



Some of the approximately 125 students who enjoyed an unexpected break from cold Fishbowl food last Friday. (Photo: MacLeod)

Soup kitchen publicizes job cuts

By John Pendergast and Carolyn Ryan

A makeshift soup kitchen was assembled in the Robertson Library Lounge last Friday, and despite some students who said, "Hey, I've got a job" while eating their free soup on CBC television, organizers feel it was a success.

Its main purpose was to attract attention to the federal government's deletion of 600 student jobs under the Canada Summer Works program. The organizers of the soup kitchen included

members of the Student Union, Canadian Federation of Students chair Beth Olley, and local CFS representatives.

Cathy Campbell, provincial representative for CFS and a UPEI student, considers the soup kitchen to have been more of an information session designed for student awareness than a publicity stunt.

Publicity was in the air, though, with reporters from CBC's Compass, local radio stations, and newspapers circulating through the Friday noon crowd in the Lounge.

As students entered the lounge, members of the committee organizing the SU campaign against job program cuts handed out yellow pamphlets, some with large red X's on the back, which described the SU's intentions for the rest of the campaign.

After most had been served with bowls of chicken noodle soup purchased from the campus food service, Saga Foods, at a total cost of \$60, Campbell called for order and explained that all students who had received marked pamphlets represented the proportion of student jobs lost through the recent Summer Works cuts — about 25%.

Furthermore, she said, this would mean an increased demand for student loans and bursaries next year, and a greater strain on the existing post-secondary funding sources.

In a random survey conducted by *Netted Gem* reporters, it was found that a majority of the students present were opposed to the job cuts.

One student remarked that one friend would be unable to attend university next fall because of a lack of funds.

Another predicted that some individuals would not bother to repay their student loans next year, not having been employed during the summer.

Student Union president Michelle Dorsey, one of the organizing committee, figured that it did raise the level of awareness on campus. Dorsey feels the loss of 600 student jobs will mean cutthroat competition for

those student jobs left on P.E.I.

The soup kitchen itself is a beginning step in UPEI's fight against job cutbacks. In the next week, postcards signed by students will be sent to Flora MacDonald, federal Minister of Employment and Immigration, asking for the replacement or reinstatement of Summer Works.

The organizers hope to express concern about the

cutbacks and ask both provincial and federal governments to remember students in future job creation plans.

Also they plan, by holding a fund-raising Main Event on Valentine's Day, to raise money to recreate one student job that has been lost.

This move especially will symbolize the importance of the job to the student and to the community at large.



Graphic/ Ubysey

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