

# Bursaries cut by provincial plan

by Alec Bruce

Ian is a good student. He takes courses in Math, Physics and Engineering at Dalhousie University. In two years, he'll graduate with honours and probably land a job with a petroleum exploration company in Alberta. He looks forward to his future: he's determined to be the best in his field. He has only one problem - and it's a big problem, one he shares with virtually every student in Canada. Ian is short of money.

Still, the last two years haven't been too rough on Ian. He's been very careful. Each summer, he's saved close to \$2000.00; and he maintains, in the winters, regular part-time work. He's cut his expenses drastically by living at home. And even if sharing his small bedroom with his twelve-year old brother cramps his social life, he figures the sacrifice is worth it. With small donations from his parents, Ian has managed to pay for his tuition, his books, and even an occasional Saturday-night beer-bash.

Ian needs roughly \$4000.00 to complete his education. He qualifies for a Canada Student Loan, and receives \$1912.00 and a bursary application. He carefully fills out the application, returns it, and breathes a sigh of relief. He assumes that under the provincial bursary program, after receiving a federal loan, he is eligible to receive an additional \$1700.00. Ian can almost smell the tar sands of Athabasca.

Ian is unfortunately premature.

but under-privileged, high school graduates may never get the chance to go to university.

Said Hill in a recent interview: "This program simply does not provide enough money. The Canada Student Loan Program and the Provincial Bursary Program have diverged to a dangerous extent. They now maintain completely different criteria for financial need. The federal and provincial plans no longer support each other or needy students. In too many cases, the N.S. bursary assessment reduces the federal need assessment. In some cases the reduction will be drastic."

cal. This meant if a student were eligible to receive \$4000.00 in student aid, he'd get roughly \$2000.00 from Ottawa, a figure summarily matched by the province.

Now, the provincial government, not content to follow Ottawa's lead, has erected its own sliding scale for assessing student need. It departs radically from the one used by the federal government. Where the Canada Student Loan Program merely requires proof of financial status and whether or not the applicant is dependent on someone, the current bursary program establishes preconditions for dependent status and financial responsibility.

The terms of the revised program say if a student lives with his parents - or lives within 15 miles of his

parents' house - is single, and working full-time towards a degree, he is dependent. Unless he gets married,

The result, in Nova Scotia, is more costs for education shouldered by students and their families as government makes it progressively more difficult for anyone to obtain provincial assistance.

According to the Hill report, the most dramatic effect will be on the expectations of students. Having received money from the federal government, and provincial bursaries, to meet their need assessments, they will again be expecting similar aid this year. The harsh reality that only a fraction of the \$1700.00 will ever be paid to any individual will hit some students like a bomb.

**STUDENT AID 1982 - 1983**

**INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS**

Please read before completing application form.

Classification of students: Students are classed in two groups for the purpose of the Student Aid Program: Group A and Group B.

Group B Students:

Are considered first in line for the following:

a) be married

b) be a single parent

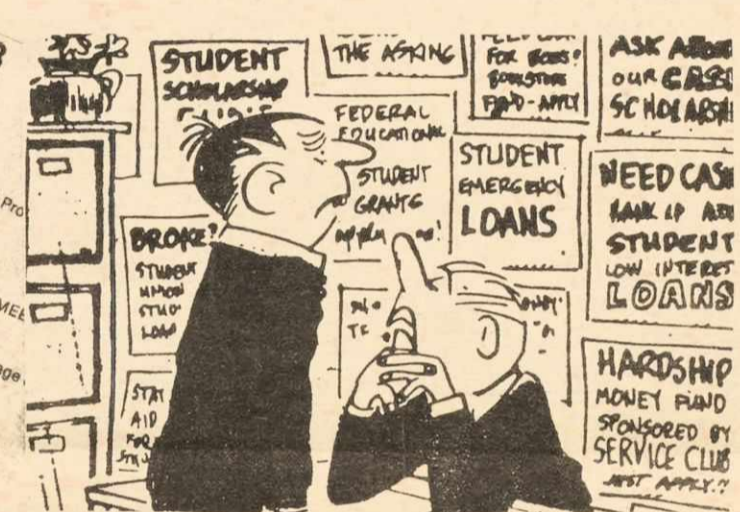
CHANGES IN THE 1982-83 NOVA SCOTIA GOVERNMENT BURSARY PROGRAM

There have been changes in the Nova Scotia Student Aid Program which may directly affect you. The Nova Scotia Government has reexamined the criteria and method of granting provincial bursaries. It was concluded that a different set of criteria should exist for granting bursaries than for Canada Student Loans, which are repayable. These new criteria, as well as the criteria for the repayable Canada Student Loan, are as follows:

1. To qualify as an independent student, YOU MUST MEET the following criteria:

a) for the first time, please submit a copy of your marriage certificate for four calendar years (48 months).

b) for 24 months; each period of which is at least 12 consecutive months.



The next two years don't promise to be as tranquil. As the economy worsens, jobs for students will become scarce. As government wage restraints intensify, costs - including the cost of university - will rise. Ian is justifiably worried. He knows he won't be earning, in the coming months, much more than he is right now. He can't expect his father, a man who feeds and clothes a family of four on \$20,000.00 a year, to pay the higher fees. Ian follows the only course left open to him and applies with the provincial government for student aid.

He does not yet know the provincial government has, in the past few months, drastically altered the terms under which students may become eligible to receive bursaries. A fresh, more restrictive, set of criteria now defines financial need in the full-time student for the provincial government. Ian will be lucky if he gets a \$500.00 entitlement this year.

Ian is hypothetical; but his problem is very real. According to a recent report by Dalhousie Students' Council Vice-President (External), Tim Hill, the province's new student aid program is so restrained, many deserving students may be forced to cut short their university careers. Many promising,

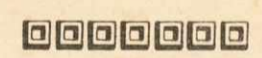
Now as before, students applying for provincial assistance must first qualify for a Canada Student Loan. The federal government allows eligible students a maximum of \$1912.00 for a 34-week academic year. If a student's need is greater than this, a provincial bursary application is sent to him. A maximum bursary of \$1700.00 is available.

In the past, the criteria used to assess financial need in the student by the federal and provincial governments were virtually identical.

drops out of school to work for four years, or becomes a single parent, he cannot change his dependent status.

Dependent status confers a special responsibility on the student's family. The province requires the families of dependent students to pay, according to their incomes, twice, sometimes three times, as much as they had to under the old scheme for education.

Says Hill: "The anticipation for money by students is disturbing. Students don't realize the different criteria at work here in Nova Scotia for aid. Some students will become victims of a program that, in its present state, can't possibly help them."



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