."

She said that people aren't planning for the future.

She said the media is misinforming the public by saying no one is taking the train.

"They're coming up with saying certain trains are absolutely empty, certain trains are only 30 per cent full and these are trains that are at 95 per cent capacity."

The Via Rail cutbacks will cost over 2,700 Via employee (as well as an unspecified numbers of CNR employees) their jobs but Boardman said employees aren't

Abortion Bill Unnecessary, Dangerous

OTTAWA (CUP) - The proposed criminal law on abortion is a dangerous infringement on women's rights pro-choice leaders say.

While the bill, which makes having an abortion without valid "social, psychological or economic cause" punishable by two years in jail, isn't as limiting as what many observers had expected, Judith Ailen said it still "stinks."

The spokesperson for the National Association of Women and the Law said the bill, tabled last week by Justice Minister Doug Lewis, contains provisions similar to the old law struck down in 1988 by the Supreme Court.

The old abortion law (authored by then-Minister of Justice John Turner) required women seeking abortions to prove their need to a hospital committee. But standards for what constituted a valid need for an abortion varied wildly from province to province.

Allen said the proposed law would have the same problem.

"If you're in Ontario you could say you were stressed out and that might be enough reason to have an abortion," she said. "But if you go to Charlottetown, the doctor might say, 'well, you're not suicidal, so you don't qualify'."

"Women in rural areas, in the north, in Nova Scotia, in Newfoundland will not have the same kind of access to abortions be-

the only ones which will be hurt.

While only 3 per cent of Canadians use the train; 5 per cent use airplanes, Boardman said.

"The amount of Canadians using the train is really irrelevant in that sense because the trains are always full. The rest of the people are tourists and that's nothing to be scoffed at. That brings in millions of dollars to this country."

She said tourism-based communities like Lake Louise and Banff, Alberta will be in deep trouble.

cause the law will be applied differently," she added.

This aspect of the old law was found to violate women's right to security of person, Allen said.

The bill would also leave the door open for "ex-boyfriends, family or neighbours" to bring a complaint against a woman they felt was getting an 'illegal' abortion, Allen said.

Allen said the bill could force women who wanted abortions because their birth control failed to have the child or face prosecution.

"In effect, it makes them criminally liable for the act of being sexually active," she said. "In this country, that's not a crime now, but this bill would make it that way."

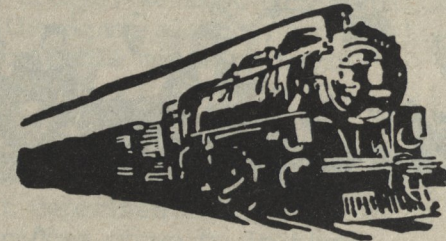
Canadian Abortion Rights Action League official Nicole Jasmin said the bill was a move to pacify the anti-choice minority.

"It's very difficult to justify this bill to the anti-choice minority," she said. "It makes me wonder what are they promising down the road. All they would have to do is take out the word 'psychological' and abortions would be virtually impossible to perform legally."

"It's very dangerous," she added.

Under the proposed bill, it will be up to doctors to decide whether a woman has a valid need for an abortion.

"That's a terrible imbalance of power," Jasmin said, "which



"The highest ridership trains in these areas are being taken out," she said. "If you're not going to take out all the trains why take the ones with the best rider-

ship?"

Boardman said Western Canada and Atlantic Canada will be the hardest hit by the cutbacks.

is demeaning and insulting to women."

Allen was optimistic that the bill would be unpopular enough

Prof Pisses Off Students, Calls Them Dyslexic

TORONTO (CUP) - University of Toronto biochemistry students are angered at a professor's theory that some of them are dyslexic.

Biochemistry professor David Tinker left a message on a public electronic mail system, open to his class, saying a large number of university students suffer from the developmental disorder affecting comprehension.

"I postulate that an unexpectedly large proportion of students have become functionally (as opposed to neurologically) dyslectic (sic)," he wrote in a note addressed to his third year class, "that is, unable to obtain knowledge from written material even though they can read it."

A member of the class who complained to the U of T student paper, The Varsity, said he was insulted. He said other students had a similar reaction.

Tinker said the message wasn't meant to offend.

"This is a section for general intellectual discussion. There were no sweeping generalizations, there was no abusive language, there was no pejorative language used."

with both pro and anti-choice members of parliament that it would have difficulty getting out of the house's committees.

In the note, Tinker theorized that dyslexia could be caused by "neurological lesions."

However, Dr. Jim Warner, an associate professor in Brock's Faculty of Education who runs a reading research clinic, said the note contains generalizations and inaccuracies.

"To talk about brain lesions from developmental dyslexia is inappropriate. There may be, we don't know. We don't know enough to make a difference helping."

Warner also said it was unlikely a student would not be aware of the problem.

Dr. William Thompson, the acting chair of the Biochemistry department, said Tinker's theory was new to him.

"He (Tinker) is not trained in psychology, psychiatry or medicine, so he is not an expert. He should not be going around labelling people as dyslexic. That is very foolish."

