

Rich are ripping off poor in education

TORONTO (CUP) - The Ontario Commission on Post-Secondary Education (The Wright Commission) has just discovered the rich are ripping off the poor for their university education.

It seems surprised.

A study it commissioned the consulting firm, Systems Research Group Inc., to do, pointed out that a greater proportion of people from "higher income" families attend university than do people from poorer families, but poor families pay more in total to support the universities than do the rich. The reason? There are fewer rich families than poor families.

The study revealed that 34 per cent of students in universities and community colleges in Ontario are from families in the \$10,000 - or - up income bracket although that group pays only 28 per cent of the education costs.

The \$7,000 - to - \$9,000 bracket spawned 24 per cent of the students but paid only 22 per cent of the costs. With lower income families the ratio is reversed.

The \$5,000 - to - \$7,000 income bracket pays 24 per cent of university costs but has only 20 per cent of the students, while the group making between \$3,000 and \$5,000 paid 20 per cent of the costs and included only 16 per cent of the student population.

The upper class groups also tended to go into professions that are guaranteed to earn them more money, like law and medicine, and thus tend to keep them in the top income brackets of society.

Law medicine, according to the report cost the most money to teach, yet 50 per cent of the law students were from the upper strata. They paid 29 per cent of the cost of their education. More than 40 per cent of those studying medicine were also from upper income groups.

According to the report, all university programs benefit upper income groups at the expense of lower ones, but there are also other benefits to be derived from being rich that the report did not deal with.

The rich (here defined as having an income of \$10,000 and over) are also taxed less in proportion than the poor so that people in the \$10,000 and over bracket, in 1961, paid about 37 or 38 per cent of their incomes in direct and indirect taxes. By comparison, those with annual incomes of less than \$2,000 paid 54 per cent of their incomes in those same taxes.

According to the study, poor families with incomes of less than \$3,000 get the best deal as far as the number of students in university in proportion to

income goes, that is, the rates are nearly equal (if low).

For having 8.98 per cent of the number of university students, such families pay 8.86 per cent of the costs.

Another report prepared for the Wright Commission recommends a longer university

year with two five month terms instead of one seven - and - half - month year in order that students may get degrees in three years instead of four. Draft recommendations released last month also showed the commission will stress making degrees easier to get.

The 13-man Commission on

Post-Secondary Education for Ontario was set up two and a half years ago under the chairmanship of the provincial deputy secretary for Social Development, Douglas Wright, to chart the course of education in universities and community colleges for the next 20 years.

Opportunities for Youth is ... a middle-class cop-out

(CUP Ottawa)

The secretary of state pays a group of young middle class radicals across Canada exorbitant salaries to give money to more young middle class radicals for projects which it knows will fold in three months.

And that's the way the government wants it says Dale Martin, a young middle class project officer for the secretary of state's Opportunities for Youth program.

He also says OFY is a human lottery and the most partisan political job-dispensing program under federal auspices.

The aim of the program is to defuse any potentially - violent groups of middle class

unemployed, he told the Ottawa Humanist Association Friday (February 19). Middle class youth who as one Humanist put it, "are more articulate, cleverer, and know how to make bombs," see the government spending all this money on them and will put up with the huge summer unemployment rate.

Although only one out of ten applicants will have his project approved, says Mr. Martin, the estimated 18,000 who will be rejected will tend to think of their lack of employment as the fault of their own inadequacies

rather than blame the government.

While the program will this year try to broaden the base it serves, providing jobs for community college students and young workers, past experience has shown that the attempt is doomed.

"The type of people who will come up with new project ideas and can phrase their applications in a way which will appeal to OFY staff are the middle class youth who are well schooled and have experience in this type of rhetoric.

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