

# Why are students so special?

"If there's one thing Pierre Trudeau is hooked on, it's public order," said Dennis Braithwaite, a writer with the Toronto Telegram. He was reacting to the government's \$58 million scheme to provide youth with jobs or travel opportunities during the summer months.

"What the program really amounts to is a big fat bribe, a desperate and probably futile plan to buy juvenile peace during the summer ahead," he commented.

We couldn't agree more. Youth is the more volatile part of the population, and unemployment during the summer months would prove this. The government seems to be reasoning that if they can get the students to create jobs, of any kind, and if students who travel will be looked after, they will be happy.

The main problem with the idea, aside from the lateness, is that this scheme came out at a time when this country is suffering an unemployment crisis. More than 3/4 of a million people are out of work in Canada. How can the government rationalize spending this \$58 million on an already privileged group, when there are many more people that need the money so badly?

**SECRETARY OF STATE**, Gerald Pelletier, said at a Montreal press conference that this amount is only a tiny portion compared to the money being spent on solving the unemployment crisis. Pity it doesn't show.

The main government programs to solve this crisis are Manpower retraining schools. Unfortunately, people often go back two or three times to be retrained and they still don't get jobs. There just aren't any to be had.

There are many things that could be and should be done in the community on a long-term basis. Anything that might be started this summer will only be temporary and superficial.

**THERE IS A HOUSING CRISIS** in this country; there are doctors needed to look after sick people; there are teachers needed to give more and better individual attention to students, and the list could go on. At the same time, there are electricians and carpenters out of work; there are an increasing number of doctors coming out of universities who are having trouble finding jobs; and there are teachers who are unable

to get teaching positions, or are being laid off.

These people should be able to find work, if our economy was planned logically. Why in a time of high unemployment are there so many jobs that need doing?

The main problem is to determine where the money in this country is allotted and how. Private industry especially in the Maritimes, and other underdeveloped areas of Canada, is primarily owned by people in Ontario or in other countries (often the States).

**IN NOVA SCOTIA**, for example, the government gives millions of dollars to such companies as Scott Paper, Michelin Tire and Acadia fisheries to come and set up business here. They are tax-free for up to 20 years. The profit these companies make from using both our human and natural resources does not stay in the area to help it develop further and to provide more jobs; it goes across the border to the American businessmen. This happens in every other American and foreign-owned industry in Canada, which explains why the government must continue sinking more and more money into this same procedure.

These companies are not concerned with worthwhile projects for the areas they are located in. They want to make money, and keep the profits themselves. The governments supporting them think they are stimulating the economy but ignore the fact that they give money to these companies, which withdraw their profits from the area or country.

An American economist recently said that American companies usually only put up about 33% of the money needed to establish business in a foreign country. When profits are made, they take it all back to the States, he explained.

**THE PUBLIC INDUSTRIES**, like the private ones, are run on a profit-making basis and there is little difference from private industry; i.e. Crown corporations or groups like IEL are run by businessmen at high salaries. The profits they make are seldom translated into high wages for workers or new local industry to really stimulate the economy of the region.

Keeping profits in the country would not, in itself, improve the conditions of the majority of the people. It would just result in richer Canadian businessmen. The problem is in the structure of our economy.

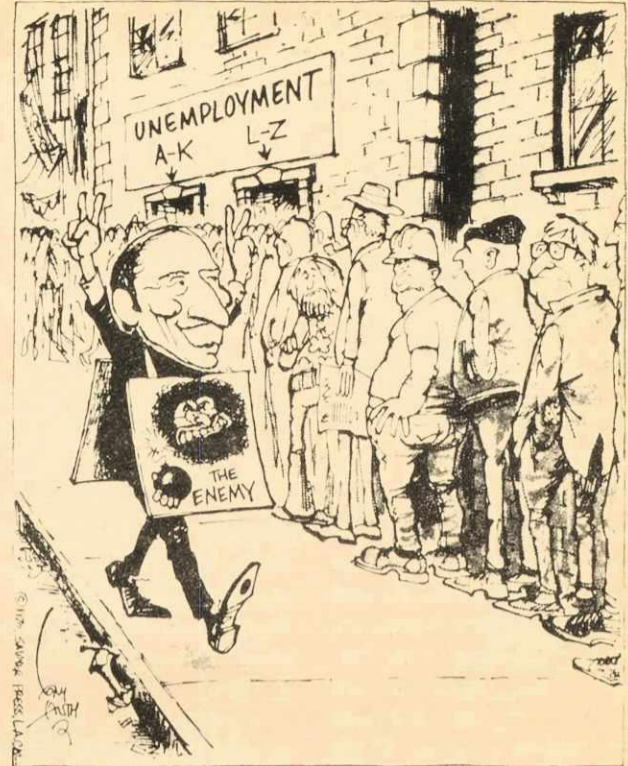
One of the basic premises of our economy is that a certain level of unemployment is necessary for its proper functioning. It is immaterial whether this level is 4, 8 or 30%. (Industrial Cape Breton now has 33%.)

**THE REASON FOR THIS "NECESSARY" UNEMPLOYMENT** is to retain a reserve labour force in anticipation of "boom" times. When the companies are not making as great profits, they cut down on the people they hire, and vice versa. This reserve labour force, is forced to compete for the few jobs available.

Supposedly, this is to ensure that only the best people get hired. But the law of supply and demand makes it clear that it is not the "best" people who will get jobs but those who can be bought at the lowest rate.

Everyone should have the right to work, to make at least enough to support themselves and their dependents, and concurrently to make their contribution to the society. One of our most valuable assets is our human resources.

This reserve labour force requirement of our economy completely negates this.



from the Varsity

**STUDENTS ARE PART OF THE SUPLUS LABOUR FORCE.** They are at the same time a privileged group, for most of them come from families whose parent (s) earn (s) a fair amount of money and can thus usually afford to send their children to university. The students are also privileged because they are not labouring during eight months of the year.

Since students normally only need work, or can work, during four months of the year, the most desperate of them are forced to take any work during the summer. They must be satisfied if they are hired for almost anything. This means that they are hired, often instead of those who are supporting families, because they will work for less.

Students are already able to receive loans, and bursaries to help them through university. The loans are interest-free until six months after the student has graduated.

**IF THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO INSURE** that students can return to university, which is what Pelletier claims, why don't they increase the loans students receive, and/or defer the interest accumulation until the student is able to obtain a job?

However, this is not what the provincial governments are doing. As one person at the news conference asked Pelletier, isn't it funny that the federal government came up with this scheme, a few weeks after the provincial governments in Ontario and Saskatchewan, for example, announced cutbacks in student loans? Something is crooked somewhere.

The government's new proposal is merely a superficial treatment of the problem. They are attempting to keep the most easily pacified group quiet, and, at the same time, are ignoring the very real problems faced by 3/4 of a million Canadians, and those depending on them.

**AS A CLOSING NOTE**, the government press conference in Montreal, and in Winnipeg, were each attended by about 30 students, all expenses paid. This meant that we were flown to Montreal full fare return, given a room in the Airport Hilton for the night, and \$10.50 for one day's worth of food. Any other transportation expenses incurred were also paid for by the government.

It must be worth a lot of money to them to suck us in.

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well we're finally through. thanks to everyone who helped this year; steve mills, brian jamieson, glenn wanamaker, beth burke, brian miller, chuck moore, joe southall, barb harris, martin dalley, frabbott, frank cassidy, mike smith, penny dyer, jeff fulton, lloyd buchinski, rick rofihe, don maclennan, bob harris, sandy lyth, and many others who helped us out.

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