

LETTERS

TTC, health plan should be priorities

To the editor,

After being a graduate student here for a year, and after talking to a number of other students at York, both graduate and undergraduate, I feel that there are a few things I would like to see "those in power" consider.

First of all, I would like to know why none of the banking machines in Central Square have Interac, or the equivalent? Is this an attempt by the T.D. Bank to coerce new students into taking out an account with their bank? I have good dealings with my bank, and no interest in changing. It is impossible to use other bank cards in the T.D. or Credit Union machines, making the prospect of needing money on campus very uncomfortable. Is there any way to change this strange state of controlled banking to make it generally useful to the student body? (ed. Central Square banking machines do have Interac.)

I'm also curious to find out what YFS (or others) are doing to promote the extension of the subway line to Steeles W. via York University. I realize that there was a gathering at the corner of Steeles and Keele for just that purpose, but I wasn't able to attend, so I didn't get the chance to see if York was throwing in their support. It would definitely be a plus for future students of York if the subway did indeed have a stop here.

My last difficulty (so far) is the new health plan. I think that it's great, and indeed, the last three universities I've attended have already had similar plans in operation. I was quite surprised that York didn't have one. At the other universities, however, the fees were combined with the regular registration fees so that everything got paid at once, saving the students from running about to find someone open to take another check. Also, the information I received said that everyone had to enroll in the plan, unless they could provide another health plan. The same letter stated that anyone who had not paid by a set date became ineligible until next year. In other words, the graduate health plan is completely voluntary, and you only have to register if you want to. Perhaps those organizing this can improve on these idiosyncrasies in the future.

Here's hoping for a good year for everyone,

H.P. White
Graduate Physics

Atkinson needs study space

To the editor,
[Professor John Parkinson,
Associate Dean]

I am deeply disturbed that the 12 study carrels stored at present in the Crowe's Nest Lounge, (which were originally situated in the second floor study room are now being offered to York constituents.

We are still in negotiations

concerning available study space for students in Atkinson College. To the best of my knowledge, the issue has not yet been resolved, therefore, I think it is premature that the carrels are being given away without offering them to, or prior consultation with ACSA (Atkinson College Students Association).

As I have indicated in my letter of July 20, 1990, we are now convinced that student needs are no longer the priority of this Atkinson Administration. ACSA, which represents 7,000 plus students, is not regarded as a vital body of Atkinson College.

We regret that the Atkinson Administration continues to approach this issue in a paternalistic and autocratic manner. In order for ACSA to continue to support the College in good faith, we would like you to show your good will in settling the study space problem.

Sincerely,
Anna Segal,
President
ACSA

OPINIONS

Nuclear, biological and chemical warfare and their inevitable big bang

by Clive Holloway

At the height of the First World War in Europe, a German Nobel Prize winner, Fritz Haber, personally supervised the release of chlorine gas against the trench defenses of the opposing forces. The effect was more devastating than anticipated by either side, and the German high command failed to take advantage of the disarray. This event was quickly followed by retaliation and the development of more effective agents. Haber is quoted as describing poison gas as a "higher form of killing." Higher than what, one could well ask. Perhaps the world is lucky that Haber was not permitted by his Nazi rulers to participate in World War 2.

By 1939 the stocks of poison gas had expanded to include a variety of blister and choking

agents, and unknown to the allies, the new nerve gasses. At this point the term gasses becomes rather incorrect since all of the new materials were in fact liquids which could be dispersed in aerosol form. Within the next few years, Canada became a world centre for the manufacture and testing of chemical and biological warfare agents, involving such well known figures as Banting, and well known institutions

Haber is quoted as describing poison gas as a "higher form of killing."

such as Western Ontario, University of Toronto, Queens, McGill and the National Research Council. All of this is told in a fascinating book by John Bryden

called *Deadly Allies, Canada's Secret War* (York Library, sc: UG 447 B79 1989). York also has a considerable collection of other books and documents on nuclear, biological, chemical (NBC) warfare in the various libraries around campus.

Today, Canada's role in NBC warfare is strictly defensive; that is, the development of protective gear, and other prophylactic measures, the development of detection techniques and the development of effective medical treatments. This is reinforced by basic and advanced level training in NBC defensive tactics by the armed forces. Many of the evasive tactics used under nuclear, biological or chemical attack are the same, hence the designation "NBC" for the training procedures. The basic steps include donning of a suit and mask prior



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