

## EDITORIAL Someone's got to suffer so let's all do it together

Frank Miller, the former used car salesman who is now the Minister of the Treasury of Ontario, in today's interview with *Excalibur*, stated that Ontario doctors should be remunerated at a rate equal to those who practice the same profession in other provinces.

Whether one agrees with Mr. Miller's statement or not we at least expect the government to apply this type of even-handed logic throughout its fiscal policy. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

Miller's thinking, if followed to its logical conclusion, would mean that Ontario universities would have to receive a 40% increase in funding to smooth out the inequities between the pay levels afforded our faculty and those found in other provinces.

Bette Stephenson, a member of the medical profession and former head of the OMA, instead has increased funding by only 12.2%. This has been viewed as a slap in the face of her own advisory board which recommended a minimum 30% increase in funding. Stephenson managed to turn this against the universities by saying that they duplicate services, are inefficient and wasteful and must learn to live within their own means.

If only Miller and Stephenson could get together, maybe some type of policy compromise could be reached. Miller seems to be stressing parity, while Stephenson seems to be hinting strongly at financial responsibility or living within one's means.

Stephenson believes that those who benefit from the system should be willing to sacrifice for it. The obvious corollary of living within one's means translates into a 24% hike in tuition fees. Okay, fair enough. If tuition increases secure parity in post-secondary education for those in Ontario, it may be worth the cost. If universities are going to be held more strictly accountable for their spending, it also may be worth the cost.

Certainly, if students and universities can be asked to sacrifice and live within their means the same should be asked of doctors. If ensuring proper medical care for Ontarians on a par with that found in other provinces means giving the doctors in Ontario a raise in pay, it may be worth the cost. But living within one's means should also apply here. As with students and faculty, doctors should be asked to split the difference.

.Of course this does not mean that doctors should contribute to their own pay increase. This is obviously absurd and counterproductive. But, if the government is so concerned with fiscal restraint, maybe doctors could be encouraged, under close government scrutiny, to live within their means.

Don't take that second vacation this year, forget about that third family car, try to scrape by on last year's La Coste wardrobe, sacrifice that new set of golf clubs, try to eke out an existence in that piddly eighteen room home. We know that \$90,000 a year won't go far—but someone's got to suffer.

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## Date: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1982

Time: 14:00 - 16:30 HOURS

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