

Jobs, jobs, jobs . . .

. . . there aren't too many

# Employer-graduate love affair is cooling

## Days of aggressive recruitment are over

By DON MOREN  
Gateway Staff Writer

A new crowd could soon be hanging out at the employment office downtown. Engineering graduates, economists, and teachers will sit around and reminisce about their undergraduate days when the full expectation was that the companies would woo them extravagantly.

This does sound impossible but it could be an accurate glimpse of the future. Come September there is most certain to be another record enrollment at the university. With a society that puts an ever-increasing emphasis on education, the arguments that university is the place for young people appear to be more convincing than ever. One of these arguments, that a university education is an assurance of a secure and financially rewarding job, is beginning to crack if present employment trends are an indication.

### FEWER COMPANIES

An article in the December 28 issue of the *Financial Post* has the headline "Graduates face colder scene on 1969 job market". The days of aggressive campus recruiting are over as the report notes: "Early reports on campus recruiting indicate that fewer companies and governments are hiring fewer people, and at roughly the same salary levels they offered last year".

This should unsettle many students, especially when it is realized that the 1969 graduating class will be a record 88,000 and graduating classes are increasing at the rate of 15 per cent annually. Also consider that the Canadian economy is growing at a healthy rate with the present outlook being quite favorable.

That the present state of the job market for university students is a temporary fluctuation is quickly dispelled by the article: "The imbalance between jobs available and graduates coming on the market can be expected to worsen still more over the next few years".

### EFFICIENT SYSTEM

A dramatic change this is to be sure when a few short years ago business and government were crying for graduates. The *Post* attributes the imbalance partly to the changing nature of the economy. A more efficient, automated system means fewer people are required to do a certain amount of work.

When asked about the weaker job market for graduates, Mr. Wayne Zuk, director of the campus placement office said: "There are fewer companies coming in and we are getting more negative answers from those we contact about coming to the campus. But the difference from other years is not that great. It is really too early to tell how many students are going to be hired."

Mr. Zuk commented on salaries: "Companies are holding the line on salaries. There have been some small increases in the neighborhood of 3 per cent."

To add to the over-all supply-demand difficulties of the job market there is also a problem of a change in the market nature.

The report noted: "There are changes in the kinds of companies

hiring graduates and in the kind of graduate they are seeking . . . the federal government, which has consistently been the largest recruiter of university graduates, reports it will hire fewer than the 650 it took on last time . . . rumors in placement offices put the figure as low as 250".

### ECONOMY DRIVE

Mr. Zuk cited the economy drive by the federal government as the major factor for its reduction of openings.

According to the *Post* the head of the recruiting league is now IBM, believed to be hiring between 700 and 800 graduates.

According to Mr. Zuk, oil companies, railways and accounting firms are expanding their recruiting. More aggressive exploration activity by oil companies and mines are sweetening the geology, geophysics and mine engineering students. Students in computing science and related fields such as mathematics, statistics will find themselves in hot demand.

Another excerpt summarizes the weak part of the market: "Students in general arts, social sciences and even civil, mechanical and electrical engineering are reported to be having difficulties in landing offers . . . throughout the country it is clear that only certain types of specialized graduates are in demand, and that the general arts student, in particular, is in trouble".

Mr. Zuk added that a lot of general arts students turn to other patterns such as education and law after graduation.

### ARTS IN TROUBLE

V. C. Martell, manager, Canada Manpower Center, Dalhousie University, Halifax had a particularly salient comment to make for the report on the plight of the Arts student: "It looks like the general arts students, particularly the girls, are the ones who suffer the most. And we are producing more of



LECTURES, MEMORIZATION—THEN A DEGREE

. . . but will there be a job later?

them than anything else".

R. A. Moore of Proctor and Gamble added: "Very few take a good look at what is available to them and at what they want to do."

Despite the classic cry for more teachers there have been warnings of future oversupply. A decrease or at least a levelling of school population is developing because of a lowering birth rate. Recruiting outside the province is to be curtailed.

Suggestions were offered in the article for a remedy to the employment problems. Most were of a longer-term nature.

Dr. Arthur J. R. Smith, chairman of the Economic Council of Canada, said in the article that industry and government will have

to adjust: "Up to now, industry and government have become accustomed to having a limited supply of professional personnel. It could take time for them to adjust."

Mr. Zuk offered perhaps an even nearer-term solution. He said that economists with Canada Manpower are working on predicting what future employment needs will be for 4 or 5 years ahead. He hoped that such information could be available for students when they are planning their academics.

The message of the current trend is a bleak one for those who extol the virtues of a liberal education. What society appears to value in a more platonic sense is turning out to be a liability when seeking a livelihood.

The message for many potential university students is that a university education does not necessarily mean job security and considerable financial reward. People who are foremost concerned about this should choose their academic pattern carefully.

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