

Throne Speech lacks detail in promises to students

BY DAVID COCHRANE

OTTAWA (CUP)—The Liberal government kicked off its second term in office with a vague commitment to provide more money for post-secondary education scholarships and job creation for Canada's youth.

In its 23 September Throne Speech, the federal government also promised to work toward training young Canadians for careers in the high-tech industry and to provide universities with more money for research.

While the ceremonial presentation was high on style, critics say it was lacking substance, a trait common to most Throne Speeches.

"There is nothing that shows us there is a commitment to put back the more than \$2 billion that has already been cut from post-secondary education or to re-examine the Canada Student Loans Program," said Libby Davies, the New Democratic Party's youth critic.

Davies says there are 26,000

more unemployed young people than when the Liberals last promised to deal with the 20 per cent youth unemployment rate a year ago. In agreement, Progressive Conservatives say that nothing announced in the Throne Speech will help create meaningful jobs.

John Herron, the Tory youth critic, says the government should cut payroll taxes if it expects the private sector to hire young people. Herron says that the possibility of employment is important if young people are going to take on the burden of financing higher education.

"What we need to do is ensure that the funding mechanisms within the government don't make going to university a daunting exercise, because students are rightfully fearful of the debt levels they will receive at the end," said Herron.

The federal government said it is committed to working with provincial governments, the private sector, and individual Canadians to make it easier for young people to find work.

"The level of unemployment among Canadian's between the ages of 18 and 25 is unacceptably high," Governor-General Romeo Leblanc said during the speech.

"The federal, provincial and territorial governments will act to address this problem."

There were also ambiguous promises to reduce barriers to post-secondary education, increase assistance to students with dependents, and new scholarships for academic excellence and to help low and moderate-income Canadians get a post-secondary education.

Although the Throne Speech was long on rhetoric and short on specifics, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) says the themes of the speech may open the door for some lobbying initiatives.

Brad Lavigne, the Federation's national chairperson, says the government is finally paying attention to the problems student politicians have been pushing for years.

The CFS wants the government

to introduce more educational grants for disadvantaged students. Lavigne says that with the nine English-speaking premiers promising to make youth issues a priority in their recent meeting in Calgary, there is a window of opportunity.

"The recognition that student debt is too high, tuition fees are too high, that youth unemployment is unacceptably too high offers us some opportunities for the upcoming parliament and the

upcoming budget," Lavigne said. The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) isn't as optimistic. Hoops Harrison, CASA's executive director, says the government didn't provide enough details about its second-term plans.

"There was nothing bad said, but no real specifics on the good parts either," said Harrison.

"There's a lot of smoke in those comments. I would have liked to have seen some dollar figures."

Professor not responsible for attempted murder

BY CHRIS BODNAR

OTTAWA (CUP) — A University of Ottawa psychology professor was found "not responsible" for attempting to murder his mother, in a court decision Monday.

Henry Edwards was charged with attempted murder on Oct. 15 last year after giving his mother an overdose of sleeping pills. His mother was treated for the overdose and released from hospital.

Edwards says he was in financial trouble, was dealing with the stress of his job, was taking care of his mother who lived with him — and fell into a state of depression.

Judge Hugh Fraser recognized Edwards' mental disorder and declared him not criminally responsible for his actions. A provincial review board will assess Edwards and recommend any additional treatment.

Robert Wakefield, Edwards' lawyer, says he is very pleased with the treatment his client received throughout the ordeal.

"It was just a sad chapter in an

otherwise very distinguished life and career. Hopefully we can get past it and he can go back to being the professor and eminent psychologist he is," Wakefield said.

Helene Carty, a University of Ottawa (U of O) spokesperson, says the university wants to be supportive of Edwards and help him.

"He was deemed to be a great man and a friend of the university," said Carty. "Everybody was supportive, and will continue to [be] so."

Edwards is on administrative leave from his teaching position, but continues his research and supervision of masters students. Carty expects him to return to his full capacity after December, when his leave expires.

Edwards' accomplishments include having been president of the American Association of Psychology Boards and chairman of the Ontario Board of Examiners in Psychology.

U of O rector Marcel Hamelin accepted Edwards' resignation as dean of Social Sciences after the initial incident.

Shooting girlfriend understandable, jokes mayor

BY KELLY BATSTONE

ST. JOHN'S, Nfld. (CUP) — A Newfoundland mayor has outraged women's groups after saying that violence against women is "understandable".

During a waste management conference on Monday, St. John's Mayor John Murphy told his audience a story that some activists say epitomizes the reasons for still having marches against violence.

CBC radio reported that Murphy, in relating a conversation he had with the mayor of Bristol during the Cabot 500 Celebrations, said the low number of security guards at the festivities showed that "we...don't have much crime [in St. John's]."

He went on to say: "The odd fellow shoots his girlfriend, but that's understandable. Apart from that, we're very peace-loving and you can go out at night without any trouble." The audience laughed at

the anecdote.

Murphy, who is running for re-election, made the comments a day after 60-year-old Mary Margaret O'Reilly was shot and killed. Her husband, Gerard O'Reilly, faces a charge of first-degree murder for the shooting.

Gloria Williams, a women's issues advocate who volunteers with several women's groups in the city says Murphy's story and the audience's reaction were outrageous.

"Four women in the province have died this year from men killing their wives or girlfriends," she said. "This is a very serious issue and [Murphy] made a big joke and mockery of it."

Williams also said it is because of attitudes like those expressed by Murphy that events like the Take Back the Night March must go on. Women across the province will participate in the 12th annual march later this month.

"[Murphy's comment] is unacceptable," she said. "This is one example of why we, in 1997, need to walk."

Murphy later apologized publicly for his comments.

"I was illustrating the fact that we are a crime-free city and it was all very jocular and so on — and then this hideous statement of mine came out," he said.

Murphy told local media that he phoned the head of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women and apologized when he realized what he'd said.

"It's just something that slipped out in a long speech that I was making, a humorous speech — I thought it was funny, anyway, they all seemed to like it."

Williams says comments like those made by Murphy show that women still have a long way to go in their struggle against violence.

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AIDS losing coverage

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people," said Hodder.

On Sunday, 28 September, Halifax will be the site of the 8th annual AIDS Walk. The purpose of this walk is to raise funds and awareness. The walk will begin at the Halifax commons.

Last year approximately \$20,000 was grossed. The money goes toward sponsoring the programs of the AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia in its effort to ensure that people living with AIDS receive the medical attention that they need.

The coalition tries to make life more comfortable for AIDS patients. It is also active in providing information to the public in an effort to prevent AIDS.

In previous years, the walk has been considered a success and to be gaining momentum.

"I guess in successful we need to look at two things, the amount of funds raised and awareness. Sometimes the amount of funds

raised was not what we would have liked, but certainly the amount of awareness generated by the walk is not measurable," said Hodder.

"Very often the people who come out find out we do and then in turn may volunteer for other things, so I guess the spin off effects from an event can go on for quite some time. That's part of the value of the walk."

Everyone is encouraged to

participate in the walk even if they are unable to get sponsors. Simply taking part is considered an asset.

To get involved, contact the AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia.

Dalhousie Students who wish to participate in the walk can contact Terence Tam, vice-president community affairs.

The Dalhousie Team will meet at noon in front of the Student Union Building.



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