

# Activists to poll Canadians

OTTAWA (CUP)—When thousands of Canadians pick up their telephones in the next two weeks, they will speak to their friendly neighborhood student activists.

"Hello, I'm from the Canadian Federation of Students," the voice on the other end of the phone will say. "And I'm wondering if you're willing to take part in a public opinion poll on post-secondary education."

A few may hang up. But hundreds will likely answer the stu-

dent pollsters' questions. And according to CFS executive officer Diane Flaherty, hundreds will also throw their support behind the idea of a quality and accessible post-secondary education system.

Flaherty says CFS's 70 members—which represent about 450,000 students—will receive polling kits in the next week and will be asked to encourage as many students as possible to poll people living in the same city about post-secondary education.

The students will ask thousands of Canadians if they think the federal government should make adequate university and college funding a priority, ensure that federal transfer payments to education are passed on to universities and colleges and come up with national standards of quality for universities and colleges.

The students will ask, among other questions, if they think all academically qualified Canadians should be able to attend university and college regardless of financial background and if they think this is now the case.

CFS staff will tabulate the results during the federation's general meeting and along with the organization's members, will present the

results to the federal government on National Lobby Day, Nov. 8.

"We're not Statistics Canada. We're not the Gallup Poll. But we'll try to be as statistically accurate as possible," Flaherty says. "We want to demonstrate to the three federal parties that the majority of Canadians do support post-secondary education and want it to be funded so that it is accessible and of quality."

Flaherty says she hopes the results will influence the federal government to take into consideration the need for adequately funded universities and colleges when it renegotiates the Federal Post-Secondary Education and Health Contributions Act. The Act, formerly known as the Established Programs Financing Act, expires in March 1985.

A similar telephone poll was done in Edmonton in late July.

About 12 students polled 300 people and the most surprising result was 82.3 per cent of those polled said they think all academically qualified Canadians should be able to attend post-secondary institutions whether they have the money or not.

Another surprising result was 82.7 per cent of those polled said they think the federal government should ensure that federal transfer payments to provinces for education are passed onto universities and colleges.

Barbara Donaldson, Alberta CFS central committee representative, said she is optimistic that the results in Edmonton will be repeated nationally. "We are encouraged by these results and that so many Canadians will probably support post-secondary education, as well as CFS's goal of guaranteed tied funding." □

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