

# Don't kill trees

by Sharon and Rudy Haugeneder

Despite the lush appearance of the dense Amazon jungle, the soil beneath it is not fertile enough to support crops for more than three years, according to scientists.

In effect, the tropical rain forest lives on itself — the plant life lives off the decayed leaves and fallen tree trunks which form a thin layer of humus that is quickly exhausted when the protective rain forest is removed.

However, the destruction of the Amazon continues. Millions of settlers, most looking for new land but many invading the rain forest in search of the vast mineral wealth that lies below its fragile soil, often sweat 80 hours a week burning and ripping out the jungle.

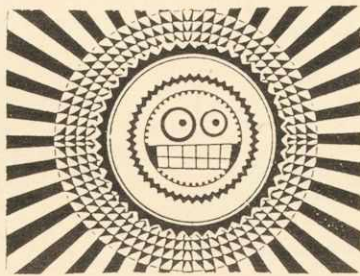
With a rapidly expanding population that sat at 121.6 million in 1981 — and growing at a rate of 2.1 per cent annually — Brazil sees the Amazon as a safety valve for population pressures, mostly from its overpopulated eastern bulge.

Rain forest destruction has been going on since the early 1970s, when Brazil offered free land and tax concessions to anyone willing to slash and burn their way through the tropical hinterlands with its once lamost impenetrable forest of 70-metre-tall trees.

Settlers have swarmed in on the spreading network of highways that have been built — or are under construction. It's the first time in amazon history that peo-

ple are settling inland, away from the 22,500 kilometres of navigable rivers in the region.

The current westward thrust, which parallels US and Canadian expansion of a century ago, began with the groundbreaking of Brasilia, the nation's new capital, in 1957 — on an empty plateau atop the eastern watershed of the Amazon.



# GST screws students

VANCOUVER (CUP) — Universities won't suffer from the proposed federal Goods and Services Tax (GST).

But a former New Zealand finance minister who spoke at the University of British Columbia on Oct. 13, said the fate of students is not so certain.

Roger Douglas said Canadian universities could benefit as much from our GST as New Zealand's universities did when the country adopted a similar tax.

"It was simply a bookkeeping transaction," he said. "They got more money on the one hand than they had taken away with the other.... Essentially, (the GST) didn't make any difference."

Douglas, the present minister of immigration and police in New Zealand's Labour government, spoke on the effects of a GST on New Zealand's economy.

He was sponsored by University of British Columbia's business students club, the economics students association and the Fraser Institute, a Vancouver-based conservative think tank.

Douglas said he did not know what would happen to students under the GST, although he believed the tax was a good thing.

"I don't think the GST affected university students in New Zealand very much at all. I guess it depends on the way you look at it," he said.

"If your income doesn't go up and prices go up, I guess you (students) will be affected by it," he said.

Some analysts say Canadian students will be at least \$340 poorer under the proposed GST.

"A lot of students make less than \$6,175 (and wouldn't qualify for the tax credit for singles making between \$6,175 and

\$13,175 a year)," said Havi Echenberg, executive director of the National Anti-Poverty Organization.

Advertising research on post-secondary students found that 65 per cent of students live away from home. Half earn less than \$7,000 a year.

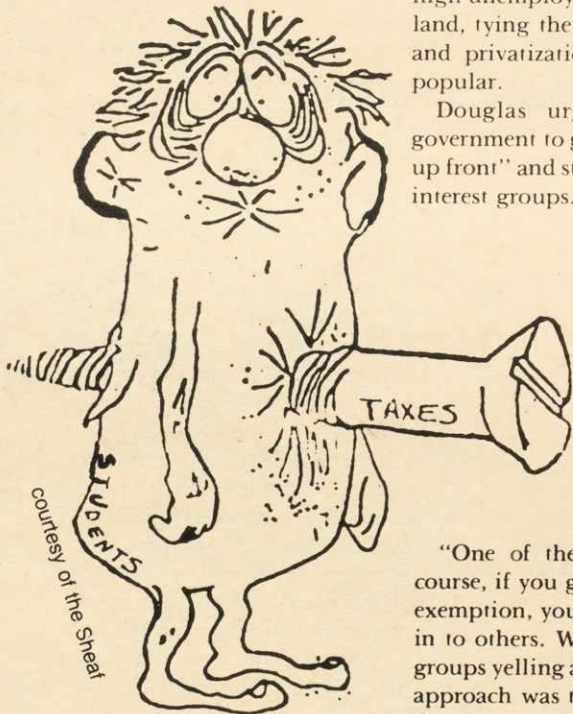
Echenberg said the tax credit would likely not keep up with inflation. She added that students

who worked in service industries and were unable to unionize would likely be particularly penalized.

Douglas said the federal government would have the most success with their GST if they refused to knuckle under to special interest groups and link the new tax to "comprehensive tax reform."

He said despite continuing high unemployment in New Zealand, tying the GST to tax cuts, and privatization made the tax popular.

Douglas urged the federal government to go for "more pain up front" and stare down "special interest groups."



"One of the problems is, of course, if you give one group an exemption, you're bound to give in to others. We had all sorts of groups yelling at us and really my approach was that if I let one of them past me, I'm gone."

## LARGE HALLOWE'EN SALE

Something for everyone. Saturday Oct. 28 and Sunday Oct. 29. For sale large selection of household items, paintings, pictures, dishes, apt. washer, linen, furniture, drapes, storm windows. Lg variety of new & like new girls', ladies' and men's clothing, Christmas items, Halloween treats. Come and have fun!

29 Wildwood Blvd. Dartmouth or call 434-4645.

## CUP BRIEFS

# We want money!

by Ian Jack and Chris Lawson

TORONTO (CUP) — About 500 angry community college students blocked traffic on one of Toronto's busiest downtown streets last Wednesday to force administrators and striking faculty back to the bargaining table.

The action followed a rally at Queen's Park, where students cheered speakers who called on the government to provide more money for the college system. Demonstrators chanted "We want Peterson" as they hammered placards against a metal barricade.

"We're here to vent some anger," said Kelvin Au, a student at Fanshawe College in London. "It should never have got this far."

There are approximately 110,000 full-time and 750,000 part-time students in the Ontario system.

Full-time faculty at the province's 22 community colleges went on strike last Wednesday over demands for a one-year 10 per cent wage increase, improved sick leave benefits, and some control over the hiring of non-union part-time faculty.

The Council of Regents, representing college administrators, offered a 6 per cent per year wage increase over two years.

Fifty-four per cent of teachers voted October 12 in favour of the strike. The action has halted most classes.

"This could ruin our year," said Donna Godden, a student who attended the rally from Mohawk College in Hamilton. "We're all here because we're the ones who lose."

"The government should be able to handle it so the students and teachers are both happy," added Jill Misselbrook, from Loyola College in Belleville.

Officials for the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), which represents roughly 9,000 college teachers, say the strike could be a long one.

"We sincerely hope it won't last," said union official Phil Cunningham. He said the strike would stop most day and night classes.

Charles Pascal, chair of the Council of Regents, said his negotiators "are waiting to go back any moment."

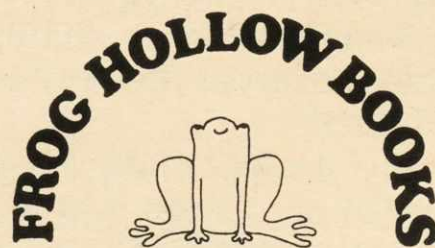
"I don't blame students for being frustrated," Pascal said. "What they should be doing is expressing their anger to both sides."

# Hopping chairs

SASKATOON (CUP) — A curb-climbing wheelchair designed by University of Saskatchewan engineering students has received international recognition.

As part of their fourth-year project in mechanical engineering, David Kulcsar, Doug Irwin, and Blaine Knoblauch developed attachments for a three wheel powerchair to enable the operator to climb curbs up to fifteen centimeters high.

The National Easter Seal Society selected the design for presentation to the annual conference of the Rehabilitation Engineering Society in New Orleans. It was one of five designs selected from one hundred entries originating from the United States, Canada, India and Yugoslavia.



**AUTHOR  
BREAKFAST  
WITH  
STEVIE  
CAMERON**

Her latest book, Ottawa Inside Out, is published by Key Porter.

Please phone the store for details and reservations.

**Spring Garden Place  
5640 Spring Garden Road**

Breakfast \$10.00  
**429-3318**

\* Now open on Sundays, 12-5 \*