

# Budget holds no surprise for students

By A.C. Snell (CUP)

Graduating now seems to be the safest thing to do in light of the recent federal budget.

There were no real surprises in Finance Minister Paul Martin's budget for post-secondary education. It was known for weeks that federal transfer payments to provinces would be rolled into one large block.

But now this block of money has a name: the Canada Social Transfer (CST).

Under the CST, money that was transferred separately to the provinces under the Canada Assistance Plan (funds for a broad range of social services) and the Established Programs Financing (funds for post-secondary education and health care) will be combined and reduced beginning in 1996-97. There will also be equalization payments for needier provinces if necessary.

In 1994-95, the federal government gave more than \$6 billion to the provinces in transfer payments earmarked

for post-secondary education. This did not include the Canada Student Loans Program, which was not touched by the budget.

The federal government predicts that more than \$1.5 billion will be phased out of post-secondary education due to the reduction in transfer payments by the end of 1998.

Currently, the total combination of transfer payments amounts to almost \$37 billion (including about \$8 billion in equalization payments). By 1998, this total amount will be reduced to just under \$34 billion, of which \$9.6 billion will be in equalization payments.

Only the amount of money allocated for health care will be required to go to its target. Therefore, there is no form of accountability from the provinces to ensure the money earmarked for post-secondary education will actually go there.

Guy Caron, national chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students, said the system is already underfunded and if the provinces do not react strongly, it will give the government "a green light to dump the deficit on the provinces."

Caron said this will be the end of any hope for national standards on post-secondary education.

"Different provinces have different strokes," said Paul Martin after the budget was released Feb. 27.

Martin said it will be up to Human Resources Development Minister Lloyd Axworthy "to sit down with the provinces and work it out."

A member from the Human Resources Ministry said there will be extensive consultations with the provinces, where ideas like accountability and an income-contingent loan system will be discussed.

Francois Rebello, president of the Federation etudiante du Quebec, said the federal government lacked the courage to cut where it should. He said the government should have taxed banks instead of cut from post-secondary education.

In Quebec, Rebello estimated that as a result of the cuts, tuition fees will increase by 62 per cent.

Each province will be affected differently by the trans-

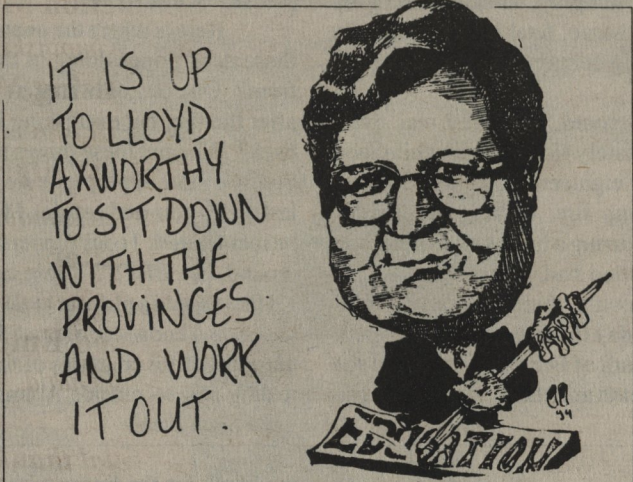
fer cuts to the provinces due to the combination of CST and equalization payments.

Ontario gets hit the worst, losing \$877 million in 1996-97. Quebec will lose \$350 million and British Columbia will lose an estimated \$282 million. On the other hand, Alberta will gain \$39 million and Newfoundland gets an additional \$28 million.

How the provinces delegate the money transfers in 1996 will determine the level of tuition fees that university institutions will set for students.

Martin said the burden was spread evenly over the provinces and he had "spent a lot of time making sure no segment of society was singled out."

In his budget speech, Martin said the federal government is committed to a co-operative approach with the provinces. And the idea behind the CST was the need "for a better-functioning system of transfers. But equally, we need a system that can be financially sustained."



# Competition may mean more students cheating

By Gavin Adamson (CUP)

Competitive pressure in tough economic times may be a factor leading students to cheat, suggested Phyllis McAlpine, chairperson of the University of Manitoba's disciplinary committee.

McAlpine said that although some students are not "disposed" to cheating, others may be pushed over the brink of academic dishonesty by economic pressures.

"For cheating to occur there have to be three things. There has to be pressure, opportunity and the [student's] rationalization," said McAlpine. "As things get a little tougher economically, more people will take more chances."

U of M student union vice-president Scott McFadyen said that in his experience as a student advocate, students caught cheating are not necessarily economically disadvantaged.

"In my experiences some students may be supported financially by their parents and are feeling the pressure from them," said McFadyen.

McFadyen did not want to rule out the economy as a factor, however. He said competition to get into fewer university openings per capita could be a factor.

"I think in the past few years, schools have become more competitive. It's more difficult

to get into graduate schools, and the environment in which we study is more competitive," he said.

McFadyen also said that economic hardship is not an issue that is considered when disciplinary action is administered.

Discipline for a student caught cheating can vary greatly. Students can be barred from classes, expelled permanently from their faculty, or expelled from the university for a number of years.

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# UPEI Student Union ELECTIONS

Nominations will soon be open for the following positions on the UPEI Student Union Council:

**Executive:**

- President
- Vice-President External
- Vice-President Internal
- Vice-President Finance
- Vice-President Operations

**Councillors:**

- 1 Board of Governors Rep
- 4 Senate Reps
- 5 Arts Reps
- 3 Science Reps
- 2 Business Reps
- 1 Nursing Rep
- 1 Veterinary Medicine Rep
- 1 Senate MAPUS Rep
- 1 First Year Rep
- 1 Graduate Student Association Rep

**Class Executives**

- Class executives for First, Second, Third, and Fourth Year classes,
- President
  - Vice-President
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer

**Non-voting Members:**

- MAPUS Representative
- Ombudsperson

**Dates to remember:**

- |                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Nominations          | March 6-17  |
| All-Candidates Forum | March 22    |
| Advance Polls        | March 27&28 |
| Regular Polls        | March 29&30 |

Nomination forms may be obtained at the Student Union Offices in the Barn.