

it should not be a criminal offense, something for which a person carries a record. Whether marijuana should be totally legalized is another question. I think I would have to learn more about the effects, or non-effects, upon health of marijuana before I'm able to take a final position on that.

SPURR

The criminalization of the youth through offences of the marijuana laws, accompanied by wide scale promotion of marijuana smoking as "opposition to the status quo," etc., are used by the state to attack and subvert the working class youth. We do not condone the use of marijuana, but neither do we condone the use of police terror against those who do use it. If someone wishes to use the drug, then that is his own affair. Still we oppose its promotion along with the rest of the rotten imperialist culture that is imposed on the people by the U.S. imperialists.

Do you think the federal government should provide student aid?

COOPER

There's no question that the federal government must continue the student loan scheme and expand it where necessary. The danger there is too much debt for students and I would like somehow for the federal government to come up with a scheme that would both provide the necessary funds and avoid the debt problem.

I will propose to David MacDonald's (Secretary of State) task force on Student Aid, which will be reintroduced after the election, the following three points:

The increasing of the tax deductible expense allowance from \$50 to \$100 per month, as inflation has killed it as a useful tool.

Professional or semi-professional books which are required reading for a course and of later use in the workforce should be tax deductible. It seems crazy to me that you can deduct the cost when you are in the workforce for the books which you couldn't claim when you were a student.

Some students don't use all of their tax deductions available. If they don't, the unused portion shall be transferred to parents where the parent contributes directly to the cost of the student's education.

MCDONOUGH

Well I think it is the aid portion that should be increased, although I can also see that there may be a necessity for increasing the availability of loans somewhat. The reality is that students have less and less means of financing their own education, given the scarcity of jobs and the reductions in summer employment programs.

Even by increasing the availability of loans you do very little to make education more accessible. What you probably do is make more

money available to students who probably have some kind of resources available to them in the first place to go to university. For the average person in lower or middle income circumstances the availability of a higher loan is not likely to increase their accessibility that much.

REGAN

I think that the federal government has to have a role in providing assistance to students attending university because of the fact that there is an unequal ability for the provinces to do so. The richer provinces can do that better than the poorer provinces.



This necessitates as part of the responsibility of the federal government a role for Ottawa in student loans and grants. My feeling is that the federal government should increase the amount of money that is available by way of student loans at the present time and recognize what the actual costs are for a student attending a university. I also believe that the federal government should do so in such a way as to encourage a province to also increase its commitment. It well may be that where at the present time the grant portion is all from the provinces, the federal government should examine the possibility of moving in to that area in cooperation with the provinces. But I do think that the amount of federal grants and the ground rules on which it can be received are out of date. And I would consider personally, as an elected member from this area having a large university population, as a high priority to press in Ottawa for a revision of the level of assistance in higher education.

SPURR

The monopolies and multinationals must pay the full cost of educating every student whom they hire, including a portion of the costs of capital construction of the universities. These companies must be made to pay as well for all research and development work undertaken at the universities in their service, to enable them to make maximum profits. Multinationals operating in Asia, Africa and Latin America must pay for

the education of foreign students who will later work for them.

Foreign students from those countries dominated by imperialism should pay no fees and should be paid a full living stipend. The state and the rich in Canada are part of the neo-colonial system of plunder and exploitation of the people on a world scale, and it is only just that they should be forced to pay a portion of these costs of foreign students.

Are you in favor of increasing the grant or the loan portion of student aid?

COOPER

I would focus more on grants rather than loans because I do think a lot of students are deterred from completing their education because of excess debt load. Now if we could eventually get into the kind of income tax program I mentioned before, we'd think that through again. (Cooper earlier outlined a system under which every university student in Canada would receive equal educational funding. The loan portion of this would be taken out of the graduate's income tax over a long time period, perhaps 20 or 30 years.) But certainly for the moment I would want to rule on the side of grants rather than loans.

I think there has to be a mix of the two and I think particularly that whatever element there is of loans in student aid, it cannot be a system of loans that puts students under a heavy debt load. That would do two things. First, it would prevent students from coming to university in the first place for fear of the debt load and, second, it would put them behind the eight ball for many years thereafter.

MCDONOUGH

In principle what makes sense to me is to begin looking seriously at a more direct form of student aid than the kind of loan programmes now present. At the moment what we have is a kind of user pay mentality, in the same way that that is being promoted in respect to transportation costs. It now seems to be promoted in respect to education and what that has the effect of doing, obviously, is reinforcing the status quo. Students that come from affluent socio-economic backgrounds have access to higher education, which in turn will guarantee their future socio-economic status and those who do not presently have those kind of guarantees will not have access to higher education. It is a formula perpetuating the inequalities of the system. This is a failure to really plan seriously for investment in our natural resources. Certainly human resources and education is our most valuable instrument of investment in resources. And somehow to lose sight of that under conditions of financial restraint is to me very short sighted.

REGAN

I can't properly answer that question because it depends on the availability of money, and it depends on the ability of government to budget for a specific amount of money.

Look at it this way. Obviously, attendance at universities should be free if it were within the ability of government to finance it. I should think every argument can be made for free university education. I think it's the question of the ability of society to provide the revenue at levels of taxation that don't discourage initiative to provide this and other important programs. In our society we can't get all the things we want at any one moment in time. But I do think that there should be a mixture of loans and grants in such a way as to try to make the loan portion not an unreasonable burden for the graduate to carry. Hopefully some day we will be able to achieve free education.

SPURR

As I have already indicated, the federal government uses tax money stolen from the people to finance schemes to make the rich richer. We would place the maximum tax burden on the rich in order to help finance the education of qualified students who are unable to pay.

Our position is that the debts of students must be eliminated. This can only be accomplished by declaring existing student debts null and void, and by instituting a progressive system of university fee payments whereby those who are most capable of paying will be required to share the largest portion of the cost of education. The students should demand that students who are poor or from the working class should not have to pay for their education, while others should pay only what they can afford. As for the students who are from rich families, they should be made to pay the full cost of their education and a large assessment to subsidize the costs of other students.



Until 1976 federal money for social services, that is, health, welfare and education, was transferred to the provinces through a cost sharing programme—the federal government matched dollar for dollar all money contributed by the provincial government. This system was replaced by the present equal programme financing [EPA] approach where money is allotted in blocks with suggestions to the provinces it be spent in different areas. Which programme do you prefer?

COOPER

I think we have to recognize that provincial governments have their priorities in the social field, the cultural field and in the field of education. Those priorities are probably best set by the provincial government than by the Federal government. I am not at all sure that a provincial government is going to be less helpful toward education than the federal government. I certainly favour a very substantial measure of support for higher education from the provincial government. Through the federal government, you can encourage the provinces to provide more funds for higher education, but I don't think you could do it by order of the federal government. I don't object to the block system as such, but I do think there is a residual role there for the federal government.

The former system was much worse than the present system for this reason, because when the federal government used to match dollar Nova Scotia fared badly because the provincial government could afford to provide only, let's say, 1500 dollars per student for higher education and that figure would be matched by an additional \$1500 from the federal government. But a rich province like the province of Alberta could provide \$3000 per student and the Federal government would cash in with another \$3000 per student for the students in Alberta who were already receiving far more than the students in Nova Scotia. So if you were asking me to compare the two systems, the new system is better in my opinion. I actually favour a system in which each university student in Canada will receive exactly the same amount of funds being made available from the federal government as every other student in Canada.

MCDONOUGH

I don't think that there is any question that cost sharing is the answer. I think that the effect of moving in the direction of the established programmes funding is to further divide the nation and this seems typical of Liberal and Tory thinking. There are examples under both administrations of the same kind of thinking to move more and more in the direction of balkinization—a kind of outmoded romantic notion about having closer control at provincial or municipal levels. I