

Black students slam security with ID on their chests

by Jeannine Amber

One student is filing complaints and several others are organizing a public campaign after an incident Monday involving York Security and three Black students on campus.

Dwayne Morgan said he and two other students were talking at the rail on the Student Centre's third floor when Security approached them and demanded identification, with no other explanation but that the students looked "young."

When the students refused ("on principle," Morgan explained), the officers called in a back-up team.

Elissa Horscroft, vice-president for equality at the York student federation, said the incident was like "security was setting up an apartheid state at York. There was absolutely no reason for the student to have his card checked and that leads me to one obvious conclusion: they were Black, they were male and, in security's eyes, threatening."

To direct other students' attention to the harassment, several students

are wearing their I.D. cards on strings around their necks.

Roger Young, one of the organizers, said they just want to make sure people are aware of the situation.

"We are making flyers stating what happened and reasons why people should be concerned."

Another student working on the campaign, Jacen Brathwaite, added, "This could extend not only to Black people but to homosexual people, or people with long hair. It's not only a Black thing."

"What if I was walking to my car late at night and an officer asked for my I.D., and no one was around and the situation got out of hand?" questioned Young.

As Morgan asked, "Of the hundred people on the landing, why were we singled out? I guess that's the question."

Rob Castle, general manager of the Student Centre, said he approached the officers and told them he didn't think their behaviour was appropriate. Castle said he suggested the students were being uncooperative because they were offended.

"I would be offended too if I were asked for I.D. without a cause," said

Castle.

According to Castle, the university has a policy of being accessible to the general public. Security normally gets involved only "if the non-community member is causing a problem, but in this case there was nothing going on," he said.

Castle said he has never had problems with non-students in the building during the day.

Don Magee, York Security direc-

tor, said the officer who questioned the students acted inappropriately.

"He was entirely wrong in the action he took. The officer's supervisor believes he was wrong also," Magee said.

Magee said he spoke to the officer, who recognized he was wrong.

Magee said that other than the verbal reprimand he didn't feel the officer should be disciplined. "He's a good officer," said Magee.

The officers had received training in race relations, Magee said. He said York's race and ethnic relations officer Chet Singh gave them a two-hour seminar.

But Singh corrected, "I didn't do training. I did a seminar about the Race and Ethnic Relations Centre."

Singh said he will be working with security in the future to design an "appropriate" program for educating officers on race issues.

"State of emergency" caled draconian

by Jennifer Lim

Activist groups are outraged after the university declared a "temporary state of emergency" in a move to gain tighter control over student behaviour.

In January York President Harry Arthurs amended Presidential Regulation number two, which outlines a code of conduct and behaviour to which all York students must adhere.

Prior to the amendment, a student accused of contravening the code of conduct would go through a tribunal process. The emergency order now allows the vice president of student affairs to suspend a student without a tribunal hearing, if the student's conduct is deemed to be "potentially or actually violent."

According to Arthurs, "there have been a number of harassment incidents and I was under heavy pressure by the York Federation of Students, staff and colleges" to make the amendment.

Members of the YFS denied this. "He was heavy pressure from us to deal with some incidents," Elissa Horscroft, vice president of equality and social affairs said, "but not in such an authoritarian fashion. In fact, YFS completely disagrees with the way this was handled."

Beth Hopkins, vice president of

student affairs, agreed with Arthurs. "The amendment was imposed partly because the university has seen an increase in disruptive behaviour by students."

But neither Arthurs nor Hopkins would cite any of the "disruptive" or "harassment" incidents which motivated the amendment.

According to Arthurs, such emergency situations require decisions "to be exercised immediately, and there are provisions subsequently made [in the amendment] for decisions to be reviewed."

Hopkins indicated that there had been several incidents last November and December which heightened the need for such measures. According to Hopkins the information is "confidential."

Livingston Weddburn, a member of the Pan-African Law Society, dismissed the excuse of confidentiality.

"There is no accountability for this drastic action," said Weddburn. "It is unprecedented to put the entire university in a state of emergency... this act is in breach of every fundamental democratic principle."

According to the new regulations, a student may be removed from campus, prevented from entering certain classes or speaking to certain

individuals, moved from residence, or asked to agree to medical or psychiatric assessment — all without a formal hearing.

Hopkins said that the presidential regulation prior to the amendment was "inadequate."

According to Hopkins the amendment allows the university "to provide the necessary legal actions and immediate response to an emergency situation."

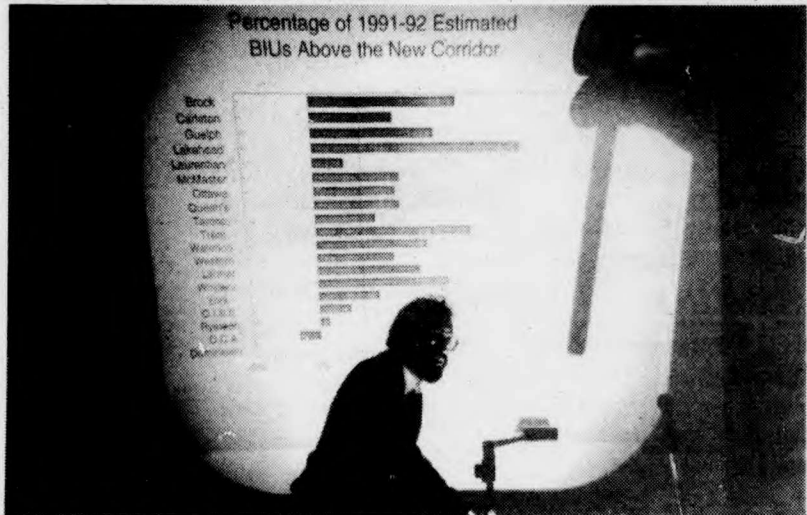
But according to Weddburn the arbitrary nature of the decision is highly problematic. "In a state of emergency, every individual's rights are suspended by the whims and fancy of an individual who holds the power to decide."

Weddburn also said the students most vulnerable are "the most politically active students of whom [the university] does not approve."

A task force committee currently working on a permanent amendment to the regulation has until the end of April to propose an alternative amendment.

According to Horscroft, who sits on the committee, President Arthurs has the authority to decide if this amendment stands after the deadline.

A copy of the amendment was printed in the Jan. 22 issue of the Excalibur.



Follow the bouncing ball: Stephen Feinberg, York's vice president of academic affairs, tries to explain to the Senate how frugal York is with its tuition dollars. Feinberg tried to prove we should keep the student population down. Photo: Doug Saunders

Winter-Summer cuts decried

by Doug Saunders

A last-ditch attempt by student and labour representatives to rescue the Winter-Summer session from extinction was rebuffed in the York senate last week.

The February-June session, which employs more than 70 faculty and enrolls around 1200 students annually, was "suspended" by the Faculty of Arts in a January budget-cutting move.

In last Thursday's Senate meeting, Canadian Union of Education Workers representative Doug Allen and York Federation of Students Vice President-Internal Nikki Gershbnain read speeches denouncing the move and calling on the university to resist government funding cutbacks instead.

"I think York University is missing the opportunity to involve themselves in a much greater fight against these cuts," said Allen, who said he represented the "about to be laid off faculty of the Winter-Summer session."

Louise Ripley, the Senate speaker, attempted to use procedural arguments to prevent Allen and Gershbnain from speaking. York President Harry Arthurs voted against allowing them to speak, as did student senate caucus chair Justin Linden.

Gershbnain "had the right idea but was voicing it in the wrong place," Linden said. "She embarrassed herself and the student body, and her display was very counterproductive."

Other senators claimed Gershbnain and Allen had no business debating the matter in the Senate, since it was actually the Faculty of Arts council which voted to eliminate the program.

In her speech, which she presented

on behalf of the York Coalition Against the Cuts, Gershbnain challenged the university's rationale for eliminating the session.

"We do not feel that the university administration has conclusively demonstrated that any substantial benefits will be realized through eliminating, or as it is euphemistically termed 'postponing' the Winter-Summer program," she said.

Members of the senate appeared to be divided over the financial benefits of eliminating entire programs in response to funding cutbacks.

Stephen Feinberg, vice president of academic affairs, presented a series of tables which demonstrated that every additional Arts student costs the university about \$30 — contrary to traditional opinion, which holds that additional students bring additional revenues to the university.

Many faculty and union members remained unconvinced by Feinberg's argument. History Professor A. Kanya-Forstner described his figures as simplistic and exaggerated and said there are "a number of students we can still bring in."

President Arthurs stood behind the decision and described it as an appropriate response to underfunding.

"Doing what we're doing is doing what we're expected to be doing," he said, "and I'll go a step further: doing what we're doing draws the attention of the people of Ontario to the crisis which we face."

Provincial funding increases reached a record low of one per cent this year, and the university has ordered across-the-board budget cuts in response. The Faculty of Arts expects to save \$750,000 by suspending the Winter-Summer session.

The Task Force on Dispute Resolution and Non-Academic Student Discipline was struck by the President after the General Meeting of the University Disciplinary Tribunal in November 1991.

The mandate of the Task Force involves three general foci:

- 1) to explore alternative dispute resolution methods that focus more on resolution and education, and less on judgement and punishment;
- 2) to identify current problems in handling disciplinary matters related to sexual harassment and racism, residence life, and disruptive students (both within and beyond the classroom);
- 3) to suggest improvements in the way we handle disputes generally, and, specifically, in regard to Presidential Regulations 2 and 3 (please note that a separate Sub-Committee, chaired by Professor Fred Zemans, is already examining the need for changes to the UDT procedures).

The Task Force invites written submissions from interested groups or individuals. Please address your comments to V.P. Elizabeth Hopkins, Chair, Presidential Task Force on Non-Academic Student Discipline, S919, Ross Building. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Birgit Langwisch, Task Force Secretary, at 736-5275.

Submissions must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Friday, March 13, 1992.