

Axworthy tables plans for job-training reforms

by Peter Michalyszyn

Labor unions have condemned it, business has praised it, and provincial ministers of education warily have questioned the latest federal initiative into job training for the 80's.

Predicting a crunch in the number of skilled Canadians to fill positions by 1984, Lloyd Axworthy has tabled plans for broad reform of the job-training market.

The program would encourage industry and provincial governments to train skilled workers to match a list of national priorities.



Lloyd Axworthy

Among those priorities are workers in computing, aerospace, and petroleum industries, as well as welders, tool and die makers, and sheet metal workers. Axworthy has promised to consult with the provinces, as he did last weekend, on other national priorities.

After that meeting, January 11, Alberta Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, Jim Horsman, said, "We are fairly confident that the federal minister will not take unilateral action on a proposed National Training Program."

Horsman emphasized that he and his provincial counterparts had little time to study the detailed Axworthy proposals. He also suggested seeking reaction to the proposals from business, industry and labor.

"We reiterated our concern that his latest proposal constitutes only one component of an overall package of federal-provincial transfer payments and cost-shared programs, and that we

have not been privileged to see all of the federal proposals in education and other areas," Horsman said.

Horsman referred to the controversial Established Programs Financing (EPF) arrangements which come up for renegotiation in March. Last

summer finance minister Allan MacEachen predicted massive cutbacks in federal post-secondary education funding. He backed off the cuts in his November budget.

As well, last July the federal government unveiled the "Labor Market Development in the 80's" Task Force report, believed to be the basis for Axworthy's training plans.

This training plan includes: listing occupations considered to be in demand nationally and shifting more funds to those areas;

developing a major forecasting system with the private sector;

substantially increasing financial aid to industries providing training in designated jobs;

cutting off training funds for jobs in which there are now surplus workers;

providing incentives to employers to train more women, natives and handicapped people;

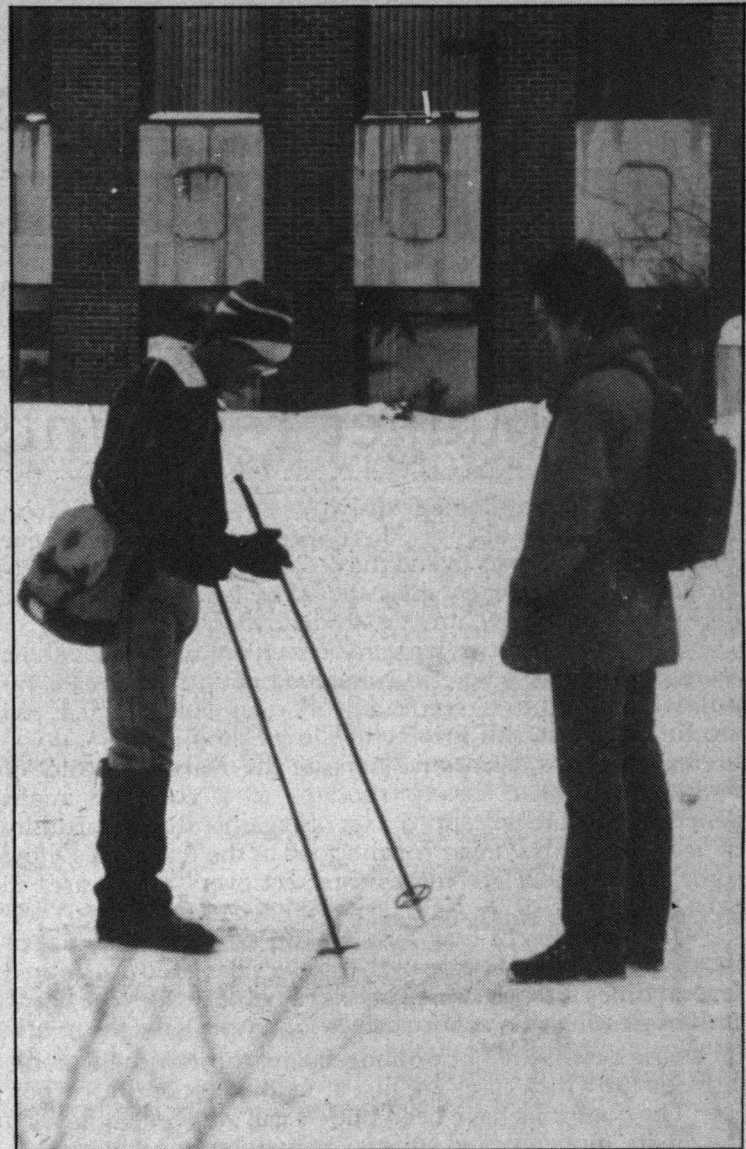
establishing a fund to help training institutions switch courses to match the national priorities.

The federal government is also investigating ways of bringing voluntary groups into 'self-help' manpower training by providing seed money to start new programs.

Dennis McDermott of the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC) criticized the federal training plan as mere "gimmickry" and said Axworthy should concentrate on creating jobs now for the unemployed, not jobs for the unemployed three years from now.

CLC vice-president Shirley Carr has called the plan "paternalism at its worst, with the government and employers deciding on their own what is best for people directly affected, without asking them for their opinion."

Carr said Axworthy's plan would not work because it was based on voluntary compliance by corporations and it excludes unions who should act as spokesmen for the workers affected.



Student tries out new dual exhaust winter grips

photo Ken Tsai

Liberals want a free response to Tory ad

MONTREAL (CUP) — The federal government has launched a belated attack against an attempt by the Progressive Conservative party to mobilize students against Ottawa's education funding cutbacks.

A comment by Secretary of State Gerald Regan, rebutting reports that the government plans sweeping cutbacks in its transfers to the provinces for post-secondary education, was mailed recently to student newspapers across the country.

While Regan reaffirms the government's support for post-secondary education, he acknowledges the government is unhappy with its current level of funding to universities.

The material is apparently a response to an advertisement placed in student papers last September, by the Conservatives,

claiming "the federal Liberal government wants to triple your tuition," and "the Liberal party just doesn't care about your future."

Not so, according to the Secretary of State.

"Canada's 1.5 million full and part-time students attending universities and community colleges have been often fed rumours and distortions by parties employing scare tactics for political ends," reads the Regan comment.

"The Liberal government has a tradition of strong support for higher education, and this support has been demonstrated by our actions as well as our words."

The Conservative advertisement noted that in fall 1980 Finance Minister Allan MacEachen announced a "1.5 billion cut in federal transfer payments to the provinces under the Established Programs Financing (EPF) plan." The ad speculated that all of that cut would be passed on to the post-

secondary institutions.

The effect of a federal cutback of that magnitude, the Tory ad said, would be that "skyrocketing tuition fees would make a mockery of the right to education for lower and middle income Canadians."

The federal budget announced in November provided for over \$5 billion in EPF cuts, spread out over five years.

The EPF agreement itself, governing federal payments to the provinces to help fund medical care and post-secondary education, expires in April and will shortly be renegotiated.

"The federal government is concerned about present arrangements for the funding of post-secondary education," acknowledges Regan in his article. "We are concerned about the increasing share of the support for post-secondary education which the federal government is paying through transfers to the provinces, and the decreasing share of the operating cost of

post-secondary institutions being paid by some provinces."

"Likewise, the Government of Canada wants greater assurances from provincial governments that money from the national treasury is actually being spent on post-secondary education. Under the present arrangement, there is no accountability or visibility for the Government of Canada's contribution to the provinces for post-secondary education," states Regan.

Regan included a cover letter on his Ministerial stationery with the article, saying he hoped it would be published (free of charge) to "stimulate a constructive exchange on how improvements in the financial structure of post-secondary education can be achieved."

The Conservative broadside against Ottawa's post-secondary funding appeared in the form of paid advertising.

BAZ



Olivia Butti's Diary

Sunday, January 14, 1982

Dear Diary:

Thank goodness that tart Maggie Trudeau is finally out of the newspapers. I don't know why they even print trash like that. Every word of it was disgusting. She makes me so angry. At breakfast I told Petey I'd like to bop her right in the nose. Petey said that he wouldn't mind bopping her once or twice himself, except he pronounced it "boffing". He's so silly when he gets up in the morning.

But to think that little sleaze was our first lady. She goes out partying and dancing till all hours, drinking and smoking cocaine and having you know what with handsome movie stars whenever and where ever she feels like it and the rest of the world probably thinks all Canadian women want to be like her. Heaven knows what they must think of Canadian womanhood in Upper Volta.

It is so galling to read about that little tramp

and see Princess Diana in the same newspaper. What a charming, dignified girl. And moral. She saved herself for marriage and got pregnant right after the honeymoon. What a fine example she would be for Canadian womanhood. What a shame is that England isn't even using her. They've already got a perfectly good Queen.

So I think it's quite obvious what we should do. At the next city council meeting I'm going to put forward a motion that we insist the government of Canada invite Princess Diana and Prince Whatizname to be queen and king of Canada. Well I suppose they can't really be king and queen, but they certainly could be governor general. I'm sure she, well I guess he technically, would do a much better job than those Schreyers. I hear she even wears blue jeans around the house. Do we want our young girls to act like that?

No, I think we need a good example for our children and Princess Diana would be perfect. In her rise to prominence there is a lesson, I think, for all of us.