

The Toronto Star

December 2, 2010 Thursday

EDITORIAL; Pg. A20

Copyright bill's education exemption fair

Nothing fair about copyright 'fair dealing,' Letter Nov. 29

Like most students, I am dismayed by the false claim, repeated in this letter, that the so-called "education exemption" proposed in Bill C-32 will allow for widespread expropriation of intellectual property.

Collectively, students spend more than \$1.3 billion on textbooks at the post-secondary level alone, a massive amount that will not change with the passage of C-32. I have to buy a textbook for almost every class I take - a purchase that I, and the more than 1.5 million other post-secondary students will continue to make regardless of whether or not C-32 becomes law.

The exception will clarify that educational uses of copyrighted books, articles, songs and other works can be fair dealing; it will not mean that any use is fair dealing. It will not, as some have claimed, permit the wholesale copying of textbooks, a use that could not reasonably be considered fair, nor will it permit teachers to replace the

use of textbooks and novels with photocopied excerpts, a use that again would not qualify as fair.

Despite what some have claimed, the test for fairness has been clearly defined in the common law. As explained in a recent decision of the Court of Appeal, adding educational uses to the list of those allowable will not alter this test whatsoever.

What educational fair dealing will do is ensure that students and teachers can make innovative use of copyrighted works in the classroom and that students are exposed to a diversity of works. Nothing will do more to support Canada's culture industry and built a desire for Canadian content than giving teachers and students fair access to our shared cultural heritage.

Bill C-32 is good for education, students, teachers and creators.

Noah Stewart,
**Canadian Federation
of Students, Ottawa**

Cornwall Standard Freeholder

December 21, 2010 Tuesday Final Edition

NEWS; Pg. 3

Students welcome OSAP changes

CHERYL BRINK

CORNWALL -- Upgrades to the Ontario Student Assistance Program are welcome news for students at St. Lawrence College, where financial aid is the "number one issue".

Senior vice-president of student and external affairs Gordon MacDougall said monetary help is a top priority as students enter college, so the province's efforts are appreciated.

"Certainly the government is making a very positive response in continuing to improve student financial aid," said MacDougall.

In a recent announcement by the ministry of training, colleges and universities, the government promised more cash for books and equipment, 1,000 more scholarships and a new grant for part-time students.

Another change is that students now have six months without payments or interest after completing their post-secondary education. The maximum loan amount has increased to \$12,240 for two terms, and the income students are allowed to make before their OSAP is reduced has doubled to \$100 per week.

"This is a good first step," said MacDougall. "They continue to be committed to helping students."

Tyler Charlebois, spokesperson for minister John Milloy, said \$81 million in addi-

tional funding has been allocated for the OSAP adjustments, which are expected to help 210,000 post-secondary students.

Most of the changes came into effect when classes began this fall.

MacDougall said half of the population on the St. Lawrence College campus in Cornwall apply for financial aid each year, but along with the school's own streamlining efforts, fewer forms and direct deposits starting in January will make receiving cheques easier.

"People make online appointments for loan distribution," said MacDougall. "We haven't had traditional big lineups for two or three years now."

The upgrades also include the extension of a 5% tuition fee increase cap each year at all post-secondary schools for the next two years.

The **Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario** said in a release that the changes are mostly positive, but the downside is that it will increase the debt load for outgoing students.

"Current and future students can expect to struggle with more debt as rising tuition fees and loan amounts threaten to make their post-graduate burden significantly heavier," read the statement.

The group called for a lowering of tuition costs instead, which are among the highest in the country.

CBC News

January 5, 2011 Wednesday

Student jobs program gets \$10M boost

CBC News

The federal government announced an additional \$10 million in funding Wednesday for the Canada Summer Jobs program.

The announcement was made by Ted Menzies, named minister of state for finance in Tuesday's cabinet shuffle, on behalf of Human Resources Minister Diane Finley.

The program provides money for small businesses and not-for-profit groups to hire students over the summer months.

Qualified not-for-profit employers are eligible for up to 100 per cent of students' minimum hourly wage and other employment-related costs.

Public-sector employers and small businesses with 50 or fewer employees that qualify are eligible for up to 50 per cent of the

provincial or territorial minimum hourly wage.

Last year, about 37,000 students had their summer jobs subsidized through the program. The additional \$10 million announced Wednesday will pay for an additional 3,500 jobs across the country.

Dave Molenhuis, chairperson of the **Canadian Federation of Students**, welcomed the announcement, saying the program has helped students in what has been a tough summer job market in recent years.

"It's helped a lot of students get their foot in the door in a field they're interested in studying," said Molenhuis. He added, however, that because the program only covers the employers' costs up to minimum wage "it can't fully address the rising costs of post-secondary education."

To be eligible for the program, students must:

- Be between 15 and 30 years of age.

- Have been registered as a full-time student in the previous academic year and intend to return to school on a full-time basis in the next academic year.

- Be Canadian citizens or permanent residents or have official refugee protection status under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

- Be legally entitled to work in Canada.

Employers must apply to participate in the program. The application period for summer 2011 will open on Feb. 1 and close on Feb. 28. Employer applications are assessed on a number of criteria, including relevant work experience, salary, the availability of supervision and mentoring and whether the job supports other community priorities.

The Canadian Press - Broadcast Wire

January 17, 2011 Monday

University-Credits

CP

TORONTO - Students in Ontario's colleges and universities may soon have an easier time transferring their credits between schools.

The Ontario government says it will invest \$73.7 million over the next five years to create a provincewide credit transfer system.

The money will help colleges and universities work together to create credit transfer agreements, as well as provide on-campus support for students looking to switch schools.

The **Canadian Federation of Students**-Ontario, a student advocacy group, says it is becoming increasingly common for students to change schools partway through their degrees.

Up until now the process has been a headache for students, with more than 500 separate agreements existing between institutions but no overall framework.

The average college student transferring to university could pocket more than \$26,000 in savings if a co-ordinated credit system is implemented, according to research conducted by Colleges Ontario.

(The Canadian Press)

The Canadian Press

January 17, 2011 Monday

Ontario to implement credit-transfer system for post-secondary students

ALEXANDRA POSADZKI, CP

TORONTO _ Alex Protomanni estimates he saved \$15,000 when he earned two years' worth of credits while transferring from college to university.

The Humber College business graduate had bad timing entering the workforce, and opted to return to school when he was unable to find work amid record-high unemployment rates.

"I was applying for the same jobs that people who were much more qualified than me were applying for, so no matter how many interviews I went to, I never got a call-back," recalls the third-year student at the University of Guelph-Humber.

Protomanni's case is not an isolated one. It has become increasingly common for students to seek out both a college and a university education.

And with more than 500 separate credit transfer agreements between institutions, making the transition from one school to another can be a headache for some students.

The Ontario government hopes to remedy the problem with a \$73.7-million investment over the next five years into creating a provincewide credit transfer system.

The investment will help colleges and universities work together to create credit transfer agreements, as well as provide on-campus support for students looking to switch schools, says John Milloy, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Milloy says the government will be setting student mobility targets with each institution. If the school fails to meet its targets, it may not be eligible to receive government funding.

"I think it's becoming very commonplace for someone to move from college to university or university to college," said Milloy, attributing the trend to the changing nature of the economy and the college system.

Students may seek out both the academic experience of a university as well as the applied, hands-on education provided by college, says Milloy.

Other students switch schools partway through their degree because they discover a new program they weren't aware of earlier, want to work with a certain professor or need to relocate closer to family, says Sandy Hudson, the chairwoman of the **Canadian Federation of Students**-Ontario.

The average college student transferring to university could pocket more than \$26,000 in savings if a co-ordinated credit system is implemented, according to research conducted by Colleges Ontario.

That figure includes tuition costs, living expenses and the cost of the student's delay in entering the workforce.

Hudson points out that the move will also cut costs for the government, which pays institutions for every student. Students who transfer schools are often being funded twice, says Hudson.

Anne Sado, president of George Brown College and a spokeswoman for Colleges Ontario, says she is eager for the program's implementation, but notes that willing partners will be needed to make it successful.

"It'll take some rolling up of the sleeves, some willing partners and the financial support to make this happen," said Sado.

The Hamilton Spectator

January 18, 2011 Tuesday First Edition

CANADA / WORLD; Pg. A8

Credit transfer system in works for post-secondary students

The Canadian Press
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The Ottawa Sun

January 28, 2011 Friday FINAL EDITION

NEWS; Pg. 8

Off to university, ready or not

Study questions whether school system is preparing students for higher education adequately

JAMIE LONG,
OTTAWA SUN

More than half of Ottawans think high school graduates are not ready for university because of low academic standards, according to a new study on Ottawa's post-secondary education.

That finding corresponds with the head researcher's own experience as a professor at Carleton University.

"It's kind of surprising sometimes when you see first year essays and papers ... maybe a bit more time should be spent on that," said Andre Turcotte, who teaches in Carleton's School of Journalism and Communication.

Similar results have been found in polls of university faculty, researchers said.

Many students at Carleton also agreed with the findings, saying they felt unprepared for the university experience.

"I do agree because for me we didn't do a lot of electronics in my high school, but its

basically all electronic here," said one Carleton student.

"I'm sure some people are ready for it ... but personally, I'd say I wasn't ready myself," said another.

Ontario's faculty union head said the province can only fix this perception by investing more money in high school education.

"As far as offering the kind of remedial work students need -- in terms of writing skills and the ability to do research -- these things cost money," said Mark Langer, president of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Association.

The study, also conducted by the **Canadian Federation of Students**, showed residents also worry about Ontario's high tuition fees, which have risen 28% in four years.

Almost two-thirds of those polled thought young people may stay away from postsecondary education in the province because Ontario is the most expensive place in

Canada to attend university.

"To see the results just sort of reinforces what we've been seeing from the beginning, that tuition fees are a barrier to access for students across the country and especially in Ontario," said Kimalee Phillip, president of Carleton's Graduate Students' Association.

Across the province

The local poll included 300 students, parents and residents in the capital from Jan. 5 to 14. The full study was conducted in cities across the province with a total of 1,800 residents.

The timing is no coincidence.

The study's authors hope the results push the province to focus on post-secondary education, especially with a provincial election coming next October.

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GRAPHIC: photo of ANDRE
TURCOTTE Professor

24 Hours

January 28, 2011 Friday OTTAWA EDITION

NEWS; Pg. 4

study says kids can't cut it HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS UNPREPARED FOR POST-SECONDARY

JAMIE LONG,
QMI AGENCY

More than half of Ottawans think high school graduates aren't ready for university because of low academic standards, according to a new study on Ottawa's post-secondary education.

That finding was echoed by the study's head researcher, who revealed his own experience as a professor at Carleton University.

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The study's authors hope these results push the province to focus on post-secondary education, especially with the provincial election approaching in October.

Residents were also polled on university enrolment, university access and the government's focus on post-secondary schools, among a slew of other related topics.

The Canadian Press

January 31, 2011 Monday

Students group says N.S. to increase university tuitions by three per cent

CP

HALIFAX _ The **Canadian Federation of Students** is claiming that Nova Scotia is going to raise university tuitions by three per cent.

The federation said in a release Monday night that it was told of the decision by media sources.

The release said the province will adopt a tuition hike recommendation made in a recent report on the province's university system.

Gabe Hoogers, the federation's Nova Scotia representative, said "students and their families were promised a better deal when the NDP was elected."

A memorandum of understanding between university presidents and the Education Department that includes a tuition freeze expires on March 31.

Students in Nova Scotia currently pay some of the highest tuitions in the country and graduate with the highest average debt of \$31,000.

February 2, 2011 Wednesday

Students at several N.S. universities protest high cost of getting a degree

CP

HALIFAX _ A snowstorm didn't stop hundreds of students from taking to the streets of Halifax on Wednesday to protest the high cost of a university education.

Students from all five of the city's universities banded together in a lively and loud demonstration, marching from their respective university campuses to Victoria Park and then to Province House.

Carrying signs that read, "Reduce Fees, drop debt," and "A University Education Shouldn't Bleed You Dry," students called on the provincial government to do something about rising student debt and high tuition that they say is putting a university education out of reach for many.

Student protests took place at the same time in the university towns of Wolfville and Church Point.

"The average student debt in Nova Scotia after graduating from an undergraduate program is \$31,000," Gabe Hoogers, a University of King's College student, told the crowd.

"After 20 years paying the highest tuition nationwide, our tuition continues to be higher than the national average," added Hoogers, also the provincial representative for the **Canadian Federation of Students**.

On Tuesday, the province announced that it was cutting funding to the province's universities by four per cent, or \$14 million, in the 2011-12 academic year.

While the province had frozen tuition rates for three years, it will now allow Nova Scotia universities to raise tuition fees by a maximum of three per cent annually.

Laura Penny, an author and professor at Saint Mary's University and Mount Saint Vincent University, congratulated students from not backing down from their fight against student debt.

Nova Scotia has an aging and dwindling population and its universities are the main draw for younger people, she told the crowd.

Cutting funding to universities and hiking tuition fees will drive the younger generation out of the province, she said.

"We don't have too many universities. We have too many bad ideas," she said, com-

menting on the province's plan to put money into a multimillion-dollar convention centre.

"Every time you cut education, you are asking people who have the least to pay more and more for less and less."

Students chanted Premier Darrell Dexter's name when they arrived at Province House but no government officials came out to address them.

(Halifax Chronicle Herald)

Brantford Expositor

February 3, 2011 Thursday Final Edition

NEWS; Pg. D4

Students protest Nova Scotia tuition hike

SHEENA GOODYEAR,
QMI AGENCY

Students in Nova Scotia took to the streets Wednesday to protest tuition hikes and funding decreases in the province.

Hundreds of students joined the **Canadian Federation of Students'** (CFS) Day of Action, protesting the province's decision to hike tuition by 3% and decrease university funding by 4%.

"We're in a snowfall, so this is really great," said Gabe Hoogers, Dalhousie University student CFS Nova Scotia representative, as chants and cheers roared in the background. "I think it will send a message to the legislature."

Nova Scotia announced Tuesday it would decreasing funding to its 11 universities as a three-year tuition freeze comes to an end.

Tuition increases in the province will be capped at 3% annually, which the province said will mean an average increase of about \$154 per

year for local students, and \$185 for out-of-province undergraduate students.

That will have a huge impact on students in the province, said Hoogers, noting that until a tuition freeze was enacted three years ago, Nova Scotia boasted Canada's highest tuition for decades. The freeze, promised in a memorandum of understanding between the province and university presidents, comes to an end in March.

Nova Scotians pay an average of \$5,495 per year in school fees -- the third-highest tuition in Canada after Ontario and New Brunswick, according to CFS-NS. The average debt-load for the province's graduates is \$31,000.

"For years, we have fought to get tuition increases under control because Nova Scotia had the highest tuition in Canada. I remain committed to making sure a university education in this province remains affordable well into the future," said Marilyn More, minister of labour and

advanced education, in a statement.

"By establishing a tuition cap, the province can ensure that tuition in Nova Scotia will not increase as quickly as it is in most other provinces."

The province is also cutting annual grants funding by 4% for the 2011-12 school year -- a move that has schools worried about their budgets.

"We have a lot to consider," said Ken Burt, Dalhousie University's vice-president of finance and administration. "In light of this announcement, we'll need to work through our numbers and assess the implications to Dalhousie."

Hoogers said the province's NDP government has proven to be a disappointment for students.

"We expected a lot more from an NDP government that when in opposition, promised us fees would be lower and we'd get control of skyrocketing student debt in the province," he said.

Sarnia Observer

February 3, 2011 Thursday Final Edition

NEWS; Pg. A4

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February 8, 2011 Tuesday

Critics take aim at Nova Scotia's decision to cut university funding

MICHAEL MACDONALD, CP
ATLANTIC REGIONAL NEWS

HALIFAX _ A coalition of students, professors and university staff is criticizing the Nova Scotia government's decision to cut post-secondary spending and allow tuition to rise.

Representatives from the coalition, appearing Tuesday before a legislative committee, said allowing tuition to increase by up to nine per cent over the next three years amounts to a discriminatory tax on poor students.

"This is the wrong path for Nova Scotia," said Rebecca Rose, Maritime organizer for the **Canadian Federation of Students**. "Now we're being asked to shoulder even more of the burden."

She cited a 2009 poll that suggested students whose parents earned more than \$100,000 annually were twice as likely to go to university as their poorer counterparts.

Last week, the NDP government also announced a four per cent cut to university operating grants for the 2011-12 academic year _ a \$14-million reduction. In addition, universities will be expected to absorb inflationary costs and wage increases.

In setting an annual three per cent cap on tuition increases, the government rejected advice from a report last fall by consultant Tim O'Neil, who recommended allowing universities to offset funding decreases through tuition increases.

"That's a recognition of the fact that we don't believe deregulating it is the answer," said committee member Leonard Preyra, an NDP lawmaker who is on leave from his job as a Halifax university professor.

On Tuesday, other members of the coalition raised questions about the amount of public money being spent on hiring and paying university administrators.

Chris Ferns, president of the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers, said the province's 11 universities have been raising the pay for administrators with very little disclosure _ and it's time to control those costs.

"Often, it's very hard to tell exactly where the money is going when it comes to senior administration," Ferns told the committee, noting there is no common financial reporting template for universities.

"There's significant room for cost containment if the reliable data was there."

He said the budget cuts will result in a reduction in the number of full-time faculty and reduced support services, but only a minimal reduction in administrative costs.

"While students will be paying more, year by year, the quality of the education they receive will be increasingly compromised," he said.

Ferns also challenged O'Neil's suggestion there was no evidence administrative costs are out of line with the national average.

"It's very hard to find that evidence because it's buried in different categories in different university budgets," Ferns said.

Provincial funding for Nova Scotia's universities has increased by 65 per cent in the past six years, jumping to \$349 million in 2010.

The average student debt in Nova Scotia after graduating from an undergraduate program is \$31,000.

Earlier this month, hundreds of students braved a snowstorm in Halifax to protest the high cost of a university education. Students from all five Halifax universities joined the loud demonstration, marching from their respective university campuses to the provincial legislature.

Based on current tuition fees, a three per cent hike would mean an average increase of \$154 a year for undergraduate students from Nova Scotia and \$185 a year for students who live outside the province.

Advanced Education Minister Marilyn More has said the province will continue to fund the student bursary program, which costs \$29 million annually.

She said the grant reduction is part of the government's attempt to trim costs as it grapples with a projected \$370-million deficit in the next fiscal year.

February 8, 2011 Tuesday

Canada Student Loans needs more cash to cover delinquencies and growing demand

HEATHER SCOFFIELD, PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS REPOR, CP

OTTAWA _ The government says it needs to pump hundreds of millions of extra dollars into its student-loans program to keep the system functioning.

Budget documents tabled Tuesday show the Canada Student Loans Program needs an injection of \$149.5 million to cover writeoffs of more than 60,000 unanticipated defaults.

At the same time, the program says it needs another \$311.2 million to meet higher demand for the loans, just as repayments decline.

The request for extra funds comes just months after Ottawa scrambled to raise the ceiling on the amount of student-loan money it can have outstanding at any time.

The requirements for extra funding point to the mounting trouble students are having in paying rising tuition fees, says the **Canadian Federation of Students**.

"It's cause for concern," said David Molenhuis, the federation's chairperson.

Tuition fees have risen dramatically in the last few years, while students have been hit hard by the recession and find it increasingly difficult to save, he said.

"We've sounded several alarm bells."

It's not surprising that the government needs more money for the program, he said, because the delinquency rate for student borrowers rose to about 13 per cent in 2010-2011, compared with about 10 per cent a year earlier.

At the same time, the number of students borrowing money has risen 6.5 per cent in the last year, and the amount of money borrowed by students has jumped eight per cent.

"Certainly the majority of students require some form of debt repayment to fund their education," Molenhuis said.

"Without substantive changes, we're going to see higher levels of delinquencies."

A spokesman for Human Resources Minister Diane Finley, who oversees the program, said the loan defaults can be traced back seven years, and have nothing to do with today's tuition or the recession.

Ryan Sparrow said his government has been extra generous to students.

"As a result of the actions of our Conservative government, students now have access to more student grants than at any time in Canadian history."

Besides student loans, the government is seeking approval to spend an extra \$1.8 billion beyond what was anticipated in earlier budget documents for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

About half of that amount is for new initiatives, such as \$216 million on a new National Defence headquarters. The other half is for increases in continuing federal programs, such as equalization and disability savings grants.

And some extra cash _ about \$22 million _ is for the Canada Border Services Agency for costs associated with the arrival last August of the MV Sun Sea off British Columbia, with several hundred Tamil refugees.

Treasury Board President Stockwell Day says the government is well on its way to reaching its spending-control targets and eliminate the \$45-billion deficit by the 2015-2016 fiscal year.

"We are on track and we are going to get there, and not by slashing programs to people," Day told a parliamentary committee on Tuesday.

In a testy exchange with opposition members during which MPs accused the minister of having no detailed plan, Day reiterated that he would balance the books mainly by freezing the operating budgets of government departments, and by ending the government stimulus program that has bloated government expenses for the past two years.

He lashed out at the parliamentary budget watchdog, Kevin Page, who has criticized the government for not putting forth a solid deficit-reduction plan.

"It is a factual inaccuracy to say there is no plan," Day said. "He is grossly wrong."

The Parliamentary Budget Officer has published an analysis of Day's operating budget freeze, concluding that the government has not thoroughly explained the impacts of its deficit-cutting exercise.

Day has said that much of the savings would come through attrition of public servants, but the PBO could not find much evidence of departmental planning to make do with far lower staffing levels.

"The fiscal objective is clear but there is no plan for Parliamentarians on how to achieve it," Page said in an email Tuesday, adding a long list of unanswered questions.

Day says he has left it up to deputy ministers to decide how best to make do with their budget freeze, and does not want to micro-manage their operations.

Digital Journal

February 23, 2011 Wednesday

BLOG POST

Canadian Federation of Students launches new student debt website

Feb. 23, 2011 (Digital Journal delivered by Newstex) -- A new website has been launched by the **Canadian Federation of Students**, the largest student organization in the country, that calls on the federal government to lower student debt and improve access to post-secondary education.

Debt has been the keyword for a young adults life. The National Post reported last year that collective student debt in Canada exceeded \$13 billion " it now stands at \$13.7 billion. Average student loans granted to students is roughly \$5,631. Earlier this month, students in Nova Scotia, who on average pay back \$28,000 in student loans, protested against the provincial governments decision to cut university funding by four percent in the next budget. This is one of the many reasons why the **Canadian Federation Students** (CFS) launched a new website for their campaign called Education is a Right. This website urges the federal government to reduce student debt and restore federal funding for access to post-secondary institutions to 1992 levels. Record high tuition fees have forced today's students to make remarkable sacrifices to afford their education, said National Chairperson of the CFS, David Molenhuis, in a press release. With household debt at

historic levels, burying students in billions of dollars of debt threatens to bankrupt a generation. Canada needs a national strategy to reduce tuition fees and student debt." The CFS also encourages students to share their stories about their debt burdens. One of the top ten things you can do to get involved is to establish a photo booth. Students would take photos with their student debt or education fees. The website was launched Wednesday morning and it already has 78,684 people. Their Facebook page has more than 1,000 likes. Canadian families are making extraordinary sacrifices to prepare themselves for an evolving workplace, the website states. Past government decisions at the federal and provincial levels are forcing students and their families to take on more education-related debt than any previous generation during a time when household earnings for the majority of families have been stagnant for the past 20 years. The organization also cites a poll from Statistics Canada that revealed that 70 percent of high school students who do not go to post-secondary institutions say financial reasons are the primary factor. Students are asking for the progressive reduction of tuition and ancillary fees at public post-secondary institutions across the country, including reduced post-residency fees for graduate students.

Winnipeg Free Press

February 25, 2011 Friday

Pg. A.4 ISSN: 0828-1785

Rapist's sentence, judge's words ripped

Kusch, Larry

Rally today outside Law Courts as citizens, politicians express anger

Students and community activists, outraged by a judge's ruling and remarks in a sex assault case, have organized a protest at noon today in front of the Law Courts building.

Court of Queen's Bench Justice Robert Dewar provoked the demonstration -- and criticism from politicians of all stripes on Thursday -- when news broke about his handling of a rape case in northern Manitoba.

Kenneth Rhodes avoided jail time last week in a sex assault involving intercourse when Dewar handed him a two-year conditional sentence. At least as serious, in the minds of many, were the judge's comments during sentencing.

He called Rhodes "a clumsy Don Juan," commented on the victim's attire and said there was "sex in the air" on the night

she was seriously sexually assaulted.

Dewar found Rhodes guilty but rejected the Crown's recommendation for a penalty of at least three years in prison.

"I think it was an incredibly irresponsible ruling," said Alanna Makinson, head of the Manitoba branch of the **Canadian Federation of Students** and one of the protest's organizers. "I feel that the judge was wrong to question what the woman was wearing the night that she was raped. And under no circumstances does a flirt or a short skirt or a kiss ever imply consent to intercourse."

Federal and political politicians and the co-ordinator of a Winnipeg sexual assault crisis program also expressed their dismay Thursday. Several said they were fearful the judge's attitude may prevent more women from reporting sexual assaults. It's estimated less than 10 per cent all sex assaults are reported to police.

"We encourage people to come forward and a decision of this sort can set that back," said Winnipeg Liberal MP Anita Neville.

"I think this sends out a horrible message to victims," said Charleswood MLA Myrna Driedger, Conservative critic for the status of women.

A spokeswoman for Justice Minister Andrew Swan said an appeal in the case is being considered. "The Crown asked for a serious jail sentence in this case and will review the transcript to determine if there are grounds to appeal the sentence," she said in an email.

Dewar, a federal Conservative appointment, has sat on the bench for just 17 months.

A spokeswoman for the Canadian Judicial Council, which investigates complaints against judges, would not say late Thursday if one had been filed against Dewar.

"It's not council's policy to disclose complaints that

we have before us unless the person who makes the complaint publicly announces it," said Johanna Laporte, the CJC's director of communications. However, observers said they wouldn't be surprised if one were to be filed in the coming days.

Lorraine Parrington, who co-ordinates the sexual assault crisis program at Klinik, said she is "appalled" at some of the judge's remarks.

She said they perpetuate the myth about sexual assault that the victim is responsible for her own victimization.

Women who have had the courage to report being sexually assaulted will be angered by the judge's

comments, while those who have never told anyone will grow even more fearful and mistrustful of the system, Parrington said.

"That (wa)s clearly an act of violence," she said, referring to the forced sexual intercourse -- not the actions of a "clumsy Don Juan."

Sexual assault victims often report shame and self-blame, as well as the feeling of having been violated, Parrington said. And the judge's ruling and remarks are likely to deter some from coming forward in the future, she said.

Meanwhile, today's protest at the Law Courts is expected to involve several community organizations,

including the Women's Health Clinic and campus women's centres, as well as student groups.

-- with files from Mia Rabson

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'He's a nice guy. He's a perfectly decent kind of guy but he reflects a certain kind of belief from a certain kind of generation'

-- a source, who asked not to be named, referring Thursday to Justice Dewar

'Really, it feels almost like the accused is being viewed as a victim here as opposed to the victim'

-- Lorraine Parrington of Klinik

UPI

February 25, 2011 Friday

Judge's rape sentence to be investigated

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, Feb. 25

The Canadian Judicial Council said Friday it would investigate remarks made by a judge who spared a rapist a prison term.

The announcement came as the government of Manitoba requested a review of Queen's Bench Justice Robert Dewar's conduct and statements, the Winnipeg Free Press reported. The council had already received complaints about the judge from lawmakers and sexual assault victims advocates.

Scores of people demonstrated outside the Law Courts in Winnipeg at noon. They demanded Dewar's departure and shouted "Yes means yes and no means no."

Last week, Dewar, who has been on the bench 17 months, gave Kenneth Rhodes a suspended sentence after he was convicted of raping a young woman he met in a bar in 2006 in Thompson, a city almost 500 miles north of Winnipeg. The judge suggested Rhodes was a "clumsy Don Juan" and that the victim invited sex with her clothing and conduct.

Alanna Makinson of the **Canadian Federation of Students** spoke at the rally.

"This ruling has damaged the credibility of Canada's justice system, and we are calling for an apology for his misguided and irresponsible ruling," she said.

The Brandon Sun

February 26, 2011 Saturday

LOCAL

Complaint filed after 'clumsy Don Juan' ruling

Winnipeg Free Press

WINNIPEG -- A national body that investigates judicial misconduct confirmed Friday that it will be reviewing complaints against a Manitoba Queen's Bench judge who has come under fire for his ruling and remarks in a recent sex assault case.

The Manitoba government has also announced it will file a formal complaint about Judge Robert Dewar with the Canadian Judicial Council.

The council, which hears complaints of judicial misconduct, confirmed Friday it has already received "several" complaints about Dewar's conduct.

Provincial Status of Women Minister Jennifer Howard said she will undertake the action on behalf of the Manitoba government.

"I feel it's important, and we as a government feel it's important, to send a message to women ... who may have been a victim or may be a victim of sexual assault that they should come forward, that they should feel protected by the law," Howard said.

Dewar had given a convicted rapist a two-year conditional sentence last week -- meaning no jail time -- and suggested that the victim's attire and flirtatious behaviour were partly responsible for the attack.

Kenneth Rhodes was described as a "clumsy Don Juan" who may have misunderstood what the victim wanted when he forced intercourse along a darkened highway outside Thompson in 2006.

Dewar said the victim sent signals the "sex was in the air," noting the woman was wearing a tube top with no bra and plenty of makeup.

Earlier Friday, more than 100 women and men chanted, "Yes means yes and no means no," in calling for the resignation of Dewar at a noon-hour protest in front of Winnipeg's Law Courts Building.

One of the protest organizers, Alanna Makinson of the **Canadian Federation of Students**, lambasted Dewar for commenting on the victim's attire and "inviting" signals.

"These statements by Judge Dewar are reinforcing the myth of implied consent and the myth that the victim of sexual assault is ultimately responsible for their own victimization," Makinson said.

"This ruling has damaged the credibility of Canada's justice system, and we are calling for an apology for his misguided and irresponsible ruling."

Edmonton Journal

February 26, 2011 Saturday Final Edition

NEWS; Pg. A5

Complaints filed against judge Decision to spare convicted rapist jail time sparks protest in Winnipeg

Winnipeg Free Press
WINNIPEG

A national body that investigates judicial misconduct confirmed Friday that it will be reviewing complaints against a Manitoba Queen's Bench judge who has come under fire for his ruling and remarks in a recent sex-assault case.

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Law Courts Building.

One of the protest organizers, Alanna Makinson of the **Canadian Federation of Students**, lambasted Dewar for commenting on the assault victim's attire and "inviting" signals.

"These statements by Judge Dewar are reinforcing the myth of implied consent and the myth that the victim of sexual assault is ultimately responsible for their own victimization," Makinson said.

"This ruling has damaged the credibility of Canada's justice system, and we are calling for an apology for his misguided and irresponsible ruling."

GRAPHIC: / Dewar; Ruth Bonneville, Winnipeg Free Press; Protesters gather outside Winnipeg's Law Courts Building on Friday to show their disapproval of Judge Robert Dewar's statements in a recent rape case.

National Post

February 26, 2011 Saturday National Edition

CANADA; Pg. A10

Magistrate to be investigated over rape comments Judge suggested victim to blame for sexual assault

Winnipeg Free Press
WINNIPEG

A national body that investigates judicial misconduct confirmed Friday that it will review complaints against a Manitoba Queen's Bench judge who called a rapist a "clumsy Don Juan" and suggested the victim was partly to blame for the assault.

Manitoba has also announced Friday it will file a formal complaint about Judge Robert Dewar with the Canadian Judicial Council. The council confirmed it has already received "several" complaints about Judge Dewar's conduct.

Jennifer Howard, the province's Status of Women Minister, said she will undertake the action on behalf of the Manitoba government. "I feel it's important, and we as a government feel it's important, to send a message to women . who may have been a victim or may be a victim of sexual assault that they should come forward, that they should feel protected by the law."

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The judge said the victim sent signals that "sex was in the air," noting the woman was wearing a tube top with no bra and plenty of makeup.

Earlier Friday, in front of Winnipeg's Law Courts Building, more than 100 women and men chanted, "Yes means yes and no means no," in calling for the resignation of the judge.

One of the protest organizers, Alanna Makinson of the **Canadian Federation of Students**, lambasted the judge.

"These statements ... are reinforcing the myth of implied consent and the myth that the victim of sexual assault is ultimately responsible for their own victimization," she said. "This ruling has damaged the credibility of Canada's justice system, and we are calling for an apology for his misguided and irresponsible ruling."

The Star Phoenix

February 26, 2011 Saturday Final Edition

NATIONAL; Pg. A16

No jail time in rape case leads to protest

Larry Kusch,
Winnipeg Free Press
WINNIPEG

Students and community activists, outraged by a Manitoba judge's ruling and remarks in a sex-assault case, have organized a noon-hour protest Friday in front of the Law Courts building.

Court of Queen's Bench Justice Robert Dewar provoked the demonstration -and criticism from politicians of all stripes on Thursday -when news broke about his handling of a rape case in Thompson, Man.

Kenneth Rhodes avoided jail time last week in a sex assault involving intercourse when Dewar handed him a two-year conditional sentence.

At least as serious, in the minds of many, were the judge's comments during sentencing.

He called Rhodes "a clumsy Don Juan," commented on the victim's attire and said there was "sex in the air" on the night she was sexually assaulted.

Dewar found Rhodes guilty, but rejected the Crown's recommendation for a penalty of at least three years in prison.

"I think it was an incredibly irresponsible ruling," said Alanna Makinson, head of the Manitoba branch of the **Canadian Federation of Students** and one of the protest's organizers.

"I feel that the judge was wrong to question what the woman was wearing the night that she was raped.

"And under no circumstances does a flirt or a short skirt or a kiss ever imply consent to intercourse."

Federal and political politicians, and the co-ordinator of a Winnipeg sexual assault crisis program, also expressed their dismay this week.

Several said they were fearful the judge's attitude may prevent more women from reporting sexual assaults. It's estimated less than 10 per cent all sex assaults are reported to police.

"We encourage people to come forward and a decision of this sort can set that back," said Winnipeg Liberal MP Anita Neville.

A spokesperson for Manitoba Justice Minister Andrew Swan said an appeal in the case is

being considered.

"The Crown asked for a serious jail sentence in this case and will review the transcript to determine if there are grounds to appeal the sentence," she said in an email.

Dewar, a federal Conservative appointment, has sat on the bench for just 17 months.

A spokesperson for the Canadian Judicial Council, which investigates complaints against judges, would not say late Thursday if one had been filed against Dewar.

Lorraine Parrington, who co-ordinates the sexual assault crisis program at Winnipeg's Clinic, said she is "appalled" at some of the judge's remarks, which perpetuate the myth that the victim is responsible.

Women who have had the courage to report being sexually assaulted will be angered by the judge's comments, while those who have never told anyone will grow even more fearful and mistrustful of the system, Parrington said.

"That was clearly an act of violence," she said, referring to the forced sexual intercourse.

Windsor Star

February 26, 2011 Saturday Final Edition

CANADA; Pg. A11

Complaints filed on judge's sex-assault ruling 'Clumsy Don Juan' remarks spark outrage

Winnipeg Free Press
WINNIPEG

A national body that investigates judicial misconduct confirmed Friday that it will be reviewing complaints against a Manitoba Queen's Bench judge who has come under fire for his ruling and remarks in a recent sex-assault case.

The province of Manitoba has also announced it will file a formal complaint about Judge Robert Dewar with the Canadian Judicial Council.

The council, which hears complaints of judicial misconduct, confirmed Friday it has already received "several" complaints about Dewar's conduct.

Provincial Status of Women Minister Jennifer Howard said she will undertake the action on behalf of the Manitoba government.

"I feel it's important, and we as a government feel it's important, to send a message to women . . . who may have been a victim or may be a victim of sexual assault that they should come forward, that they should feel pro-

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Dewar said the victim sent signals the "sex was in the air," noting the woman was wearing a tube top with no bra and plenty of makeup.

Lorraine Parrington, who coordinates the sexual assault crisis program at Winnipeg's Clinic, said she is "appalled" at some of the judge's remarks.

She said they perpetuate the myth about sexual assault that the victim is responsible for her own victimization.

In a noon-hour demonstration

Friday in front of Winnipeg's Law Courts Building, more than 100 women and men chanted, "Yes means yes and no means no," in calling for the resignation of Dewar.

One of the protest organizers, Alanna Makinson of the **Canadian Federation of Students**, lambasted Dewar for commenting on the victim's attire and "inviting" signals.

"These statements by Judge Dewar are reinforcing the myth of implied consent and the myth that the victim of sexual assault is ultimately responsible for their own victimization," Makinson said.

"This ruling has damaged the credibility of Canada's justice system, and we are calling for an apology for his misguided and irresponsible ruling."

GRAPHIC: Ruth Bonneville, Winnipeg Free Press; Protesters gather in Winnipeg on Friday to demonstrate against Justice Robert Dewar's statements in a sexual-assault case.

Winnipeg Sun

February 26, 2011 Saturday FINAL EDITION

NEWS; Pg. 4

His Honour, his ruling under fire Remarks in sex assault case disgusting: protesters

BY DEAN PRITCHARD,
WINNIPEG SUN

Protesters marched on the Law Courts on Friday and demanded Justice Robert Dewar be removed from the bench following his controversial comments about a rape victim's provocative attire.

"These statements by (Justice) Dewar are reinforcing the myth of implied consent and the myth that a victim of sexual assault is ultimately responsible for their own victimization," said Alanna Makinson of the **Canadian Federation of Students**.

About 100 protesters waved placards bearing messages including "Dewar resign now" and "No such thing as implied consent." The group's chants prompted honks from several passing motorists.

"I'm disgusted with the issue," said Bob Hudson. "This judge is way out of line and should be tossed, as far as I'm concerned."

Dewar convicted Thompson resident Kenneth Rhodes of sexually assaulting the 26-year-old victim 4 1/2 years ago. Dewar rejected a Crown recommendation Rhodes be sentenced to at least three years in prison and instead granted him a conditional sentence.

Dewar said the victim and a friend were dressed in tube tops and high heels when they met Rhodes and another man outside a bar "and made it publicly known that they wanted to party."

Rhodes, Dewar said, had the mistaken belief "sex was in the air" and a "heightened expectation" that sex would occur.

Court heard the victim rebuffed Rhodes three times before he raped her on the side of a road. Rhodes admitted telling the woman "it would only hurt for a little while."

Dewar said Rhodes described the incident as "a case of misread signals."

Dewar's verdict in another sex assault case is currently before the Manitoba Court of Appeal.

Last summer, Dewar acquitted a man charged with several counts of sexually assaulting a young girl. The Crown appealed the ruling, arguing Dewar erred in his assessment of the accused man's evidence and the evidence of the alleged victim, and that Dewar engaged in "inappropriate speculation."

The appeal was heard earlier this month. The high court has reserved its decision.

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GRAPHIC: 1. photo by MARCEL CRE-TAIN/WINNIPEG SUN More than 100 people gathered outside the Winnipeg Law Courts on Friday to protest a judge's comments about the provocative attire of a sexual assault victim at a sentencing hearing. 2. photo of ROBERT DEWAR 'Misread signals'

Winnipeg Free Press

February 26, 2011 Saturday

Pg. H.16 ISSN: 0828-1785

Getting off the bottle

Wiebe, Lindsey

In Manitoba, campuses have led back-to-the-tap parade

It tanked at Winnipeg city council, garnered so-so support elsewhere in the province, but found fans at a trio of local universities.

And with the province now considering changes to its own policies, there may be some fizz left in Manitoba's bottled water debate.

A few years have passed since the bottled water discussion heated up, focused mainly on the environmental waste of used-and-tossed bottles. Communities like Toronto, Vancouver and Charlottetown have taken steps to ban single-use bottles in some city buildings and Winnipeg briefly weighed the pros and cons of a ban in 2008.

Winnipeg's proposal was ultimately scrapped, but in 2009 the University of Winnipeg became Canada's first university to ban bottled water on campus. Two other local universities -- Brandon University and the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface -- followed suit. The Winnipeg School Division entered the fray earlier this year when trustee Mike Babinsky proposed a ban on all plastic drink containers, a pitch that was sent off for consultation.

But bottle ban take-up has been limited elsewhere in Manitoba, with only a few communities pledging to eliminate the bottle in

favour of tap water.

Last fall, the **Canadian Federation of Students (CFS)** Manitoba called on the province to 'take back the tap.' In a report presented to Conservation Minister Bill Blaikie, the group pointed to the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent filling cooler jugs and urged Manitoba to follow the lead of Nova Scotia, which last summer decided to stop buying bottled water in all departments where potable tap water is available.

"(Minister Blaikie) was certainly sympathetic to where we were coming from," said David Jacks, resource co-ordinator for CFS Manitoba. The group is one of those organizing Bottled Water Free Day events March 10.

The province spent roughly \$745,000 on bottled water from 2004 to 2010, according to information from the province's procurement services branch.

Most went to large cooler jugs, but nearly \$168,800 was spent on single-use bottles, more than 700,000 of them over a five-year span.

Water-cooler spending varies by ministry: The figure ranges from nearly \$1,600 in Aboriginal and Northern Affairs in the last calendar year to more than \$17,000 in Finance, based on numbers collected from half a dozen provincial departments by the Free Press. Manitoba Conservation did not respond to the request.

CFS Manitoba's pitch may have

found some traction: The province is in the early stages of reviewing its bottled water purchasing policy, a spokeswoman said this week, and hopes to make an announcement sometime this spring.

Winnipeg's new \$300-million water treatment plant came online at the end of 2009, offering up safer and better-tasting water. But the issue of bottled water in city buildings hasn't come up again.

Mayor Sam Katz's office hasn't stocked single-use bottles since 2008, but still uses communal coolers. A spokesman said that's because the office, built decades ago, doesn't have kitchen facilities. On the whole, the city spent more than \$13,000 filling water coolers at various departments last year, though just \$125 more went toward single-use water bottles.

Groups looking to phase out bottled water need to make sure tap-water infrastructure is up to snuff, said Jacks. He pointed to the legislature, where fountains are hard to find and don't always work well, if at all.

Many offices -- the Free Press included -- use mainly water coolers, with fountains underused or out of the way.

"It's so easy to get bottled water, so why maintain water fountains? Why use water fountains? Why make sure the pipes are clean and safe?" said Jacks. "That's the type of culture we're hoping to help change and shift."

Communities or schools wanting to ditch the bottle may be stymied by beverage exclusivity contracts, said Elly Adeland, campaigns coordinator for the Polaris Institute. The research and advocacy group has gone after the bottled water industry in recent years, arguing municipal water is safer and can be more accessible. The institute does not disclose where it gets its funding, Adeland said.

More than 80 municipalities around Canada have brought in bottle bans of one kind or another, according to the institute. Altona, Shoal Lake and Dauphin have all made commitments, said Adeland. Brandon made a similar pledge for its city hall, said Jacks.

"We felt that we have good water," said Altona Mayor Mel Klassen, who said with the amount of plastics going into landfills, it "just didn't make sense" to use bottled water. The community swapped to tap water at its municipal office four years ago, he said.

What remains to be seen is whether Manitobans on the whole are kicking the bottle, or embracing it.

The latest Statistics Canada data showed Winnipeggers drinking more bottled water, not less. In 2007, 41 per cent of those who had access to municipal water -- the vast majority of residents -- said they drank primarily bottled water at home, up 10 per cent from 2006. Across Manitoba, 37 per cent of people did so, up eight per cent.

And after the initial negative publicity, there are signs bottled water sales might be picking up

again. U.S. trade publication Convenience Store News reported sales dropped by more than 10 per cent in 2009, and blamed the weak economy. But last year, sales bounced back four per cent, with three per cent growth expected for 2011.

When it comes to water bought in cooler jugs, as compared to single-use bottles, the debate may be more about money than the environment.

Jon Stewart, owner of the Culligan franchise in Manitoba, said the cooler jugs used by the chain are sanitized and reused for up to a year, then recycled at the end of their lifespan, though it still takes a driver to deliver and collect them. Culligan uses treated tap water, removing additional solids as well as chlorine, said Stewart.

For students, the bottled water issue centres on privatization and human rights, Jacks argued. Environmental concerns are on the radar, but "people really understand that water should not be a commodity," he said. "It's a basic human right and a basic human need."

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BOTTLE ALTERNATIVES

FIZZY WATER ON TAP

Fill your bottle with free fizzy water at a special fountain in Paris's Jardin de Reuilly. The fountain -- the first of its kind in France -- dispenses still and carbonated water and opened to the public last September. The idea originated in northern Italy, where 215 such fountains exist, according to Paris's public water company.

KEEPING COOL WITHOUT THE BOTTLE

Bottle-free coolers, filtration systems that connect directly to a water hook-up, are an option for folks who'd like to go bottle-free but want a cooler handy. "We're installing more of those for sure," said Jon Stewart, owner of the Culligan Manitoba franchise. The chain sold 18 per cent more bottle-free coolers in 2010 than the year before.

GREEN BRIEFS

Good, bad and ugly of pollutants

Free lunch-hour talk on environmental pollutants with Prof. Charles Wong, Canada Research Chair in Environmental Toxicology at the University of Winnipeg. Wednesday, March 2, 12:10 to 12:50 p.m., Carol Shields Auditorium, Millennium Library. For more information, call (204) 986-6779.

Green jobs...

Check out the jobs on offer at the second Manitoba Environmental Industries Association career fair. Wednesday, March 2, 12:30 to 5 p.m., reception 5 to 7 p.m., fair at the University of Winnipeg Duckworth Centre, reception at Convocation Hall. Details at www.meia.mb.ca or by calling (204) 962-8503.

...and green drinks

Green Drinks is an informal monthly get-together for people working in the environmental field, whether in government, consulting, at non-profits or in their spare time. Friday, March 4, 5 p.m., The Lo Pub, 330 Kennedy St.

that "it was just impossible to measure up to my wealthier classmates" under those conditions.

The poll shows that, despite the many investments in higher education made by the Ontario Liberals under Premier Dalton McGuinty, "they're getting no credit for it," said pollster Turcotte.

Eighty-five per cent of respondents said the quality of post-secondary education has either stayed the same or declined under the Liberals, who have governed for eight years. Only four per cent thought the quality had improved.

And 48 per cent of respondents rated the McGuinty government's performance on post-secondary education as "about the same" as the earlier Mike Harris Conservative government. An-

other 29 per cent said the Liberals did better than their predecessors, while 14 per cent rated the Liberal performance as worse.

Ontario's minister of colleges and universities, John Milloy, said it is "outrageous" to compare the two governments "and trying to draw a parallel there."

The previous Conservative government "slashed support to universities, they slashed student aid," he said.

"A pale comparison to what we have today."

Milloy, who is Kitchener Centre MPP, said the two universities and one college in Kitchener and Waterloo are "among some of the best in the world."

Because of the \$6.2 billion

invested by the Liberals, an additional 140,000 students are able to go to university and college - and student aid has been "radically transformed" into one of the most generous systems in the world, he said.

For example, a university student from a middle-income family, living away from home and working 10 hours a week part-time, would now get \$12,000 in student aid. That's \$7,900 more than he or she would have received under the Conservatives, and the majority of the extra money comes as a grant, not a loan.

"We have a phenomenal story to tell in post-secondary education," Milloy said.

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Waterloo Region Record

March 3, 2011 Thursday Final Edition

LOCAL; Pg. B1

Ontarians worry about costs of post-secondary education

By Luisa D'Amato,
Record staff

Residents of southwestern Ontario, including Waterloo Region, are more concerned about the affordability of post-secondary education than many other key issues, a new study says.

The study, released Wednesday, shows that 61 per cent of residents say tuition costs are too high, while 30 per cent say they are about right.

Three out of four residents of southwestern Ontario - including Waterloo Region, London and Windsor areas - believe it will become more important to have a university degree a decade from now.

At the same time, they are more concerned about affordability of that post-secondary education than they are about many other important issues, including the quality of health care, unemployment and crime.

People ranked affordability of higher education at 7.73 on a scale of 1 to 10,

where 1 is "not at all concerned" and 10 is "very concerned."

That made it a more urgent matter than quality of health care (7.61), unemployment (6.50) and crime (5.37)

"People are worried about the cost of higher education and concerned their children will be unable to access a college or university," said Andr Turcotte, whose company, Feedback Research, did the survey in January. Turcotte is also a professor at Carleton University's school of journalism and communication.

"Voters in southwestern Ontario want tuition fees brought under control," Turcotte said.

The poll of 1,800 residents across Ontario was commissioned by the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations and the **Canadian Federation of Students**.

Tuition is about \$5,000 a year for most full-time undergraduate students in

arts and sciences. But there are exceptions: Wilfrid Laurier charges \$6,900 for its education program, University of Waterloo charges \$10,000 for engineering students, and University of Western Ontario collects \$20,000 a year for its business program, more than four times what it charged five years ago.

"We can't continue down this road," said Sandy Hudson, the chair for the Ontario branch of **Canadian Federation of Students**.

She has just graduated from University of Toronto with \$40,000 in debt.

While she was a student there, she said tuition fees increased to \$6,000 from just over \$4,000 when she began.

Meanwhile, class sizes "ballooned," she said.

Hudson took several part-time jobs to help pay her bills, one of them on a night shift.

But the extra hours of work took their toll. She found

Canwest News Service

March 7, 2011 Monday

Premier hopeful Adrian Dix touts \$100-million post-secondary grants

Ian Austin, The Province

Would-be premier Adrian Dix said Monday he would establish a \$100-million annual needs-based grant program to help post-secondary students chase their dreams.

"We want people to pursue their dreams, whatever they are, and this would allow them to do so," said Dix, a candidate for the B.C. NDP leadership who would, of course, have to defeat premier-designate Christy Clark in order to fulfil his promise. "Tuition has gone up more than 100 per cent in the last 10 years."

Dix said he graduated from UBC in 1986 debt-free, while today it's not uncommon for students to rack up tens of thousands of dollars in debt before they graduate.

"Right now we have the lowest grant program in Canada," said Dix, speaking at a media event at Vancouver Community College. "Three-quarters of the jobs of the future will require some form of post-secondary education, so we must make post-secondary education accessible."

VCC faculty union president Frank Cosco also attended the presser, stating that students carrying huge debt loads is a new phenomenon.

"My generation didn't have that, Adrian's generation didn't have that - I think it's shameful," said Cosco. "Our college just last week raised tuition by another two per cent."

"We've got to do better - this is a crazy situation."

The pledge from Dix was immediately endorsed by the **Canadian Federation of Students**, which said students in four-year programs owe an average of \$27,000 on graduation.

"Students are in need of this program now more than ever," said Nimmi Takkar, chairwoman of the **Canadian Federation of Students**-British Columbia. "Student debt is at an all-time high, and this program would be a bold step in the right direction for students, their families, and the BC economy."

"Students are calling on all candidates to take action to make affordable education a leadership issue,"

Dix is vying for the B.C. NDP leadership with fellow MLAs Mike Farnworth, John Horgan, and Nicholas Simons, along with marijuana advocate Dana Larsen.

The winner will be decided by a province-wide vote on Apr. 17.

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The Leader-Post

March 7, 2011 Monday Final Edition

Regina, Saskatchewan: NEWS; Pg. A8

Education seen as key issue

Meagan Fitzpatrick,
Postmedia News
OTTAWA

On his recent crosscountry tours, Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff has talked often about post-secondary education and how his party plans to make it more affordable so that, "if you get the grades, you get to go."

Does that mean free tuition? More scholarships? And if so, how would an Ignatieff-led government pay for it?

Canadians will have to wait until an election to find out - and with polls showing the Tories strafing majority territory, that could be a very long wait. The Liberals are keeping details of their "pan-Canadian learning strategy" under wraps until it's time for a campaign.

But what is in plain sight is that Ignatieff, with his close personal ties to academia, is trying hard to set his party apart from the Conservatives. He thinks education is an issue that can help him do that.

In a recent speech to the Liberal caucus, he said Canadians need to know that the Liberals will support them if their children require help with post-secondary educa-

tion.

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What students really want is a reduction in the upfront cost of post-secondary education: tuition.

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What the federation really

wants from Ottawa, however, is a long-term plan for higher education.

"Canada is one of the last countries on the planet that doesn't have a vision for post-secondary education," said David Molenhuis, CFS national chairman. "What would be great to see from the federal political parties is to start thinking more big-picture politics when it comes to guaranteeing every Canadian the right to access the colleges and universities that they pay for through the tax system."

Will Ignatieff's still-vague learning strategy be the vision Molenhuis is looking for?

"The rhetoric certainly sounds promising, but what are we going to see in terms of this learning strategy, the actual implementation of these rhetorical statements?" said Molenhuis.

The "soft language" from Ignatieff on education indicates "he's practising what he's going to be preaching on the campaign trail," according to John Wright, senior vice-president of public affairs at Ipsos Reid polling firm.

Whether the funding of post-secondary education, and Ignatieff's "you get the grades, you get to go" tagline resonates with Canadians will

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"It might be one of the things that they put together as part of their platform but in and of itself, it's not something that lights a fire under people," he said.

Ignatieff has said that investing in education is key to Canada's economic recovery and voters can expect to hear a lot more of that kind of language during a campaign.

"If you want a big public argument about what is likely to create more jobs in the future for Canadians I will bet on education versus corporate tax cuts any day of the week," Wright says.

GRAPHIC: Don Healy, Leader-Post Files; Federal Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff is focusing on post-secondary education funding, an issue that sets his party apart from the Conservatives.

Nanaimo Daily News

March 7, 2011 Monday Final Edition

NATION & WORLD; Pg. A9

Ignatieff bets on education as a winning strategy in next election

Liberals expected to tell Canadians that they are the party to trust on social programs

Meagan Fitzpatrick,
Postmedia News

On his recent cross-country tours, Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff has talked often about post-secondary education and how his party plans to make it more affordable so that, "if you get the grades, you get to go."

Does that mean free tuition? More scholarships? And if so, how would an Ignatieff-led government pay for it?

Canadians will have to wait until an election to find out -- and with polls showing the Tories strafing majority territory, that could be a very long wait. The Liberals are keeping details of their "pan-Canadian learning strategy" under wraps until it's time for a campaign.

But what is in plain sight is that Ignatieff, with his close personal ties to academia, is trying hard to set his party apart from the Conservatives. He thinks education is an issue that

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GRAPHIC: Colour Photo: Postmedia File Photo; Federal Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff has painted only the broad strokes of his learning plan.

Ottawa Citizen

March 7, 2011 Monday Final Edition

NEWS; Pg. A4

Education plan seen as a pathway to election win Liberals are staying tight-lipped on their 'pan-Canadian learning strategy,' writes Meagan Fitzpatrick

Meagan Fitzpatrick,
Ottawa Citizen

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GRAPHIC: Christinne Muschi, Reuters; Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff is pushing his idea of making postsecondary education more affordable but he won't release details of the 'pan-Canadian learning strategy' until an election is called

The Telegraph-Journal

March 7, 2011 Monday

New Brunswick: MAIN; Pg. A8

Ignatieff bets on education as winning strategy

Politics With election looming, Grit leader looks to differentiate his party from Tories

Meagan Fitzpatrick
Postmedia News

OTTAWA - On his recent cross-country tours, Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff has talked often about post-secondary education and how his party plans to make it more affordable so that, "if you get the grades, you get to go."

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24 Hours

March 8, 2011 Tuesday VANCOUVER EDITION

NEWS; Pg. 4

Dix promises student aid

JEHNIFER BENOIT,
QMI AGENCY

Adrian Dix announced Monday if he becomes premier he would establish an annual \$100-million needs-based student grant program.

"We have the worst grant program in Canada and some of the highest tuition fees ... it will make a significant difference," said the B.C. NDP leadership candidate outside of the Vancouver Community College downtown campus

"Tuition has doubled in the past 10 years ... the average debt [for students] is \$27,000 at the end of their post-secondary education."

Frank Cosco, VCC faculty union president, supported Dix's proposal. "Why

should young people be forced with this debt when they start their working lives ... it's time to change that," he said.

"Student debt is at an all-time high," added Nimmi Takkar, **Canadian Federation of Students** B.C. chairperson. "This program would be a bold step in the right direction for students."

Dix is campaigning for the B.C. NDP leadership along with fellow MLAs Mike Farnworth, John Horgan, Nicholas Simons and Dana Larsen.

GRAPHIC: B.C. NDP leadership candidate Adrian Dix pledges to ease student debt outside the Vancouver Community College Monday. PHOTO JEHNIFER BENOIT

Times Colonist

March 8, 2011 Tuesday Final Edition

CAPITAL & VAN. ISL.; Pg. A5

Dix announces \$100-million plan to reduce debt among students

Postmedia News
VANCOUVER

Would-be premier Adrian Dix said Monday he would establish a \$100-million annual needs-based grant program to help post-secondary students chase their dreams.

"We want people to pursue their dreams, whatever they are, and this would allow them to do so," said Dix, a candidate for the B.C. NDP leadership who would, of course, have to defeat premier-designate Christy Clark in order to fulfil his promise.

"Tuition has gone up more than 100 per cent in the last 10 years."

Dix said he graduated from the University of British Columbia in 1986 debt-free, while today it's not uncommon for students to rack up tens of thousands of dollars in debt before they graduate.

"Right now, we have the lowest grant program in Canada," said Dix, speaking at a media event at Vancouver Community

College.

"Three-quarters of the jobs of the future will require some form of post-secondary education, so we must make post-secondary education accessible."

Vancouver Community College faculty union president Frank Cosco also attended the press conference, stating that students carrying huge debt loads is a new phenomenon.

"My generation didn't have that, Adrian's generation didn't have that. I think it's shameful," said Cosco.

"Our college just last week raised tuition by another two per cent.

"We've got to do better. This is a crazy situation."

The pledge from Dix was immediately endorsed by the **Canadian Federation of Students**, which said students in four-year programs owe an average of \$27,000 upon graduation.

"Students are in need of

this program now more than ever," said Nimmi Takkar, chairwoman of the **Canadian Federation of Students**-British Columbia.

"Student debt is at an all-time high, and this program would be a bold step in the right direction for students, their families and the B.C. economy," she said.

"Students are calling on all candidates to take action to make affordable education a leadership issue."

Dix is vying for the B.C. NDP leadership with fellow MLAs Mike Farnworth, John Horgan and Nicholas Simons, along with marijuana advocate Dana Larsen.

The winner will be decided by a province-wide vote on April 17.

GRAPHIC: Mark Van Manen, Postmedia News; Adrian Dix: "Right now, we have the lowest grant program in Canada."

The Vancouver Province

March 8, 2011 Tuesday Final Edition

NEWS; Pg. A12

Dix is promising cash for dreams

Leadership candidate notes tuition has risen more than 100 per cent in 10 years

Ian Austin,
The Province

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Minister of Science and Universities Ida Chong challenged many of Dix's statements, saying that B.C. has the fourth-lowest tuition in Canada.

"Our government has implemented a number of programs. We have forgiveness programs," said Chong, who said B.C. Liberals have created 33,00 more post-secondary student spaces in a decade.

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twitter.com/ianaustin007

GRAPHIC: Wayne Leidenfrost -PNG;
NDP leadership candidate Adrian Dix says he wants people to chase their dreams.;

The Brandon Sun

March 9, 2011 Wednesday

LOCAL

Assault story underscores value of women's day

Cosgrove, Colleen

When Shannon Skidmore contemplated what she was going to tell her peers during Brandon University's annual International Women's Day reception, she knew the only way she could drive her message home would be to share, for the first time, her shocking personal experience with sexual assault.

The fourth-year political science student was sexually assaulted when she was 19 by a trusted friend following a night out at the bar.

Since then, she says she has blamed herself for drinking too much that night.

But she never came forward about it until yesterday, when she shared her story with nearly 50 people who gathered to mark the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day.

The event, which also celebrated the achievements of 22 exceptional BU female students -- including Skidmore -- was

bookended by a Brandon University Students' Union presentation about No Means No, a campaign developed by the **Canadian Federation of Students** to raise awareness and reduce the occurrence of date rape and dating violence.

No Means No made headlines recently following remarks made by Manitoba Queen's Bench Justice Robert Dewar about a victim of sexual assault.

"I wasn't sure how to make my presentation more impactful ... my story just fit in so well with everything I was reading about and it reminded me of my own situation so I felt had to speak up," Skidmore told the Sun following her emotional public confession.

"It feels a lot better knowing that I can tell someone not in a 'pity me' sort of way, but in a 'we're here together' way. It's heartwarming to look out into the crowd and see supporting faces."

Unfortunately, Skidmore isn't alone in her experi-

ence, which is just one reason why discussions about gender inequality and women's issues are important today, assistant professor of sociology Serena Petrella said.

Skidmore agrees.

"We still need International Women's Day because obviously these things are still happening here and now," she said. "It's a day to celebrate fantastic women, but it's also a day to talk about and mobilize people on issues that are affecting women today. It's that coming together and even if it's just about making us feel better, or making us feel like we're doing something that matters, hopefully it will impact others."

The achievements of women over the past 100 years cannot be discounted, but it's important that the modern-day inequalities aren't pushed under the rug, Petrella says.

"It's International Men's Day 364 days a year ... I'm lucky to be a sociologist, so I'm very aware of the

goals that we have reached and the ones that we're still working on," Petrella said. "Indeed we have made some great steps forward, so we do have reasons to celebrate as well as reasons to still be vigilant."

Economic disparity is one of the most pervasive contributing factors to gender inequality in Canada; and it only gets worse throughout the developing world, Petrella stated. For every \$1 a man in Canada makes, women earn 69 cents. Economic inequality is the biggest barrier women face today, Petrella says.

"Women end up, by their reproductive labour, their families and the amount of care they do within their family, as well as the work they do outside of their family, it basically equals two-thirds of all of the work, though they only get 10 per cent of the reparation for that work," she said. "It's amazing, and they only own one per cent of the total private property in the world. There's much work to be done before we can say that Canada is a truly equitable society."

The first International Woman's Day march was held in 1911 when more than one million men and women rallied in support of women's right to vote, work, hold public office and end gender discrimination.

BU honours young women

To mark International Women's Day, 22 Brandon University female students have been identified by their professors as exceptional in their area of study.

While the young women's studies run the gamut from fine arts to sciences, they have not only garnered scholarships and kudos for their academic endeavours, but have also made contributions within the community at large. Some are busy volunteers, others share the beauty of music, art or literature with others, while others are mentors, coaches or teachers.

* Elizabeth Boutette

* Alison Cooper

* Jessica Dutka

* Suzu Enns

* Amanda Fortin

* Sarah Gazan

* Alise Geiser

* Sylvia Harper

* Nicisha Johnson

* Amanda Kaskiw

* Janet Lee

* Emiliya Mamleeva

* Lynda Matchullis

* Kristen Martin

* Roberta Matheson

* Jessica Peat

* Adeline Savy

* Jackie Simpson

* Shannon Skidmore

* Andrea Thiessen

* Kelby Treloar

* Silvia Lei Xue

' Source: Brandon University

Benzinga.com

March 10, 2011

Thousands Mark Canada's Second Bottled Water Free Day

Benzinga Staff

OTTAWA, ONTARIO--(Marketwire - March 10, 2011) - Today, people across Canada and around the world are marking the second Bottled Water Free Day.

"Canadians are rejecting the privatization of public water resources and pledging to toss the bottle and go back to the tap," said Paul Moist, national president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. "While Bottled Water Free Day started in Canada last year, this year it has spread to five continents."

Organized by the **Canadian Federation of Students**, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Sierra Youth Coalition, Polar Institute, and Development and Peace, Bottled Water Free Day aims to raise awareness about the negative impacts of bottled water and the need to defend public water resources and infrastructure.

"Across the country students are standing up for public water," added Shelley Melanson of the **Canadian Federation of Students**. "A dozen campuses have already banned the bottle and brought back the tap."

Highlights of Bottled Water Free Day include:

- More than 120 events on more than 60 Canadian university and college campuses, and at dozens more municipal facilities, workplaces, high schools, and other institutions;
- Events in Canada, the United States and on five continents;
- An announcement that the University of King's College will go bottled water free, the first post-secondary institution in the Maritimes to do so.

"Access to safe drinking water is a basic human right to which thousands of Canadians and nearly a billion people worldwide are denied," added Siobhan Rowan of Development and Peace. "The Government of Canada and other governments worldwide need to do more to ensure access to it."

Bottled Water Free Day is taking place after years of an increasing backlash to bottled water. To date nearly 100 municipalities, four municipal associations (including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities), seven school boards, 11 university campuses and countless workplaces have restricted the sale or distribution of bottled water.

For a full list of events and endorsing organizations visit:
www.bottledwaterfreeday.ca

The Canadian Press

March 18, 2011 Friday

Quebec students protest government plan to hike university tuition fees

JONATHAN MONTPETIT, CP

MONTREAL _ Students in Quebec are warning the provincial government that its plan to raise university tuition fees by 75 per cent will result in crippling debt levels and a show-down with their powerful unions.

A small but boisterous group of students took to the streets on Friday to express their anger at the government's intention to hike annual tuition by \$325 a year for five years.

The measure is among the most controversial in the provincial budget tabled Thursday by Finance Minister Raymond Bachand. Militant student unions in the province have long resisted any effort to increase tuition, which is the lowest in Canada.

"In Quebec we want the best universities, the best students, and money shouldn't be an issue," said Leo Bureau-Blouin, who heads the provincial union of college students.

Bureau-Blouin said student leaders plan to meet over the weekend to plan larger protests in the coming weeks.

The province's student unions have shown their ability to rally large crowds in the past; 50,000 people attended a protest in Montreal the weekend before the budget.

"We're going to protest until Quebec stops hiking tuition fees," Bureau-Blouin said. "Each time Bachand and (Premier Jean) Charest comes to Montreal, we'll be there."

The planned increases will bring tuition for Quebec students to \$3,793 by 2016-17, up from the current \$2,168. That would still leave the province 30 per cent below the 2010 Canadian average.

Out-of-province students in Quebec paid roughly \$5,600 in tuition this year.

Though the fee hikes announced in Thursday's budget are directed at Quebec students, some universities are warning the rate for non-Quebec Canadians could increase next year as well.

Students are worried the higher tuition fees for Quebecers will further complicate efforts to fund their education.

"I'll have to talk to my boss and work more hours," said Marc-Andre Marquis, a political science student at the Universite de Quebec a Montreal who works part time at a pet

store.

"But under the financial aid system, if I work more, I'll receive fewer bursaries."

One study conducted by a prominent Quebec student union found that as many as 40 per cent of students in the province fund their education without support from their parents and that 80 per cent work while studying full time.

"It's already difficult; I don't get any help from my parents and I'm the first one in my family to go to university," said Marie Pierre, a student at the Universite de Montreal who wants to become a teacher.

"When I started it wasn't that expensive, but now I'll have to go into debt, take out a line of credit or find some other way of funding my schooling."

The **Canadian Federation of Students** accused the Quebec government of seeking to balance its books on "the backs of students."

David Molenhuis, the federation's chairperson, said the government's move will "bankrupt a generation and undermine Quebec's long-term economic stability."

Friday's protest snarled traffic outside a Montreal hotel where Bachand was defending his budget. At one point they even managed to block the mayor of Montreal's car, forcing him to make his way to the speech on foot.

Inside, Bachand expressed little sympathy for the students' concerns.

"What's the fair share that students should pay?" Bachand asked reporters after his speech.

"He (the student) is going to earn hundreds of thousands of dollars more than if he had a high-school education."

Students argue the new tuition rate will limit access to higher education, something which Bachand rejects out of hand. He says 35 per cent of the revenues generated by the higher rate will be put back in to student aid.

The rest will help finance an ambitious array of funding programs for Quebec's universities. Among them is a plan to encourage private companies to donate more to post-secondary education.

In all, universities will see \$850 million in additional public funds by 2016-17.

"The competition for brains in this planet is quite high," said Bachand. "If we don't start working on our universities now, it will be too late."

The Canadian Press

March 20, 2011 Sunday

Public underwhelmed with McGuinty's post-secondary education efforts

COLIN PERKEL, CP

TORONTO _ Concerted efforts by the McGuinty government to improve post-secondary education in Ontario appear to be largely unappreciated by the public.

In fact, a provincewide poll finds more than one-quarter of those asked believe the quality has declined under the Liberals, while fewer than one in 10 see any improvement.

Prof. Mark Langer, president of the organization that speaks for university faculty, said he was taken aback by the finding.

"I was appalled when I read that," Langer said.

"The Liberals have laboured mightily to restore funding and they seem to be getting very little traction from doing that ... very little public recognition."

The Feedback Research survey, slated for release this week, also suggests the Liberal government's performance on post-secondary education is viewed barely more favourably than the previous Conservative government's record.

Twenty-seven per cent said the Liberals under Premier Dalton McGuinty, who took office in 2003, had done better than the Tories under former Conservative premier Mike Harris. Twenty three per cent rated the Liberal performance worse.

"One would have thought the public would be paying closer attention to what the McGuinty government has been doing," said Langer, president of the Ontario Confederation of Faculty Associations.

"They seem to have been victims of their own success."

Figures show the Liberals have almost doubled the number of dollars going into post-secondary education.

At the same time, a concerted effort to raise the percentage of high school grads who go on to college or university has resulted in many more students in the system.

The result is that Ontario lags in funding per student _ students pay more for tuition in Ontario than elsewhere in Canada.

According to the poll, two-thirds of those asked said tuition was too high, with one in four

suggesting fee levels were about right.

Concerns about cost were significantly higher among lower-income respondents, the poll indicates.

Nora Loreto, with the **Canadian Federation of Students**, said students are suffering from sticker shock.

Since 2006, most programs have seen tuition hikes of four to five per cent annually, and as much as eight per cent per year for deregulated programs such as law and medicine, she said.

Loreto said fees have risen more sharply under McGuinty, who faces an election campaign this fall, than under Harris.

"The (Liberals') record did include not reversing any of the bad policy in terms of fees that the previous government made," Loreto said.

"They're really battling a PR nightmare when you've got students facing the cost of education increasing."

Ontario's ratio of students to professors remains the highest in the country but survey respondents did not appear to share persistent concerns among both faculty and students about the larger class sizes.

In fact, just 12 per cent saw the issue as a problem, while three-quarters of those said schools were simply using their resources more efficiently.

The poll of 1,800 people in Ontario was done in mid-January for the faculty associations and student federation. It is said to be accurate within 2.9 percentage points 19 times out of 20.

The Canadian Press

March 20, 2011 Sunday

CP Graphic

CP

TORONTO _ A provincewide survey of attitudes toward post-secondary education is slated for release this week. Some findings of the poll for the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations and **Canadian Federation of Students**:

Education quality under the Liberals versus the previous Conservative government.

Stayed the same: 44%

Declined: 28%

Improved: 8%

Don't Know: 20%

Liberal performance versus previous Conservative government on post-secondary education:

About the same: 36%

Better: 27%

Worse: 23%

Don't Know: 14%

Tuition fees:

Too high: 66%

About right: 25%

Too low: 2%

Don't Know: 7%

SOURCE: Feedback Research

Benzinga.com

March 21, 2011

Ontario Federation of Labour: Working for Justice, Working for Change

Benzinga Staff

TORONTO, ONTARIO-- (Marketwire - March 21, 2011) - Workers across Ontario are uniting together to challenge racial prejudice and discrimination in their workplaces and in their communities. March 21, 2011 marks the 45th anniversary of the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) is working to challenge racism in the workplace ...and in the classroom.

Established six years after the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre, in which South African police opened fire and killed 69 people peacefully protesting apartheid "pass laws", the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has become a focal point for the struggle for equality and human rights. Every year, events and activities are organized around the world to encourage people and governments to help challenge racial discrimination and to remember its negative consequences.

As communities of colour continue to grow in Canada at five times the rate of the general population, racialized people remain three times more likely to live in poverty, while earning 15 per cent less on average than non-racialized workers. In addition, the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal continues to hear cases in which racialized workers are subjected to overt acts of racism in their workplaces. As of June 15, 2010, all employers will be required to have in place an Occupational Health and Safety anti-harassment policy. Yet much more remains to be done.

"The shameful effects of racism continue to manifest themselves in Ontario workplaces and in the earnings of racialized workers. Supporting economic justice in Ontario means supporting public services and good jobs, but we also need tougher rules, with stiffer penalties, to send a clear message to employers that racism has no place in the workplace," said OFL President Sid Ryan. "It is the responsibility of everyone,

not just racialized workers, to challenge racism in all of its forms and to fight for equality and human rights."

To give voice to this issue, the Ontario Federation of Labour will be hosting the first ever Workers of Colour Assembly in Toronto on March 25 and 26, 2011, in collaboration with the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the Latin American Trade Unionists and the Asian Canadian Labour Alliance. The forum will give participants the opportunity to discuss barriers to equality, including access to good jobs, affordable housing, pensions and education. It will focus on developing short and long-term strategies for challenging legislators, employers, communities and individuals to become allies in the struggle for racial justice.

While fair wages and harassment-free workplaces continue to top the labour movement's bargaining agenda, Ontario workers are also active in fighting to end racism in Ontario's educational system. Last year's Final Report of the

Task Force on Campus Racism, hosted by the **Canadian Federation of Students**-Ontario with participation from the Ontario Federation of Labour, found that individual and systemic racism continue to affect college and university students in the classroom, in campus life, and in institutional policies. Other research of the CFS demonstrates that user fees, like tuition fees, have a disproportionately negative effect upon racialized people, who are statistically more likely to earn less before and after graduation.

However, the racial barriers to education start much earlier than college or university. In Canada's most impoverished communities, which continue to be predominantly racialized, success in primary and secondary education

is thwarted by inadequate resources. In First Nations communities, the crisis is the most stark. Sometimes without heated rooms, in moldy portables, without libraries and educational resources, First Nations children continue to be neglected and underfunded by the federal government. This year, the Ontario Federation of Labour will be joining community groups and Aboriginal and First Nations advocates in the Shannen's Dream campaign to promote the right to education for First Nations children.

"Parents across the country should be outraged by the learning conditions in so many First Nations communities. Without proper classrooms, libraries and the most basic educational facilities, children cannot succeed at

learning," said Terry Downey, OFL Executive Vice-President. "No parent would accept these conditions for their own children, so we need to speak out to ensure the right of every child to a quality education is a reality, not a dream."

On March 21, Ontario workers will be reflecting not just on their accomplishments, but on the work that is still required to achieve real economic and social equity in Canada. Racism is a destructive force that undermines the solidarity that is the pillar of any union's strength. As trade unionists committed to social change, the Ontario Federation of Labour will continue to bring workers together to challenge all of the barriers to a just and equitable society - within the workplace and the community.

The Toronto Star

March 21, 2011 Monday

NEWS; Pg. A8

Poll shows Liberals' education efforts weak

A new poll shows Ontarians are unimpressed with how university education has fared in the hands of the Liberal government.

The survey of 1,800 adults found that nearly half of respondents believed the quality of post-secondary education has stayed the same since Dalton McGuinty took power.

But almost a third of respondents said quality of education had declined in that period, and only 8 per cent said it had improved.

A **Canadian Federation of Students** representative said she wasn't surprised at the results.

"(The government) is going to have to

take a real hard look at the current track that they're on and I hope they take this as an alarm bell for them," said Nora Loreto, spokesperson for the Ontario branch of the CFS.

While the Liberals have increased investment in post-secondary education, Loreto said much of that has gone into keeping up with a booming student population.

Asked to compare the McGuinty's Liberals' performance on post-secondary education to that of the previous Progressive Conservative government, 36 per cent ranked them as about the same, 27 per cent believe they're doing better and 23 per cent believe they're worse.

Kate Allen, Cynthia Vukets with files from The Canadian Press

need relief," said Nora Loreto, a representative of the student union. "We were really hoping for some measures to start reducing the upfront cost of our tuition fees."

Mark Langer, president of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, says he's concerned about the quality of education given the high ratio of students to instructors in Ontario schools.

"The budget does a lot to provide spaces for students. It does absolutely nothing for getting people to teach those students," Langer said.

Literacy and basic skills programs for adults will get \$44 million in funding while \$22.5 million will go to helping students find summer jobs this coming fiscal year.

While education and health care were beneficiaries in the budget, the Liberals looked to its courtrooms and jails to save money.

The construction of the Toronto West courthouse will be cancelled, saving about \$181 million over three years.

The government also said it will be closing underutilized jails in Owen Sound, Walkerton and Sarnia and partially closing the Toronto West Detention Centre.

Inmates will be moved to the province's newer mega jails.

New Democrat Leader Andrea Horwath says cancelling the construction of the new courthouse will place additional stress on

a justice system that is already "strapped."

"We see cases being thrown out of court because they can't get through fast enough," Horwath said. "To scrap this plan completely, when we know there's already significant pressure in the courts to get cases heard, that's extremely problematic."

Duncan said the province has to carefully weigh its priorities.

"Our priorities are health care and education," Duncan said. "We chose this year to invest in more post-secondary spaces, we chose to invest in children's mental health programs and we've chosen to build new, more efficient jails that will require the closure of some existing jails."

24 Hours

March 29, 2011 Tuesday TORONTO EDITION

NEWS; Pg. 3

BUDGET SET TO ADD 60,000 STUDENT SPOTS **FINANCE MINISTER VOWS TO PRESERVE EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE**

ANTONELLA ARTUSO,
QMI AGENCY

Ontario will fund an extra 60,000 post-secondary student spaces over the next five years.

"We want our workers to be the smartest, most capable and creative workers anywhere," Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan said Monday. "It's penny wise and pound foolish if you undermine the quality of post-secondary education in this province."

The government will put an extra \$64 million into colleges and universities, rising to just over \$300 million as the additional spaces are phased in by 2015-16.

The economy depends on a well-educated work force to attract business investment, said Duncan, who will unveil his budget Tuesday.

Post-secondary graduates tend to have better job prospects and are less likely to need government financial supports, Duncan said.

However, Tory MPP Jim Wilson accused Duncan of over hyping an announcement that governments routinely make without fanfare.

"This is simply announcing the spaces he has to create because he has the highest student unemployment in Canada," Wilson said. "I think it's a non-announcement. I don't think any political party today in Ontario is contemplating leaving students on the street."

NDP MPP Rosario Marchese said the province still spends the least per capita on post secondary education of any province.

Nora Loreto, of the **Canadian Federation of Students**-Ontario, said the new positions are welcome and hopes it is a sign that other important student priorities will be addressed in Tuesday's budget.

"The real question is when will we get relief, when will they start to target our tuition fees and student debt?" Loreto said.

The Canadian Press

March 29, 2011 Tuesday

Liberals \$1 billion learning passport isn't a ticket to more cash for students

STEPHANIE LEVITZ, CP

OTTAWA _ The Liberals are calling it a "learning passport," but the plan to give students grants for post-secondary education doesn't necessarily mean a ticket for more cash.

The \$1-billion program announced by the party on Tuesday would see high school students who go on to higher education receive \$1,000 a year, for up to four years.

The money would be funnelled directly into registered education savings programs and students who meet the low-income threshold for those plans would receive \$1,500 a year.

"This is the kind of investment in education which is a game-changer for our country," Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff said, standing before a crop of college students from the Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning in Toronto on Tuesday.

"It's a billion dollars of new money to make us the best-educated society on the planet."

The \$1-billion annual cost is based on estimates that roughly a million students attend college or university each year; if each student gets \$1,000, it works out to about \$1 billion.

Statistics Canada says average annual tuition in the country is \$5,138.

The Liberal plan is a meaningful contribution towards easing the crushing burden of student debt, because it is money that doesn't have to be repaid, said David Molenhuis, national director of the **Canadian Federation of Students**.

But there's a but.

"We need to see the details on exactly how this will work," said Molenhuis.

How much a student has in RESPs will affect how much they are eligible for in other forms of federal or provincial student assistance.

The extra thousand dollars a year could result in students getting less out of those other loan programs.

The Liberals say the plan is on top of the existing tuition tax credit, Canada Student Loans Program and the Canada Student Grants program.

"For students with loans, the learning passport will allow all or part of that loan to be replaced by our new grant which means same amount of money without having to pay it back," a statement from the party said.

Put another way, while the money will help ease the debt burden of students, as the RESP money is non-repayable, it doesn't actually give them more money for school.

The passport will help students who've already maxed out their borrowing limits, the party said.

The student loans program has been struggling.

Budget documents tabled in February showed that the it needed an injection of \$149.5 million to cover writeoffs of more than 60,000 unanticipated defaults.

At the same time, the program said it needed an extra \$311.2 million to take care of higher demand for the loans, just as repayments decline.

Molenhuis said the student grants program gives out about \$570 million in non-repayable grants.

"To leave that in place and add a billion more for non-repayable assistance, I think that's a much better presentation of the numbers we need to be discussing," he said.

"We're reaching a breaking point. We are on the verge of bankrupting a generation."

The Liberals plan to pay for the program through a combination of cancelling the corporate tax cuts and getting rid of two existing education-related tax credits.

Combined, the textbook and education tax credits put around \$240 million back in students' pockets, once they are earning enough income to claim them.

"It takes, for some people, years to be able to access them, so it's something of a back-ended measure to provide assistance through tax credits when we could be delivering this aid up front," said Molenhuis.

"Delivering assistance on the front-end is a much better way to ease the pressures on the pocketbook and give people the money they need to push them through the financial barriers that have been erected in the system."

The other wrinkle in the system is that tuition fees aren't the purview of the federal government.

"It's possible that provinces would use this as an opportunity to increase tuition fees," said Paul Cappon, the president and CEO of the Canadian Council on Learning.

"I don't think they will, but what you'd like to see is some agreement between the federal government and the provinces that if a policy like this was put in place, it wouldn't be eroded immediately eroded by higher tuition fees."

The Canadian Press

March 29, 2011 Tuesday

Ontario budget includes funding for mental health, more post-secondary spaces

ALEXANDRA POSADZKI, CP

TORONTO _ There was just a smattering of spending in Ontario's pre-election budget Tuesday with health care and education collecting the lion's share of the money.

The province's financial blueprint was lacking the kind of goodies voters have come to expect in advance of an election, but there were investments in key programs, such as expanded breast cancer screening, post-secondary education and mental health and addiction services.

"We need to find that balance between deficit elimination and making sure we don't lose the gains we've made in education and health care," said Finance Minister Dwight Duncan.

"It is very much about nurses and hospitals, it's very much about schools, it's very much about teachers," he added. "Good schools and good hospitals strengthen our economy by making our people more productive and our business more competitive."

The province, which goes to the polls Oct. 6, pledged \$15 million over the next three years to fund breast cancer screenings for women under 50, using a special pink page in the budget document to highlight the initiative.

Sandra Palmaro, a spokeswoman for the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, said the investment will help save the lives of Ontario women.

"We're happy to see the government making a difference in saving lives," Palmaro said.

Ontario will also launch a mental health and addictions strategy that will cost the province \$93 million a year by 2013-2014.

Ontario's nurses said they're pleased with the investment, but want the program expanded from child and youth to everyone.

"It's significant. It's a step in the right direction," said Doris Grinspun, of the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario.

"We are less impressed with the investment into the new mega jails. That investment is absurd at a time when we have decreased rates of crime and increased rates of poverty," Grinspun added.

The province has set aside \$600 million to \$800 million over three years to help cash-strapped hospitals eliminate their deficits and committed \$100 million a year to an existing program to improve pharmacy services for those covered under the Ontario Drug Benefit Plan.

On the education front, Ontario will create 60,000 more spaces in classrooms at colleges and universities over the next five years. The money will go toward the schools' operating costs, with the province kicking in \$309 million a year by 2013.

The **Canadian Federation of Students** called the investment "somewhat disappointing," saying it does not address the high cost of post-secondary education for students.

"Students need relief," said Nora Loreto, a representative of the student union. "We were really hoping for some measures to start reducing the upfront cost of our tuition fees."

Mark Langer, president of the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, says he's concerned about the quality of education given the high ratio of students to instructors in Ontario schools.

"The budget does a lot to provide spaces for students. It does absolutely nothing for getting people to teach those students," Langer said.

"The government is turning out students like widgets and not really worrying about the quality of the education that they're receiving."

Literacy and basic skills programs for adults will get \$44 million in funding while \$22.5 million will go to helping students find summer jobs this upcoming fiscal year.

While education and health care were beneficiaries in the budget, the Liberals looked to its courtrooms and jails to save money.

The construction of the Toronto West Courthouse will be cancelled, saving about \$181 million over three years.

The government also said it will be closing underutilized jails in Owen Sound, Walkerton and Sarnia and partially closing the Toronto West Detention Centre.

Inmates will be moved to the province's newer mega jails.

New Democrat Leader Andrea Horwath says cancelling the construction of the new courthouse will place additional stress on a justice system that is already "strapped."

"We see cases being thrown out of court because they can't get through fast enough," Horwath said. "To scrap this plan completely, when we know there's already significant pressure in the courts to get cases heard, that's extremely problematic."

Horwath says soaring post-secondary tuition fees and the cancellation of the courthouse are proof that the Liberals don't have a plan.

"After closing breast cancer clinics in London and forcing patients to fight for breast can-

cer treatments, why would anyone believe that they actually have a breast cancer strategy?" Horwath said.

Duncan countered that the province has to carefully weigh its priorities.

"Our priorities are health care and education," Duncan said. "We chose this year to invest in more post-secondary spaces, we chose to invest in children's mental health programs and we've chosen to build new, more efficient jails that will require the closure of some existing jails."

Cornwall Standard Freeholder

March 30, 2011 Wednesday Final Edition

NEWS; Pg. 14

Ignatieff proposes \$1.45B in new education funding

JESSICA MURPHY

OAKVILLE, Ont. -- Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff announced a \$1.45-billion annual investment in post-secondary student assistance on Tuesday.

Dubbed the Canadian Learning Passport, it will offer \$1,000 a year in tax-free, non-repayable assistance for four years to high school students to pay for college or university tuition. That amount is bumped to \$1,500 a year for low-income students. The money will be made available to students at the beginning of each school year.

A family that earns \$36,000 a year or less is considered low-income under the proposed plan. A reduced amount will also be available to part-time students.

Ignatieff made the announcement at Sheridan College in Oakville, located southwest of Toronto.

Ignatieff claims the pledge is "a game changer" that will use an existing vehicle -- registered education savings plans -- to open post-secondary education to low-income families.

"This is to ensure every single Canadian, every single family, gets a shot at the dream," he said.

A student would have to have an

RESP opened in their name, but neither they, nor their families, would have to contribute financially to it to benefit from the proposed program.

Instead, the government would place the notional amount in the RESP account when the student is between 14 and 17 years old so it will be available when they decide to continue their education.

The expiration date on the cash, in line with the current expiration date for RESPs, would be 36 years after the plan is opened.

The party estimates one million students across the country would benefit from the program each year.

Tuition costs vary across the country, from \$2,500 to \$8,000 per year.

The Liberals plan to fund the various policy planks of their campaign by hiking the corporate tax rate back to 18%, or 2010 levels, up from the current 16.5%. They estimate the hike would pump \$6 billion back into federal coffers.

The party would also scrap the education and textbook tax credits to help fund the plan. Getting rid of those credits would free up an estimated \$450 million a year.

The proposal would cost taxpayers \$1.45 billion each year -- \$1 billion in new money added to the cash from the two cancelled tax credits.

The **Canadian Federation of Students** raised concerns the financial assistance would be eroded over time because of rising tuition costs.

"Financial aid is only half the equation," said David Molenhuis, the federation's national chairman. "Tuition fees in most provinces are increasing many times faster than the rate of inflation."

Existing grants and loans systems -- the tuition tax credit, the Canada Student Loans Program, and the Canada Student Grants Program -- would remain in place.

Current students would also be able to benefit from the Liberals' plan through a transition program.

Sheridan College accounting student Natercia Cordeiro, who works almost full time to fund her education, said any money is welcome, but she needs to see the full Liberal platform before making up her mind.

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GRAPHIC: Michael Ignatieff

Edmonton Sun

March 30, 2011 Wednesday FINAL EDITION

NEWS; Pg. 5

Liberals' \$1.45B learning proposal

JESSICA MURPHY,
PARLIAMENTARY
BUREAU

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at the dream," he said.

A student would have to have an RESP opened in their name, but neither they, nor their families, would have to contribute financially to benefit from the proposed program.

Instead, the government would place the notional amount in the RESP account so it will be available when they decide to continue their education.

Tuition costs vary across the country, between \$2,500 and \$8,000 per year.

The Liberals plan to fund their platform policies by hiking the corporate tax rate back up to 18%, or 2010 levels, up from the current 16.5%. They estimate the hike would pump \$6 billion back into federal coffers.

The party would also scrap the education and textbook tax credits to help fund the plan. The Liberals say the credits wouldn't be missed because students

would get this new cash up front.

The **Canadian Federation of Students** raised concerns the financial assistance would be eroded over time because of rising tuition costs.

The Tories argue their proposed 2011 budget offers a series of options for students, including increasing eligibility for loans for part-time students.

Existing federal grant and loan systems would remain in place.

The Liberals said a small number of students would see a cut in the student loan amounts they're eligible for if the policy is introduced. Grants wouldn't be affected.

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GRAPHIC: photo of MICHAEL IGNATIEFF Game changer

The Ottawa Sun

March 30, 2011 Wednesday FINAL EDITION

NEWS; Pg. 5

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Waterloo Region Record

March 30, 2011 Wednesday Final Edition

NEWS; Pg. A5

Health care, education among winners in Ontario budget

By Alexandra Posadzki,
The Canadian Press
TORONTO

There was just a smattering of spending in Ontario's pre-election budget Tuesday with health care and education collecting the lion's share of the money.

The province's financial blueprint lacked the kind of goodies voters have come to expect in advance of an election, but there were investments in key programs, such as expanded breast cancer screening, post-secondary education and mental health and addiction services.

"We need to find that balance between deficit elimination and making sure we don't lose the gains we've made in education and health care," said Finance Minister Dwight Duncan.

"It is very much about nurses and hospitals, it's very much about schools, it's very much about teachers," he added. "Good schools and good hospitals strengthen our

economy by making our people more productive and our business more competitive."

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"We are less impressed with the investment into the new mega jails. That investment is absurd at a time when we have decreased rates of crime and increased rates of poverty," Grinspun added.

The province has set aside \$600 million to \$800 million over three years to help cash-strapped hospitals eliminate their deficits and committed \$100 million a year to an existing program to improve pharmacy services for those covered under the Ontario Drug Benefit Plan.

On the education front, Ontario will create 60,000 more spaces in classrooms at colleges and universities over the next five years. The money will go toward the schools' operating costs, with the province kicking in \$309 million a year by 2013.

The **Canadian Federation of Students** called the investment "somewhat disappointing," saying it does not address the high cost of post-secondary education for students. "Students

The Brockville Recorder and Times

March 30, 2011 Wednesday FINAL EDITION

NEWS; Pg. A6

Ignatieff proposes \$1.45B in new education funding PROMISES: Grits would contribute to RESPs

JESSICA MURPHY
PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU

OAKVILLE, Ont. -- Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff announced a \$1.45-billion annual investment in post-secondary student assistance on Tuesday.

Dubbed the Canadian Learning Passport, it will offer \$1,000 a year in tax-free, non-repayable assistance for four years to high school students to pay for college or university tuition. That amount is bumped to \$1,500 a year for low-income students. The money will be made available to students at the beginning of each school year.

A family that earns \$36,000 a year or less is considered low-income under the proposed plan. A reduced amount will also be available to part-time students.

Ignatieff made the announcement at Sheridan College in Oakville, located southwest of Toronto.

Ignatieff claims the pledge is "a game changer" that will use an existing vehicle -- registered education savings plans -- to open post-secondary education to low-income families.

"This is to ensure every single Canadian, every single family, gets a shot at the dream," he said.

A student would have to have an

RESP opened in their name, but neither they, nor their families, would have to contribute financially to it to benefit from the proposed program.

Instead, the government would place the notional amount in the RESP account when the student is between 14 and 17 years old so it will be available when they decide to continue their education.

The expiration date on the cash, in line with the current expiration date for RESPs, would be 36 years after the plan is opened.

The party estimates one million students across the country would benefit from the program each year.

Tuition costs vary across the country, from \$2,500 to \$8,000 per year.

The Liberals plan to fund the various policy planks of their campaign by hiking the corporate tax rate back to 18%, or 2010 levels, up from the current 16.5%. They estimate the hike would pump \$6 billion back into federal coffers.

The party would also scrap the education and textbook tax credits to help fund the plan. Getting rid of those credits would free up an estimated \$450 million a year.

The proposal would cost taxpayers

\$1.45 billion each year -- \$1 billion in new money added to the cash from the two cancelled tax credits.

The **Canadian Federation of Students** raised concerns the financial assistance would be eroded over time because of rising tuition costs.

"Financial aid is only half the equation," said David Molenhuis, the federation's national chairman. "Tuition fees in most provinces are increasing many times faster than the rate of inflation."

Existing grants and loans systems -- the tuition tax credit, the Canada Student Loans Program, and the Canada Student Grants Program -- would remain in place.

Current students would also be able to benefit from the Liberals' plan through a transition program.

Sheridan College accounting student Natercia Cordeiro, who works almost full time to fund her education, said any money is welcome, but she needs to see the full Liberal platform before making up her mind.

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GRAPHIC: photo of Michael Ignatieff

Calgary Sun

March 30, 2011 Wednesday FINAL EDITION

NEWS; Pg. 22

Liberals' \$1.45B learning proposal

JESSICA MURPHY,
PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU

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dream," he said.

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Instead, the government would place the notional amount in the RESP account so it will be available when they decide to continue their education.

Tuition costs vary across the country, between \$2,500 and \$8,000 per year.

The Liberals plan to fund their platform policies by hiking the corporate tax rate back up to 18%, or 2010 levels, up from the current 16.5%. They estimate the hike would pump \$6 billion back into federal coffers.

The party would also scrap the education and textbook tax credits to help fund the plan. The Liberals say the credits wouldn't be missed

because students would get this new cash up front.

The **Canadian Federation of Students** raised concerns the financial assistance would be eroded over time because of rising tuition costs.

The Tories argue their proposed 2011 budget offers a series of options for students, including increasing eligibility for loans for part-time students.

Existing federal grant and loan systems would remain in place.

The Liberals said a small number of students would see a cut in the student loan amounts they're eligible for if the policy is introduced. Grants wouldn't be affected.

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GRAPHIC: photo of MICHAEL IGNATIEFF Game changer

Guelph Mercury

April 1, 2011 Friday Final Edition

EDITORIAL; Pg. A11

Liberal learning plan has wrinkle

Stephanie Levitz
OTTAWA

The Liberals are calling it a "learning passport," but the plan to give students grants for post-secondary education doesn't necessarily mean a ticket for more cash.

The \$1-billion program announced by the party on Tuesday would see high school students who go on to higher education receive \$1,000 a year, for up to four years.

The money would be funnelled directly into registered education savings programs and students who meet the low-income threshold for those plans would receive \$1,500 a year.

"This is the kind of investment in education which is a game-changer for our country," Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff said, standing before a crop of college students from the Sheridan Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning in Toronto on Tuesday.

"It's a billion dollars of new money to make us the best-educated society on the planet."

The \$1-billion annual cost is based on estimates that roughly a million students attend college or university each year; if each student gets \$1,000, it works out to about \$1 billion.

Statistics Canada says average annual tuition in the country is \$5,138.

The Liberal plan is a meaningful contribution toward easing the crushing burden of student debt, because it is money that doesn't have to be repaid, said David Molenhuis, national director of the **Canadian Federation of Students**.

But there's a but.

"We need to see the details on exactly how this will work," Molenhuis said.

How much a student has in registered education savings plans will affect how much they are eligible for in other forms of federal or provincial student

assistance.

The extra thousand dollars a year could result in students getting less out of those other loan programs.

The Liberals say the plan is on top of the existing tuition tax credit, Canada Student Loans Program and the Canada Student Grants program.

"For students with loans, the learning passport will allow all or part of that loan to be replaced by our new grant which means the same amount of money without having to pay it back," a statement from the party said.

Put another way, while the money will help ease the debt burden of students, as the registered education savings plan money is nonrepayable, it doesn't actually give them more money for school.

The passport will help students who've already maxed out their borrowing limits, the party said.

The student loans program has been struggling.

Budget documents tabled in February showed that it needed an injection of \$149.5 million to cover writeoffs of more than 60,000 unanticipated defaults.

At the same time, the program said it needed an extra \$311.2 million to take care of higher demand for the loans, just as repayments decline.

Molenhuis said the student grants program gives out about \$570 million in non-repayable grants.

"To leave that in place and add a billion more for non-repayable assistance, I think that's a much better presentation of the numbers we need to be discussing," he said.

"We're reaching a breaking point. We are on the verge of bankrupting a generation."

The Liberals plan to pay

for the program through a combination of cancelling the corporate tax cuts and getting rid of two existing education-related tax credits.

Combined, the textbook and education tax credits put around \$240 million back in students' pockets, once they are earning enough income to claim them.

"It takes, for some people, years to be able to access them, so it's something of a back-ended measure to provide assistance through tax credits when we could be delivering this aid up front," Molenhuis said.

"Delivering assistance on the front-end is a much better way to ease the pressures on the pocket-book and give people the money they need to push them through the financial barriers that have been erected in the system."

The other wrinkle in the

system is that tuition fees aren't the purview of the federal government.

"It's possible that provinces would use this as an opportunity to increase tuition fees," said Paul Cappon, the president and CEO of the Canadian Council on Learning.

"I don't think they will, but what you'd like to see is some agreement between the federal government and the provinces that if a policy like this was put in place, it wouldn't be eroded immediately by higher tuition fees."

GRAPHIC: Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff and Oakville candidate Max Khan speak to students on Tuesday at Sheridan College in Oakville. Ignatieff announced his party's learning passport proposal. The Canadian Press

The Brandon Sun

April 2, 2011 Saturday

LOCAL

Students upset by judge's comments organize rally

By Carol Sanders

WINNIPEG -- Critics of a judge's handling of a rape case in Thompson six weeks ago say his controversial comments during sentencing and the ensuing fallout should be a federal election issue.

"Ending rape is an election issue," said one of the signs carried by protesters outside the downtown Law Courts building Friday.

It was the second time protesters paraded there over Justice Robert Dewar's comments suggesting a rape victim's attire and flirtatious behaviour were partly to blame for the attack, which involved forced intercourse. The judge called the attacker, Kenneth Rhodes, a "clumsy Don Juan" and noted the victim wore a tube top, high heels and plenty of makeup. He gave the man a conditional sentence of two years - meaning no jail time -- rejecting a Crown suggestion of at least three years behind bars.

Friday's rally was held to ex-

press outrage at Dewar's remarks and to call out federal candidates on where they stand on women's rights, organizers said, noting it is also the start of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

"The rally is about Dewar still not being held responsible for his comments," said Liz Carlyle of the **Canadian Federation of Students**.

She said members of the student-funded organization are pressing the issue because women's groups have lost their government funding to organize and advocate for women's rights.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women used to be a powerful voice until it was gutted after years of successive governments hacking away at its funding, Carlyle said.

Without the feminist watchdog organization speaking out for women, men and members of the justice system seem to get away with blaming the victims of sexual assaults, she said.

"Why do so many men have complete ignorance that consent is required?"

The outrage isn't just in Winnipeg.

In Toronto on Sunday, protesters are holding a "Slut-Walk" after a police officer at a safety forum said women shouldn't dress like "sluts" if they don't want to be victimized.

Meanwhile, the man whose conditional sentence for the rape conviction filed an appeal asking the province's highest court to overturn his sexual assault verdict. He claims the guilty finding by Dewar "was unreasonable and unsupported by the evidence."

"The judge erred in law in misapplying the test for honest but mistaken belief in consent," the appeal said.

The Canadian Judicial Council is investigating Dewar's handling of the case. In the meantime, Dewar has agreed not to preside over cases of a sexual nature.

Winnipeg Free Press

April 2, 2011 Saturday

Pg. A.13 ISSN: 0828-1785

Protesters highlight rape issue

Sanders, Carol

Demand politicians address Manitoba judge's sentencing comments

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The judge called the attacker, Kenneth Rhodes, a "clumsy Don Juan" and noted the victim wore a tube top, high heels and plenty of makeup. He gave the man a conditional sentence of two years -- meaning no jail time -- rejecting a Crown suggestion of at least three years behind bars.

That prompted a rally last month outside the Winnipeg courthouse.

On Friday, another rally was held to express outrage at Dewar's remarks and to call out federal candidates on where they stand on women's rights, organizers said.

"The rally is about Dewar still not being held responsible for his comments," said Liz Carlyle with the **Canadian Federation of Students**. She said members of the student-funded organization are pressing the issue because women's groups have lost their government funding to organize and advocate for women's rights.

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The outrage isn't just in Winnipeg. In Toronto on Sunday, protesters are holding a "SlutWalk" after a police officer at a safety forum said women shouldn't

dress like "sluts" if they don't want to be victimized.

In Winnipeg Friday, students who belong to a Facebook group held the rally outside the Law Courts because it's election time and the start of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

They want election candidates to speak out against the judge's comments and support funding for programs that help sexual assault victims and monitor the courts, said Carlyle.

Meanwhile, the man whose conditional sentence for the rape conviction filed an appeal asking the province's highest court to overturn his sexual assault verdict.

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The Canadian Judicial Council is investigating Dewar's handling of the case. In the meantime, Dewar has agreed not to preside over cases of a sexual nature.

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Indigenous Peoples Issues and Resources

April 4, 2011 Monday

BLOG POST

Canada: Liberal Party Aboriginal Education Plan Receives Students' Support

Apr. 4, 2011 (Indigenous People's Issues Today delivered by Newstex) -- Canada: Liberal Party Aboriginal Education Plan Receives Students' Support The Aboriginal education plan outlined by the Liberal Party today is a necessary commitment to Aboriginal communities across Canada. The **Canadian Federation of Students** has pressured the federal government to meet its Treaty obligations and increase financial support for Aboriginal post-secondary education.

"This plan represents a very significant commitment to closing the participation gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians," said David Molenhuis, Chairperson of the **Canadian Federation of Students**. "It will reduce student debt and open doors to university and college education for thousands of Aboriginal learners." In addition to lifting the two per cent cap on the Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP), Michael Ignatieff announced that, if elected, the Liberal Party would: add \$100 million to PSSSP block funding; create a Métis national scholarship; and provide permanent funding for the First Nations University of Canada. Between 1996 and 2006, the Aboriginal population in Canada grew by 45 per cent. However, funding increases to the Post-Secondary Student Support Program

(PSSSP), the main funding mechanism for Aboriginal students, have been capped at two per cent. When the cap was implemented in 1996, the PSSSP funded approximately 27,000 students. As a result of population growth, tuition fee increases, and inflation, by 2009 the PSSSP funded only 23,000 students. Additionally, the federal government currently funds Status Indian and Inuit peoples only, leaving non-Status and Métis people without dedicated support. "While the federal government has neglected its Treaty obligations for many years, overcoming barriers to post-secondary education will require more than funding increases," said Cassandra Opikokew, Chairperson of the National Aboriginal Caucus of the **Canadian Federation of Students**. "The Liberal Aboriginal Education Plan would provide much needed support to thousands of students and make a substantial contribution to breaking the cycle of poverty." Founded in 1981, the **Canadian Federation of Students** is Canada's largest student organization, uniting over one-half million students from all ten provinces. The National Aboriginal Caucus of the **Canadian Federation of Students** is the national voice of Aboriginal students at universities and colleges in Canada. Source: **Canadian Federation of Students**

Canwest News Service

April 4, 2011 Monday

Liberal veteran education promise could hit roadblocks: experts.

Carmen Chai, Postmedia News

Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff highlighted his party's "vets not jets" promise Monday with a multi-million dollar promise to help Canadian Forces veterans get back to school. The Liberals' Veterans Learning Benefit would cover expenses from tuition, books, accommodations and living expenses for up to four years of post-secondary education or technical training after completing their service. It would apply to any serving member or future member of the Canadian Forces and even extends to spouses if the veteran is unable to use the benefit, the party's platform shows.

The Liberals say that based on current projections, the program would cost about \$120 million over the first two years of a Liberal government.

How does it differ from the current Conservative plan?

The current plan is aimed at those entering the service, not leaving it. Canadians who sign up with the Canadian Forces through the current Regular Force Officer Training Plan receive free university tuition, books and academic equipment, including a salary with benefits. The students can attend the Royal Military College in Kingston, Ont., or an approved Canadian university, according to the Canadian Forces website. Graduates are guaranteed a job, but they must serve between three and four years with the military in return for this free education. The government also offers a Vocational Rehabilitation program where veterans are assessed by experts who decide what the best options are for a veteran considering school. Some costs, from tuition, transportation and certain fees are covered.

The Liberal promise, on the other hand, offers veterans - those who have already served - eligibility for the Learning Benefit. Douglas Bland, a Queen's University professor and chair of the school's defence management studies, says it would be the first measure to help veterans with education since the Second World War.

How many veterans could it help?

There are currently about 58,000 veterans, according to 2010-11 fiscal year spending estimates for Veteran Affairs. This is expected to increase to 70,000 veterans by 2013 as soldiers return from Afghan missions. David Molenhuis, national chair of the **Canadian Federation of Students**, said that an average year of education, ancillary fees, accommodation and textbooks would cost a student \$15,000. Four years of education would come with a \$60,000 price tag according to his estimates. Doing the math, about 2,000 veterans could take advantage of the Liberal promise.

If veterans apply and are accepted into specialized programs, tuition fees would be higher and the number of veterans helped would be lower.

Can schools handle the potential extra capacity?

Molenhuis says the Harper government has scaled back funding social sciences and the arts to post-secondary institutions in order to pour money into applied sciences from health studies to engineering. He said universities and colleges could face some issues if there is high demand for certain programs, depending on what veterans decide to study. But schools have increased their capacity for post-secondary studies, so overall, the system should be able to absorb a high number of undergraduates.

What other issues arise?

Bland, whose research is concentrated on defence policy-making, said that veterans who have been out of school for years could face roadblocks, such as having correct qualifications and competing with younger students.

Bland said it's hard to tell how many veterans already have post-secondary education or technical training. Government officials could not provide this information Monday.

The Canadian Press

April 5, 2011 Tuesday

N.S. tables \$9.3-billion budget with \$389-million deficit in fiscal 2011-12

KEITH DOUCETTE, CP

HALIFAX _ Changes to deal with chronic delays in emergency health care and a set of new initiatives to ease student debt highlighted the Nova Scotia government's 2011-12 budget tabled Tuesday.

The \$9.3-billion spending program included a deficit of \$389.6 million, slightly more than the \$370 million that Finance Minister Graham Steele had recently forecast. Departmental spending was reduced by \$170 million.

Steele said he is sticking to a plan to balance the province's books by 2013.

"Any faster and important public services like health and education would be threatened," Steele said in his budget speech. "The budget slashers say we're not moving fast enough and we say, 'So be it.' "

The government said the deficit, which comes on the heels of a \$447-million surplus for 2010-11, is mainly caused by the province's decision to return to annual funding for universities, which have been allocated \$327 million in the budget.

The government will spend \$30 million on student bursaries and implement a maximum debt cap of \$28,560, which means any money borrowed over that amount during a four-year degree program will be forgiven. The NDP is also continuing a tuition reduction of \$1,283 for Nova Scotia students studying in the province.

"The cap is comparable to those in other jurisdictions and will be a powerful incentive to graduates to stay and build a life in Nova Scotia," said Steele.

The initiative was met with mixed reactions from student groups.

Mark Coffin, executive director of the Alliance of Nova Scotia Student Associations, said the cap was mostly good news, but he was looking for more help before students rack up debt.

"We would have hoped there would be more up-front assistance so that students wouldn't have this fear of debt, said Coffin.

Rebecca Rose, an organizer for the **Canadian Federation of Students**, said she was disappointed in the cap and would have been happier with a reduction in tuition fees.

She also said the large surplus recorded for 2010-11 should be invested in post-secondary education.

"We're talking about a government that while in official opposition strongly supported students in calling for an investment in post-secondary education and a reduction in tuition fees," said Rose.

"Now that they are in government, we see that they've actually completely turned their backs on students and their families."

The government also said it would open at least four new collaborative emergency centres in rural areas at a cost of \$3 million this year in a bid to reduce overcrowding in hospital emergency rooms.

Otherwise, the province intends to hold steady in major areas of expenditure, including health care and education, with \$3.7 billion spent on health, and spending slightly reduced for education at \$1.1 billion.

The education cut translates into \$17.6 million less for school boards this year. School boards and district health authorities are also expected to account for inflationary and salary costs.

Steele defended introducing new programs at a time when further cuts to education and health appear imminent with the government intending to keep spending at current levels into the future.

"Every one of these things (programs) are worthwhile and are needed to respond to conditions as they actually are," said Steele. "But the important thing is that for every new program that we are implementing we are reducing spending somewhere else in order to pay for them."

The budget indicates that government revenues have been steadied by income tax and HST revenue. Last July's two percentage point hike in the HST to 15 per cent resulted in \$237 million for provincial coffers and this year HST revenues are estimated to bring in \$344 million.

Liberal Leader Stephen McNeil said he couldn't trust the government's numbers, given the surprise announcement of such a large surplus just a day before the budget was tabled.

And he said the announcement came only a week after the government's move to increase roughly 1,400 user fees to generate about \$3.4 million in additional revenue.

"This is nothing more than a charade," said McNeil. "Nova Scotians can no more trust the numbers that we saw today than we could trust the one's last year."

He said the government increased taxes to increase spending on new programs ahead of the next election in two years.

Conservative Leader Jamie Baillie said the budget was a sign of a deliberate tax-and-spend agenda.

"To plunge us from surplus into debt, to drive up our debt and to continue to go on with new program spending announcements I think is the wrong direction for our province," said Baillie.

On the tax front, the budget will increase the basic personal exemption by \$250, meaning the amount people have to earn before paying taxes rises to \$8,481 from \$8,231.

That means an estimated 4,300 low-income Nova Scotians won't be paying income tax and those on social assistance will get an extra \$15 a month.

As promised, there will be a half a percentage point drop in the small business tax rate to four per cent, a move that will cost the province nearly \$6 million during the first full year of its implementation in 2012-13.

Leanne Hachey of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business applauded the "tweaking" to personal and small business taxes, but expressed disappointment that there wasn't a long-term tax plan to address the province's competitiveness.

"Where do we want to be as a province in terms of our competitiveness because, clearly, right now our businesses cannot compete in our current tax environment," said Hachey. "We just want a sense of what's coming down the pipe and sadly this budget didn't provide that for us."

Meanwhile, capital spending did not change from a separate budget released last December and includes \$560 million for roads, bridges, schools and health-care facilities. Capital spending includes \$83.6 million for renovations and for new schools in Bedford, Lunenburg and Yarmouth.

There is also \$15 million included for the dredging of Sydney Harbour and \$7.1 million to continue with restorations to the schooner Bluenose II.

There are several new initiatives in the health sector, including \$4.4 million to pay for the degenerative eye drug Lucentis and \$1.5 million to fund nurse practitioners throughout the system. Another \$2.6 million will be spent to replace the emergency room of the Aberdeen Hospital in New Glasgow.

The province will also continue with its goal of cutting the civil service by 10 per cent, cutting 427 jobs through attrition by 2013-14.

The Canadian Press

April 12, 2011 Tuesday

Manitoba loosens purse strings in last budget before fall provincial election

BY CHINTA PUXLEY, CP

WINNIPEG _ Manitoba's NDP government is loosening the purse strings in a pre-election budget that boosts spending on education, child care and municipal infrastructure.

But it is also increasing tobacco taxes to help with a two per cent increase in overall spending. For the second year in a row, smokers can expect to pay 50 cents more for a pack of 25 cigarettes.

The New Democrats changed the law last year to allow the province to run deficits, and the 2011-12 financial blueprint forecasts a \$438- million shortfall on a \$14-billion budget. The province is borrowing \$49 million from its rainy-day fund to partially offset the deficit.

Premier Greg Selinger _ who is facing his first election as leader since Gary Doer stepped down last year to become Canada's ambassador to the United States _ said he is confident taking this budget to the polls Oct. 4.

This is a "family friendly" budget, he said.

"It's a budget that really speaks to the priorities of Manitobans," Selinger said. "They asked us to protect front-line services for health care and education. They asked us to invest in infrastructure. They asked us to do it in a fiscally responsible way. All of those elements are covered in this budget."

Families with kids enrolled in drama, art or other cultural extracurricular activities will be allowed to claim a new tax credit worth up to \$54.

Tuition fee increases are to be capped at the rate of inflation, but universities are to get a five per cent increase in their operating budgets.

Municipalities will also get slightly more cash for infrastructure and transit, with a promise that they will get the equivalent of one per cent of the provincial sales tax in coming years to spend on roads and sewers.

"Sales tax has grown, on average, about seven per cent a year," Selinger said. "So it gives predictable growth in the future and more support to municipalities."

The province is also committed to battling a critical shortage in child care by spending \$4.7 million to add 2,100 spaces and 400 nursery spots this year.

Manitoba's basic personal exemption is also slowly increasing by \$1,000 over four years, starting with \$250 this year.

Finance Minister Rosann Wowchuk said Manitoba has more spending power now because it fared better than expected during the economic downturn.

"We are ahead of where we thought we would be," she said. "We are climbing successfully out of the downturn ... We are on schedule to return to surplus by 2014."

The finance minister said she expects the economy to grow almost three per cent this year to allow the province to restore small increases to education property tax rebates which have been delayed.

The budget also contains money for 66 more police officers and cash for more family doctors.

The opposition is criticizing the NDP for using budget goodies to buy votes. Conservative Leader Hugh McFayden said he's concerned about the ballooning deficit and suspicious about the timing of the spending.

"When you lay out a five-year plan that shows declining deficits and then five months before an election bring out a budget that increases the deficit from last year, it looks as though it's a government focused only on the desperate politics of the coming five months rather than what Manitoba is going to look like in five years," he said.

The budget got a mixed reaction from others. Marilyn Braun-Pollon, vice-president with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, said the budgeted deficits and swelling debt are not sustainable.

"We've seen spending over the last five years increase about 28 per cent," she said. "We believe the Achilles heel continues to be the inability to rein in spending."

But students, who recently lost their tuition freeze, applauded the government's tuition cap and increased funding for universities.

"It's a budget that benefits students as well as universities," said Alana Mackison, chair of the **Canadian Federation of Students** Manitoba. "It's a budget that prioritizes accessibility as well as quality of our post-secondary institutions."

CTV NEWS CHANNEL Television, Inc.

POWER PLAY WITH DON MARTIN

April 15, 2011 Friday

Engaging Youth

DON MARTIN: And we're just going to switch channels slightly here because we're talking about youth and how they're getting involved in this election. Youth represents more than a third of eligible voters, yet turnout's quite dismal usually. We've reached the halfway point in this campaign, so we kind of raised the question of Canada's youth are any more or less engaged than normal. Joining me now is the chair of the Canadian Students Federation, David Molenhuis. And in Montreal, Cameron Fenton, who's director of the Canadian Youth Climate Coalition. Cameron, I want to go to you first on this. Are you sensing anymore engagement by people, say, under the age of 25 than has happened before?

CAMERON FENTON (Canadian Youth Climate Coalition): Well, I think it's pretty clear that there's at least visibly more engagement with what we're seeing with the vote mobs. But at the same time, we're also still seeing that youth and the concerns of young people in Canada are being largely ignored by the politicians. We saw in both debates this week, despite, I mean, despite hundreds of e-mails being sent to the broadcasting consortium calling for questions on climate change, we saw nothing

about that. We saw minimal conversations about things like post-secondary education. The issues that young people care about are still really being ignored. So while we are seeing more young people, at least through the, this vote mob phenomenon, we're also just seeing a continuation of the political, political leaders not taking our concerns into consideration, which is fuelling what, what I guess, many people consider apathy, but I think a lot of young people consider disempowerment.

MARTIN: Okay. I want to go to you on this, David. What's your sense? Students just, I've never heard of students having pep rallies about voting before.

DAVID MOLENHUIS (Canadian Federation of Students): Well, I think, yeah, I mean people are making use of social media absolutely and doing a lot more to show politicians that that they're engaged, absolutely. And I think everything that's being stated by the CYCC is absolutely true. There's little attention paid to our issues. And when they are, they are paying attention to our issues, coming on to campus, we talk about it for a few minutes, and then promises get made, and promises don't get kept. So yeah, I think people are

trying to show more and more displays of just how they're getting involved, and I think this is just one more way that students are doing it. I mean, activists are getting together doing literature drops in and around residences for students who are staying on campus through the summer and going out into the community and to student, student housing around the universities and colleges. So more and more is being done right now to show that, yes, we're here. And we're going to be voting on May 2nd and to despite what the Conservative party is doing, in advance polls, too.

MARTIN: Is it, I mean, this is a generalization, but is it fair to say students generally are not pro-Conservative?

MOLENHUIS: Well, I mean, you could make that argument to be sure, but I think we're focussed on the issues. Absolutely. And regardless of whoever's in power, we're still involved in between elections, too. We want to see, even with the Conservative party, promises that are made, delivered on when they get in power. And we're not seeing that. And that's part of, not apathy, but it's part of growing distrust and resentment when more and more people are being

thrown out of rallies. And there are now grabs for ballot boxes, and in between elections, we're, we're not taken seriously.

MARTIN: Cameron, you, you have a particular interest obviously in climate change and other environment issues. There isn't much about that coming out of any of the parties, is there? Except for perhaps the Greens?

FENTON: Yeah, and I mean, it's really kind of an amazing phenomenon given that it was so central to the 2008 election. And it's really amazing because if there's one thing we can't ignore, it's that the very real implications on our planet. That's one of the things I think is so important that's being ignored and why youth aren't engaging in at least the electoral part of the democratic process. I mean, at the baseline, I think it's, the young people across this country are, refuse to inherit a country and a planet that's in crisis. And that's what we're being promised by our leaders, and the token gestures that they're offering us when it comes to climate change, when it comes to things like post-secondary

education just aren't enough. And this, this constant push to divide things like the environment from the economy by most of the parties is just something that, it's, it's not true and it's not something that we can, it's not a debate we can have putting these two sides to it, if we're actually going to get through this, and we're going to come out of this with a cleaner, a more sustainable and more just world on the other side.

MARTIN: One thing, David, that the Liberals, at least are trying is their learning passport. You know, and that's the only one that stands out in my mind as a real firm and hard commitment from any of the party leaders. That's Liberals. Have you heard anything from any of the other parties that even replicates that in any way?

MOLENHUIS: Well, I think, yes, the learning passport is a billion dollars in new redirected spending for non-repayable assistance, which I think is a very positive development from what's available currently. The New Democratic party is also offering an \$800 million commitment to reducing tuition fees which is,

of course, one of the top concerns of students and their families, and increasing the amount of grants available to students by \$200 million. So both parties, both opposition parties talking in the billions for non-repayable assistance, and, I guess, in the reduction of up front costs. So, that's a pretty positive development. I mean, the Green party is also talking about non-repayable assistance. And then, the Conservative party platform offers some small measures for part-time students. So there's a bit of talk, but really the problem is that we're not, we're not having these conversations in all candidates' debates. We're not doing this enough in the media, talking about these issues. And to, I think that's leading to a lot of people who feel left out of the process. So...

MARTIN: Okay, well, David Molenhuis, thank you very much. Cameron Fenton in Montreal, appreciate your input. Coming up next on "Power Play" we head out of the studio to look for honest election opinion and a decent Italian sandwich. Please stay with us.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

National Post

April 19, 2011 Tuesday National Edition

ISSUES & IDEAS; Pg. A17

Standing up for veterans, students and commuters

In the din of an election campaign, it's hard for so-called "fringe parties" to make their voices heard. This week, the National Post gives smaller parties the chance to tell you what they're all about -and why you might consider giving them your vote

Sinclair Stevens,
National Post

The Progressive Canadian (P.C.) Party believes in being accessible, responsive and accountable to the people of Canada. To that end, our campaign centers on three important issues.

Veterans Our objective is to ensure that the veterans of Canada's wars receive their benefits and health care in a timely fashion. Currently the standard of proof that the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board demand is "prove we should help you." This is wrong, and we would change it.

On the advice of retired Colonel Patrick Stogran, former veterans ombuds-

man, who is a member of our party, a Progressive Canadian government would create a legislated Office of the Veterans Ombudsman. To ensure proper oversight and keep the DVA honest, this office would bridge departmental boundaries and participate in discussions with both the Privy Council Office and the Treasury Board Secretariat on issues that involve veterans.

As Col. Stogran has said, this is only a start. They are positive steps towards destroying the insurance-company culture that fails to support the veterans who have served this country so well. As an additional point, proper funding for the future needs of veterans must be accounted for in conjunction with all military budgets.

Students The P.C. Party deplores the serious underfunding of post-secondary school education at the university and community college level in Canada. If it is right to publicly fund almost 100% of the education of our students up to grade 12,

then it is wrong to force high school graduates to shoulder an average student debt of \$25,000 to obtain their university degree. At present, aggregate student debt stands at \$14-billion.

We therefore endorse, and would implement, the **Canadian Federation of Students'** recommendation to: "Develop and implement a national vision for a high quality and affordable system of post-secondary education. The federal government should, in co-operation with the provinces, implement a federal Post-Secondary Education Act modelled after the principles of the Canada Health Act, accompanied by a dedicated cash transfer with appropriate funding."

Finding funding at the federal level is not a problem, but rather is just a question of priorities. The Harper government proposes to spend \$6bil-

WEDNESDAY

THE MARXIST LENINIST PARTY lion on new pris-

ons and other so-called "tough on crime" items, as well as \$30-billion on questionable new fighter jets. We say: Let's spend this money on the education of our future work force.

Commuters Traffic in Canada is getting worse. Statistics Canada reports the average commuter spends 32 working days a year simply getting to and from work. A recent Toronto Board of Trade report on commuting times in 19 major European and North American cities ranked Toronto dead last, worse than New York, London and even Los Angeles.

These delays have finan-

cial implications. A 2006 Transport Canada study put the annual cost of congestion nationwide, including everyday and "non-recurring" congestion (accidents, road work and so on) at a staggering \$6.7-billion.

Unlike the old-line parties, which are not even addressing this issue, the P.C. Party has a plan to tackle commuter congestion, by facilitating rapid rail transportation across Canada. The Constitution Act in Canada places trains under federal jurisdiction. A P.C. government would use this power to reduce Canadian commute times by harnessing rapid train travel for Cana-

dians from coast to coast to coast. This would make Canadians more productive, help the environment and save the economy - and every commuter - significant dollars.

The P.C. Party's goal is to fill "the space on the political spectrum, where most Canadians are." If you believe in an accessible, responsive and accountable government, which addresses the issues that matter to you, we ask for your vote in this election.

- Sinclair Stevens is the leader of the Progressive Canadian Party, progressivecanadian.ca

Xinhua General News Service

April 29, 2011 Friday

WORLD NEWS; Political

Polls shows education key factor in Canadian election

TORONTO April 29

Nearly half of Canadians say it is important that the political party they support makes post-secondary education a priority, according to a new poll released on Friday, which was conducted by Harris/Decima for the **Canadian Federation of Students** and Canadian Association of University Teachers.

"Rapidly rising tuition fees and record-high levels of student debt are alarming to most Canadians," said David Molenhuis, National Chairperson of the **Canadian Federation of Students**, adding that political parties that address these issues stand to benefit on election day.

Forty-eight percent of those surveyed said post-secondary education was a priority for them personally, with nearly a third (about 31 percent) indicating it was a very

high priority. Just eight percent said universities and colleges were not an important issue in the election.

"A number of Canadians will be looking closely at the party platforms this weekend to see who has the best plan for colleges and universities," added Penni Stewart, president of the Canadian Association of University Teachers.

The random national telephone survey included interviews with 2,019 adult Canadians from April 14 to 27. The margin of error is plus or minus 2.2 percent.

The **Canadian Federation of Students** is Canada's largest student organization, uniting more than half a million students in all ten provinces. The **Canadian Federation of Students** and its predecessor organizations have represented students in Canada since 1927.

The Canadian Press

May 10, 2011 Tuesday

NDP is tops with young voters in all regions except Alberta: poll

HEATHER SCOFFIELD, CP

OTTAWA _ A new poll suggests the NDP is the hands-down favourite among an increasingly mobilized youth _ even though the party did not make a concerted appeal to young voters during the election campaign.

The two-part Internet poll of 18-to-24-year-olds was conducted for the Historical Dominion Institute early in the campaign and then right after the voting.

It suggests that support for the NDP grew by leaps and bounds during the campaign in every region of the country except Alberta.

"A lot of young people gravitated to Jack Layton," said Jeremy Diamond, director of the institute. "It's less to do with policy and platform and more to do with how engaging he is as a person."

The respondents, mainly students, said the NDP spoke to them most clearly on the issues they cared about _ health care and the environment.

While conventional wisdom holds that students generally have a soft spot for the NDP, polling at the start of the campaign showed the Conservatives slightly in the lead, almost tied with the Liberals, and the NDP in third.

By election day, however, the NDP claimed 44 per cent of the survey group's votes _ 20 percentage points more than the Conservatives.

From the get-go, the New Democrats planned to expand their appeal beyond their traditional base. But they didn't specifically target youth. Rather, they stressed help for seniors in poverty and focused on building support among people in their 30s and 40s.

Their pitch was directed at those who were uncertain about how to care for both aging parents and growing children, with the costs of running a household on the upswing.

The newfound enthusiasm among youth for politics is reflected in the NDP caucus. The average age for an MP in the previous Parliament was 54 and there were just two MPs under 30. But the average age of the new NDP caucus is 46, with 20 MPs under the age of 30 _ mostly from Quebec.

During the campaign, the **Canadian Federation of Students** spoke up in favour of the NDP's platform on student debt and support for post-secondary education.

And the party has always been respected by youth for its focus on social policy, said Rebecca Blaikie, a young candidate who ran unsuccessfully in Manitoba.

"Youth are concerned about social justice and we're the only ones that ever talk about social justice," she said.

But the survey suggests that this wasn't usually a deciding factor for young voters. Instead, health, the environment, the economy and jobs were top of mind for them.

Plus, with traditional support for the Liberals and the Bloc Quebecois in flux toward the end of the campaign, there were signs that the youth vote could actually make a difference and change the makeup of the House of Commons, Diamond suggested.

"There was a lot of interest in the campaign toward the end, on how things can possibly change in Canada," he said.

Respondents said that while the election outcome makes them less confident about the way democracy works in Canada, it also left them more interested and engaged in politics.

About 58 per cent of those polled after election day said they believed getting involved in politics is a good way to make a difference.

Voter turnout among youth has been notoriously low. In 2008, just 37.4 per cent of eligible voters aged 18 to 25 cast a ballot, Elections Canada said. In 2006, youth turnout was 43.8 per cent, while in 2004, it was 37 per cent.

The Historica-Dominion poll can't determine what young voter turnout was on May 2 and Elections Canada's results are still several months away.

The poll showed that youth were thinking more about politics than before, and the signs hint at an increase, said Diamond.

"That's a really positive message."

While many a commentator has wondered aloud if youth turnout will rise because of social media, the poll found that only three per cent said they joined Twitter to follow the election.

The Internet survey of 814 people between the ages 18 and 24 was conducted by the Innovative Research Group early in the campaign and then again between May 3 and May 8.

It is considered to have an estimated margin of error of 3.4 percentage points plus or minus, but since it was conducted online, it's impossible to say precisely how exact the poll is.

The full poll results will be available at www.historica-dominion.ca
