

# Operation Summertime "to help students"

by Frank Cassidy

Operation Summertime, a program sponsored by the Federal Government, has been set up so that "post secondary students will be able to continue their studies in the fall".

This word came from Secretary of State Gerard Pelletier at a press conference in Montreal last Friday (March 18). He said that the meeting had been called because "there is very little time to put the program into motion".

The conference, called on short notice, was set up to hear the views of university newspaper editors from eastern Canada, on the government's decision to implement the program.

The federal government hopes to have the organization set up by the end of April, which allows very little time for preparation.

"We realize that this is a

crash program", Pelletier said, "but we wanted to reach the students as soon as possible."

One of the main points in question concerned the long delay in the announcement from Ottawa.

"There are a number of reasons why the project was so long to be made public," Pelletier said. "I won't go into detail about it. I will just say that the intention was to release to them (the students) at a much earlier date, but we were held up by what we thought, and I think, were important reasons."

"Preliminary consultations with provincial authorities were not only essential...not only of a jurisdictional matter, but of the essence of the success of this program," he said.

The plan behind this operation will enable students to use their "imagination and creativity" in building a project

which will provide employment for themselves during the summer," Pelletier said.

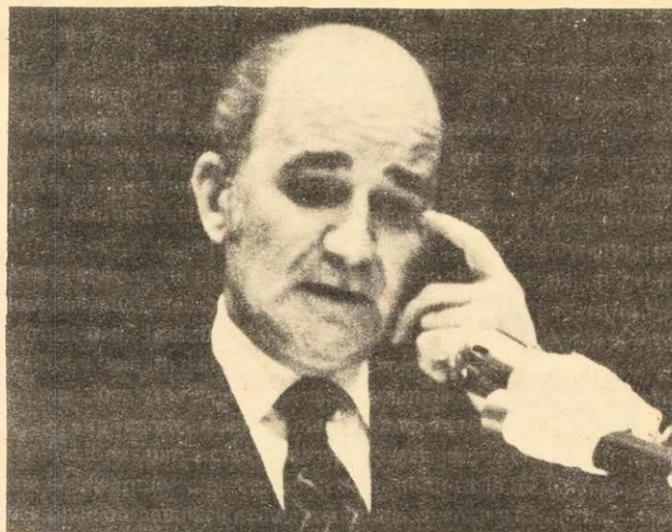
"We leave anyone free to present a project and we'll judge the project on the value of the project itself".

"This means that we will evaluate the program itself in terms of the reliability of the organization and a good rationale of the program itself," he said.

"There are other criteria but I wouldn't like to go into them because it would be, I think, a bit boring."

Pelletier was criticized for the great interest expressed by the government in this project, while at the same time not concentrating their attention on the hundreds of thousands of unemployed in Canada.

University of Toronto Varsity Editor, David Frank, asked why is this money being allotted to students when there are



Gerard Pelletier wonders why he asked, and the government paid, 30 students to come to his Montreal news conference. One of them just asked the \$58 million question.

almost three-quarters of a million people unemployed in Canada.

Pelletier replied that "there is a need to give students jobs."

"The 57.8 million dollars being spent in this area is only a drop in the bucket, compared to what is being spent on unemployment," he added.

## TYP — back next year or not?

The Transitional Year Program may not continue next year if financial problems aren't solved soon.

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to \$40,000 to continue the program, according to President Henry Hicks.

**EVERYONE CONNECTED WITH THE PROGRAM** is firmly convinced it should be continued. Students voiced a unanimous "YES" when asked if they felt the program should be continued. Dr. P. D. Pillay, TYP director, said TYP people have to prove to the university that the program is worthwhile. He thought they could do it. TYP tutors interviewed also felt the program should continue.

The program is designed to provide young Nova Scotian Blacks and Indians with the academic background to prepare them for university. It was operating on a trial basis this year with sixteen Blacks

and seven Indian students.

The university gave \$80,000 for the program. The Nova Scotia Union of Indians is paying for Indian students' tuition and living expenses. The rest of the money for the program was received from public and private donations. **THERE WERE FEW CRITICISMS** of the program from those involved in it. Indian students feel "there's not much Indian history material around".

Black students felt that there was too much Black history to crowd it into one year. One student suggested that there should be more students, and more equal representation of the two cultures.

Another criticism given by some students and tutors is that

the program should be two years, rather than one.

"The only way to make this program effective is to give the amount of time necessary to each student to allow him to achieve success in the university," said English tutor Marty Sonkin.

Sonkin emphasized that it was important for the tutors and students to be informed about the continuation of the program as soon as possible. They must be able to make plans for next year he said.

"IT'S GOING TO BE A LOT EASIER next year," said one student. "This is the first year a program of this type has been established in Nova Scotia. I think for a first year program, it's really a success," he added. They felt it was more relevant

than usual university courses.

"I think it does a lot for the community," said Rocky Jones, the Black history tutor, "because it allows some people the opportunity to get involved in the sort of things they never had an opportunity, on a very small scale — they never had the chance."

**AS FAR AS THE STUDENTS ARE CONCERNED** the university is committed to the program and it would be disgraced if they backed out.

"If this program doesn't continue," warned one student, "this goddam university is going to be in a jam. I think everyone should know that. Christ, we aren't getting nothing for nothing. It's just something that's been denied to us."

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## Smith welcomes job plan

Dalhousie Student Union President Brian Smith has welcomed the federal government's \$57.8 million student summer employment program with "enthusiastic relief", but is quick to caution optimistic students.

"Students hoping to get a summer job under the plan must appreciate that as yet no federal monies have been allocated to any particular local projects", he said.

Government officials have told the Student Union it will be welcoming grant proposals from a broad base of student-oriented organizations.

"But the ultimate success of the project", said Smith,

"depends on a co-operative effort by all those seeking the federal funds."

Smith explained that preparation of a proposal to serve members of the Dalhousie Student Union has already begun, but he hopes the federal government's initiative can be soon expanded to serve the student population of the province.

On another front, feelers have been put out by Smith on the subject of Air Canada Swing-Air cards. In communication with the airline's Market Development Department, Smith says that the reasons for cards should be reassessed.

At the present time, students

up to 22 years of age receive a 40% discount but travel only on a stand-by basis. Smith would like to have two specific changes implemented.

The first would be to reduce the discount to 34% but at the same time make available confirmed reservations. Smith says this "would eliminate the problem of Swing-Air users booking seats on flights, on a full-fare rate, using a fictitious name."

The second change would be to include all full-time students registered at any recognized educational institute in Canada under the Swing-Air plan. This, he says, "would allow the plan to appeal to youth to see their country first".