

Summer jobs — will you get one?

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Students who found it difficult to obtain summer employment last year will find it even harder this summer.

The prospects for student employment are dimmer since last year's low. A number of economic realities reveal our position:

- approximately 30-40 per cent of Canadian students were effectively unemployed last summer
- the overall unemployment rate has shown an unusual increase during the winter
- there are no precise figures on student employment and no plans to handle the summer's rush on jobs this year.

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics says 74,000 persons between ages 14-19 were unemployed last summer. This includes only part of all students seeking jobs.

In 1967-68 there were 237,000 undergraduates in Canada (DBS): add to this all graduate students and members of community colleges, technical schools, etc., and the increase in this year's enrollment—there just aren't enough jobs.

Manpower has no statistics on students entering the work force, when, for how long, etc. The government agency claims to have found 17,000 jobs last year once it had set up special services to handle the unexpected demand. (This figure includes such jobs

as two or three hours a week cutting grass.)

Although last year's situation was described as unusual—it was reported that some 2,700 women with BA's were unemployed in Toronto alone—there don't appear to be any more opportunities opening up in 1969.

Coupled with increasing unemployment figures, summer student employment could effectively disappear.

The job shortage will force students to rely increasingly on loans and awards to finance their education. The loans plan was designed to supplement student summer earnings. If the amount of part-time and summer work has been permanently reduced, a new

approach will have to be developed.

After combining the accent on student contributions, the generally low amount available in awards and the rising cost of living, a significant number of students may have to defer their education. In any case, the goal of the federal-provincial loan plan—"to ensure that all who are capable can continue their education"—will not be fulfilled. Unless a basically different stance is taken, a number of solutions appear possible:

(1) The loan-awards program be greatly expanded. This entails more money from already hard pressed government revenues. The money would have to come from increased taxes; though not necessarily from that tax base already

overtaxed—i.e. it is possible to increase taxes on a more equitable basis with the implementation of the Carter Report and a tax increase to larger corporations (specifically mining and oil companies).

(2) Implementation of mammoth summer work projects for students. This could involve a CYC-style program allowing students to work during the summer on various community projects and have this credited toward increased financial aid at university. Again, money is coming from government funds, though with an input of real work on the part of the student and a contribution from community or private enterprise.

(3) Operation of universities on a tri-mester basis. This has certain obvious attractions (more students in less time; better use of basic facilities) but would require greater expenditure than an increase loans and awards. It would involve greater university operating costs and a simultaneous cut-back on student summer earnings (if they are in fact available).

(4) Governmental policies aimed at full employment—the simplest and most obvious solution. Full employment is possible.

Canadians still lack many of the necessities of life (housing, food, medical assistance) and they can be supplied. The unemployed could be engaged in filling these needs if the government initiated the proper programs. And full employment policies, would automatically raise tax revenues.

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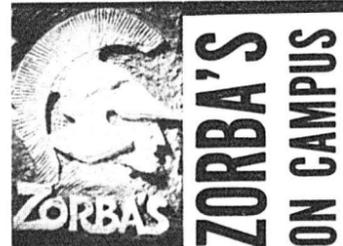
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