

letters

Dear Sir,

It is good to see government tightening the belt on funding to universities.

Universities predict disaster unless government comes up with the requested 17 percent increase in funding. Students claim corresponding tuition hikes will price them out of an education. Of course, each claim has some truth. But this does not mean higher education is going through an unnatural, or unhealthy progression.

Although there is a dangerous overflow of academics scurrying about this country looking for suitable work. Most discover, too late, the piece of paper they worked so hard for to be little more than just that. Too often the graduate finds himself growing stagnant serving some obscure bureaucratic function, or feeling equally useless serving behind some department store counter.

Meanwhile, across the street works the person with a manual trade. Probably it is interesting work. Probably it pays more. Perhaps the only thing the graduate has over the craftsman is monthly student loan payment deadlines to meet.

For some crazy reason there exists on university campuses, and other places like government, industry, labour, and other institutions of learning, a mysterious contempt for the manual trades. Ignorance perpetuates this contempt. There are alternatives to a university education, good ones.

Unfortunately, people have been finding it more

and more difficult to get a start with one of the high skill trades. The training opportunities are not there.

Government has been aware of this for a long time. Early in 1977 a government task force reported the shortage of skilled labour as a serious problem requiring urgent national attention. The task force report calls the lack of training facilities disgraceful, and recommends changes.

The solution, obvious enough, would be a shift in emphasis from academic to job oriented training. Essential to this would be a change in attitude on behalf of many people.

Canada has one million unemployed, a acute shortage of skilled workers and, at the same time, the world's second most expensive education system. (Sweden is top). Can universities really expect to enjoy in the future the extravagant lifestyle developed over the past several decades?

If academics are finding the belt of restraint tight, they had better watch out, because by the mid-1980's they will be finding it difficult to breath.

Bill Power
Drop-out 1978
(now living and
working in N.S.)

CHEM. LAB.

I realize that it's only a drop in the bucket, what with industrial and agricultural run-off, but every little bit hurts. The spent chemicals in our Freshman chemistry laboratory seem to go straight into our water system.

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This seems to me to be an insufficiently responsible action on the part of a University Faculty. When I was at Simon Fraser University, we used a system where the acids and bases, weak and strong, were separated into containers - I disremember whether they were plastic or glasslined. I suspect we could afford such a system; it was not elaborate.

However, these chemicals, although separated, should not be consigned to the city authorities for disposal. They are likely to dump the chemicals, carefully separated, into the Harbour. I might be maligning them; I must admit we seem to have one of the more enlightened municipal and provincial governments around. The matter still stands, however,

that should they dump the chemicals as is, our university conscience or responsibility might seem to be ended, except that our goal of nullifying the effects of our experiments will not have been attained.

Perhaps a quick letter from our Chemistry Dept. to that of another university might save us some mistakes in choosing equipment and procedures.
by H. Roberts

Dear Editor,

I would just like to say how much I enjoy Tom Clow when he is on the air at CIMN. He has a terrific voice for it and I know I'm not the only one who enjoys his shows.

Keep up the great work, Tom!
An avid listener.

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