

# We're earning less and less

**OTTAWA(CUP)** —The seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate among returning students fell three percentage points in August: to 11.1 per cent from 14.4 per cent in July, according to figures just released by Statistics Canada.

With the new figures, student employment is almost back up to what it was in 1981, before the recession that took away thousands of student summer jobs. August unemployment is one per cent lower than in August 1984.

The news may not be as good as it looks, though. According to Kenneth Bennett, who oversees collection of the data at Statscan's Household Surveys Division, most students are now earning lower wages than before the recession.

"The largest growth in student employment) has been in the service sector," Bennett said.

Before the recession, many students could find jobs in forestry, mining or manufacturing. But in 1985, Bennett said, "you don't find students making their way on to the factory floor anymore."

The recession hit rock bottom in the summer of '83, which was by

far the worst year for summer student employment. However, students are more likely to get a job at Le Ke than at the steel mills in Hamilton these days. And service sector wages are in general lower than in the manufacturing sector," Bennett said.

The statistics also mean quite a few students only found work in the last few weeks of the summer.

Some students, considered employed by StatsCan, are not doing well. Gordon Miller, a second year Physics student at Simon Fraser made only \$1,700 all summer working at Whistler Mountain — a two-hour drive from Vancouver. He didn't save any money because he used almost all his earnings for food and rent at Whistler and gas to Vancouver on weekends. His parents will pay for his education this year and he will have to live at home.

In Nova Scotia, the government assumes students have saved \$700 a week when calculating loans and bursaries. In New Brunswick, students must save 45 per cent of earnings if living away from home, 60 per cent if living at home.

Many New Brunswick students,

like those working on Challenge '85 grants (57 per cent of the grants paid minimum wage), earned \$152 a week. They could not save \$68 a week after paying for food and lodging.

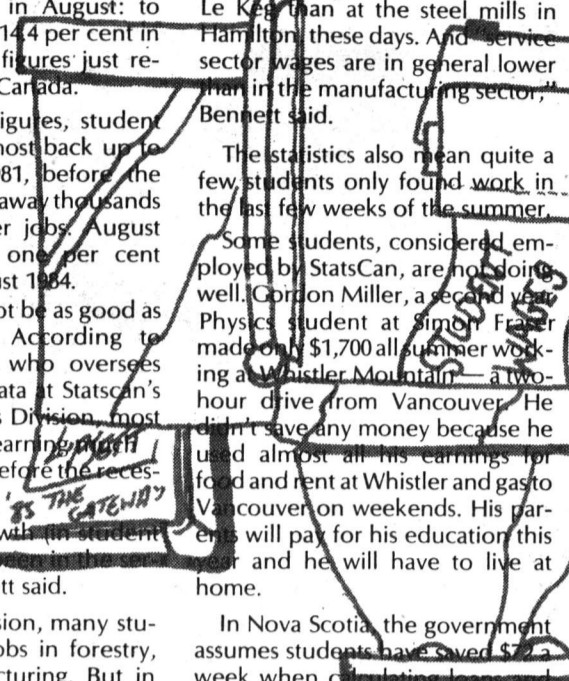
Minimum wage in five provinces has not risen since 1981. In every province but Manitoba and Saskatchewan, minimum wage is \$4 or lower.

Appealing for more student loan money is long and nerve-racking, said Anne Marie Turcotte, researcher at the Canadian Federation for students.

"The best student aid is a summer job," Turcotte said. "If students had a decent job with decent wages, they would not need student aid," she said.

The office of Flora MacDonald, federal minister of employment and immigration, sent out a press release recently to praise her Challenge '85 job creation program. The press kit included 37 news stories from the summer, all saying Challenge '85 was a success.

Other stories, like the banner headline on P.1 of Ottawa's Le Droit: "178,000 too many unemployed — Challenge '85 was a failure" did not make it into the clippings.



IS THE GATEWAY?

# They want your blood and more

by Tamara Dean

The Canadian Red Cross Society recently opened a new clinic near the University of Alberta Hospital and is looking for volunteers and donors.

Volunteer co-ordinator Jennifer d'Obrenan is asking for the help of "energetic, artistic and imaginative students" for the Special Projects and Public Affairs committees. Volunteers are also needed to make telephone calls and assist the medical staff.

Assistant Director Faye Ripley said the phone room can accommodate volunteers from 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 9 a.m. until 4:30 p.m on Fridays.

Though the volunteer program, d'Obrenan feels the volunteers themselves will receive such benefits as personal satisfaction, on the job experience, letters of reference for future employment and the opportunity to meet and help people.

If the new clinic is not accommodating for students, Ripley suggests contacting other Red Cross Clinics for their convenience, as volunteers and donors are needed at other branches and mobile clinics in Edmonton.

Besides volunteers, the head staff at the Red Cross Clinic are asking for blood donations. If interested in donating, call 431-0202 (extension 209).

Interested volunteers can call 431-0202 (extension 207).

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