

# Feds to axe summer job funds

by Chris Lawson

OTTAWA (CUP) — Employment and Immigration minister Barbara McDougall is expected to announce drastic cuts to the federal summer job program, Challenge '90 this week.

A draft copy of the minister's announcement was leaked to reporters Jan. 24.

The announcement, slated for Jan. 29, said funding for the program, which provides grant money to companies and organizations who employ students during the summer, would be cut 44 per cent from \$118.8 million this year.

Last year, 3972 Nova Scotia students depended on the Challenge program for their summer employment, according to the Students' Union of Nova Scotia.

SUNS chair Lara Morris said that, even with last year's level of funding, 15.5 per cent of returning students in Nova Scotia last July were unemployed. The Canadian average was 10.2 per cent.

The cuts are necessary to

decrease the federal deficit, the announcement said.

It also said funds for Canada Employment Centres would be cut from \$10 million to \$7 million.

McDougall would not comment on the cuts or the leak. Officials from McDougall's office did not return calls.

"I think it's crazy," said NDP education critic Chris Axworthy. "When already students are finding it difficult to get summer jobs."

"It's disgraceful," he added. "If there were lots of summer jobs out there for students, it would be different. But there aren't."

He said the lack of summer jobs for students would affect many people's ability to study.

"Lots of students depend on summer jobs to afford college or university," Axworthy said. "What they're doing is robbing more Canadians of their right to an education," he added.

Canadian Federation of Students official Catherine Louli said the cuts would mean more students relying on student loans to pay their way through school.

Louli said the number of students graduating more than \$15,000 in debt doubled between 1985/86 and 1987/88.

According to a Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission study, 22.8 per cent of Nova Scotia students arranging to pay back their loans in 1986-87 had debt loads over \$10,000.

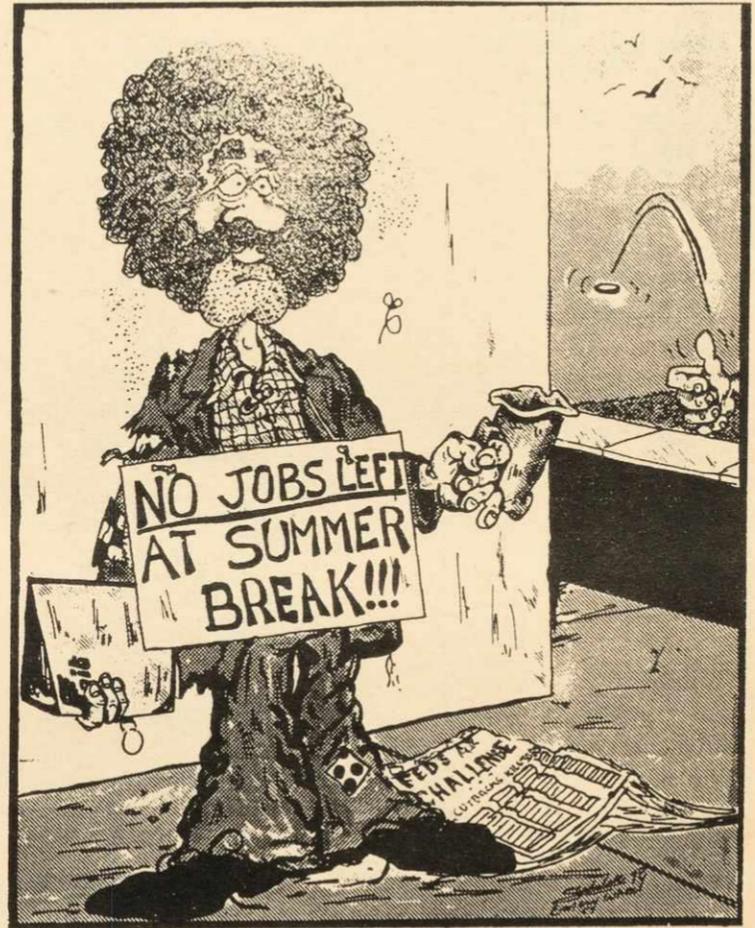
Both Axworthy and CFS chair Jane Arnold were surprised at the size of the cutbacks.

"We had a meeting with [Youth Minister Jean] Charest in October, and he said there would be cuts, but he didn't suggest they would be this drastic," Arnold said.

Charest recently resigned as federal minister for youth and amateur sport over allegations that he interfered in a court case.

Axworthy said between the 3 per cent administrative fee on Canada student loans, cuts to federal funding for post-secondary education and the GST, it's a very bad time to be a student in Canada.

"It's not a good time to be in Canada, period."



## "Destructive cult" a no-no at York U

TORONTO (CUP) — A University of Toronto religious student group lost its student status at York University in 1988 for using "aggressive recruiting techniques."

Christian Advance, U of T's version of the Boston-based International Church of Christ, was called a "destructive cult" by Helga Tucker of the Council on Mind Abuse (COMA).

The York administration revoked the group's status after students repeatedly complained of harassment.

"The decision was never made on any dogmatic basis," said Cora Dusk, York's director of student affairs.

"Many people felt they were being personally harassed," she said. "We had testimonies from students on campus of aggressive recruitment techniques, and some who were psychologically damaged by interaction with the group."

Christian Advance is allowed to use U of T rooms and lecture halls to hold bible-study meetings. Former student Christine Bruggemann, who was a member for 18 months, said this means the university is playing a part in one of the group's chief recruiting methods.

"On the surface it would appear their meetings are harmless," she said. "But the meetings are recruitment tools."

U of T's student affairs official David Neelands, said unless the group has done something illegal, or "deliberately, in my mind, infringed on the rights of others," its status can't be revoked.

"I certainly don't agree with their tactics — they are very reprehensible," he said. "But I am very nervous about excluding anyone on ideological grounds."

Neelands said he has had many complaints about the organization, but none of them have come from "victims."

"I'm told it tends to erode the support a person has. It teaches them not to trust friends and family," said Neelands.



## Namibians tour Canada to promote independence

by Sandra Bit

Ronnie Dempers, the Secretary of Education and Culture for NANSO, Namibia's student union, spoke yesterday and today with various student and community groups on the topic of racism and education. Sponsored by Oxfam, his visit was part of a cross-Canada tour by a group of Namibians to raise awareness about Namibia's independence from South Africa, scheduled to take place on April 1, 1990.

The objectives of the tour, co-sponsored by Oxfam and WUSC, are to share racist experiences with blacks in Canada; to raise global awareness of Namibia's changing political system; and to discuss the new education system the country is designing.

NANSO, which represents 47,000 students at or above the secondary level, will continue to play an important role in creating an educational system that provides fair and equal treatment for all. Over the past five years, it has been working hard to eliminate the segregationist 'bantu' education system, and to stop the use of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in Namibia.

Also speaking in the near future will be Dalhousie law professor Wayne MacKay, who will



give a report on the elections in Chile.

A recent participant in a Canadian election-monitoring delegation to Chile, MacKay will outline the events that took place during the committee's 10 day visit to Chile in December of 1989. He will be speaking at a meeting to be held Thursday, February 15, at 8 pm at the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection.

The delegation MacKay participated in consisted of 20 people from across Canada and included an MP from Spadina, trade unionists, and a representative from the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. The group was sponsored solely by non-governmental organizations such as Oxfam and WUSC and was invited to participate in the elections by the various opposi-

tion groups in Chile which helped to organize the election.

The monitoring of the election was carried out mostly by observation. The delegation met with various opposition groups, women's organizations, and trade unions to get a sense of the climate and popular opinion before the election. Along with the various other delegations from around the world, the Canadians formed small groups and visited polling stations to observe how the voting was carried out, and to speak to groups after the voting was over.

Because it is illegal to not vote in Chile, voter turnout was reported as high, and the delegation concluded that the election was as democratic as could be hoped for, and that there was no evidence of force or violence used to coerce voters.