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RESTAURANT, BAR AND LOUNGE

Federal restraint continues despite outcry

By Karen Herland

Unemployment figures are breaking records across the country, and now hard-hit youths are breaking records for enrolment. But the same economy that can't provide them jobs, can't provide them funds for education.

Universities are closing their doors to thousands of qualified students because they can't afford to educate them.

"Our governments are setting the stage for social unrest by shutting off all options to our unemployed youth," says Pauline Jewett, a New Democrat MP from B.C.

Jewett, NDP post-secondary education critic, wants the federal and provincial governments to create a joint emergency fund, to help out Canadian universities.

Ottawa's current education funding formula dates back from 1977. It finances roughly 60 per cent of the post secondary system with the provinces funding the rest. Before 1977, the federal and provincial governments shared funding on a 50-50 basis.

But recently, with the infamous 6 and 5 program, Ottawa cut its share by \$102 million for 1982-83. This is in addition to its plan to reduce funding \$5.7 billion over five years. And because federal

funds for education don't have strings attached, the provinces continue to divert monies to other areas.

Jewett says the cutbacks trend particularly affect women, who account for 95 per cent of the full time enrolment increases from 1970 to 1979.

"On its present course, the federal government is assisting in the creation of a permanent underclass of youth and women," Jewett says.

In B.C., education funding is hit the worst. The province cut its student aid funds 40 per cent. Jewett, a former Simon Fraser University president, says B.C. universities are already cutting courses and staff.

"We've got too many students for our present resources," agrees current Simon Fraser president, William Saywell. "The only thing we can do is say no to qualified people."

Other provinces are struggling with lack of funds. In Ontario, York University turned away 1,400 qualified students this year, a situation repeated across the province.

And in Quebec, cutbacks mean quota systems and the possibility for tuition fees for the first time in CEGEPs, the preuniversity colleges.

Jewett decries these trends. "Our governments must not be allowed to abandon the goal of universal accessibility

to post secondary education," she says.

Loans may be hit next, according to Secretary of State Serge Joyal. Despite the additional \$60 million federal contribution this year for loans, Joyal warned many provinces are freezing or reducing their aid contributions.

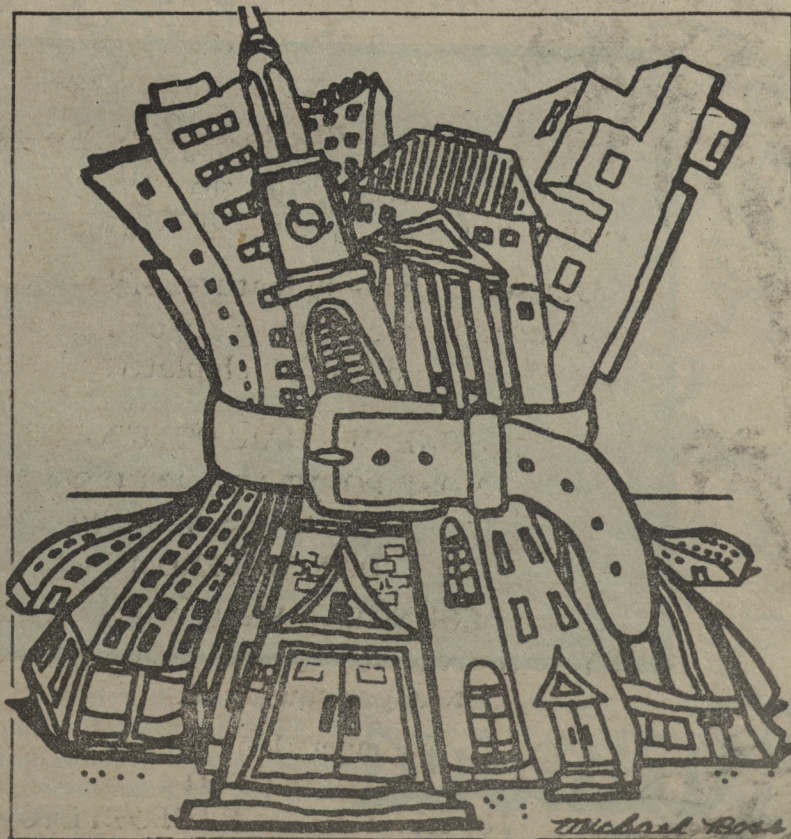
Another area that may be hit is minority language education. Joyal said he has already heard complaints from French students in Saskatchewan. He does not believe Quebec's anglophone universities will suffer.

Jewett says the strains on Canada's higher education system are hurting youth, and the federal government is to blame.

"The federal government created a system of funding that resulted in this tragic situation. It's up to us to join with the provinces in creating an emergency fund and a new fund formula."

Finance minister Marc Lalonde says such a deal is out of the question unless the provinces agree to return to the 50-50 cost-sharing system of pre-1977. The federal government is demanding more control over how its funds are spent, but in the meantime it is continuing on its plan to restrict the flow of education dollars.

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