

A rundown on student assistance

By Lauren Yu

The key advice to students seeking assistance under the Ontario Student Assistance Programme is "apply, and then possibly, appeal," according to Chris Allnutt, a researcher at the Ontario Federation of Students.

Mr. Allnutt made this remark at a panel discussion held at Osgoode Hall on September 13, on changes introduced under the new OSAP scheme this year. Also taking part in the discussion was William Clarkson, director of the Student Awards branch at the Ministry of Universities. Mr. Clarkson said little that would discredit Allnutt's advice.

Allnutt was directing his advice specifically at a couple of the major changes under the new Ontario Study Grant Plan. Under the new grant plan, a student's contribution is calculated from actual summer earnings, rather than from an expected figure set by the government as in previous years. This new feature is an attempt to represent a more realistic assessment of financial status.

However, for students whose summer earnings were below \$2400, at initial assessment, the Ministry assumes a minimum

contribution of \$800, based on a \$50 weekly contribution over a 16-week period. Thus, an \$800 contribution from summer earnings would be assessed against a student who earned \$900 as well as one who earned \$2300 this summer. *It is up to the student to appeal against this \$800 assessment.*

Allnutt advised that anyone who earned less than \$2400 this summer should appeal.

"A student who earned \$2300 would have to show a lot of living expenses before he can convince the Ministry that he couldn't save \$800," Mr. Clarkson responded. He thought more realistic cases would involve students living away from home who earned below \$1800, and students living at home who did not earn substantially above \$800 this summer.

The appeal process is relatively straight forward. In most cases, it involves writing a letter to the York Student Awards Office detailing one's financial circumstances, accompanied by documentation of job searches or earning statements as the case may be, and a budget listing personal expenses incurred over the summer. Anyone who was unsuccessful in finding employment for part or the whole of summer

should definitely consider an appeal.

Mr. Clarkson pointed out that a \$400 rather than \$800 contribution is assessed against students who graduated from high school last June.

Mr. Allnutt told the gathering that his "apply and appeal" advice is applicable to students who are effected by the introduction of the eligibility periods. Under the new grant plan, a student becomes

ineligible for grant if he or she has used up more than eight eligibility periods. An eligibility period is usually equivalent to one semester of full-time university studies. In effect, students will be ineligible for grant assistance after completing a four-year undergraduate degree.

In order to mitigate the harsh effect of this new provision, the government has created a loan remission scheme. Under this

scheme, the Ministry will pay directly to a lending bank a percentage of the loan over and above the first \$1000 issued to a student. Loan remission is therefore really a form of deferred grant. The amount of the loan paid off by the government is subtracted from the student's principle when he or she starts paying off the loan.

The loan remission programme will be in effect for the next two years only.

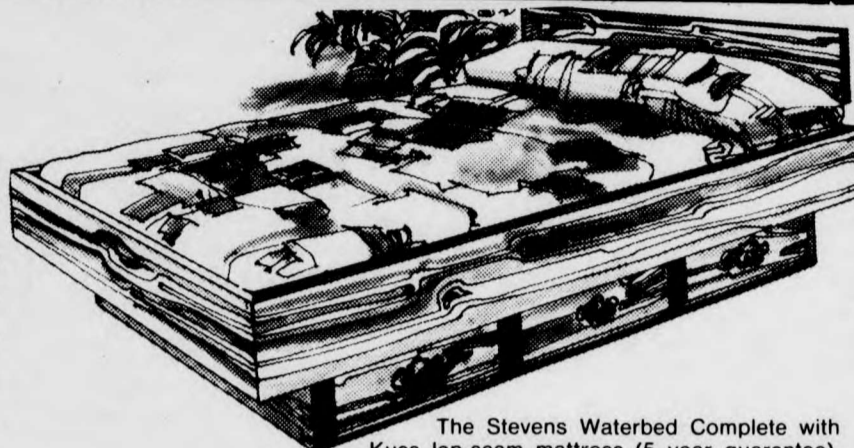
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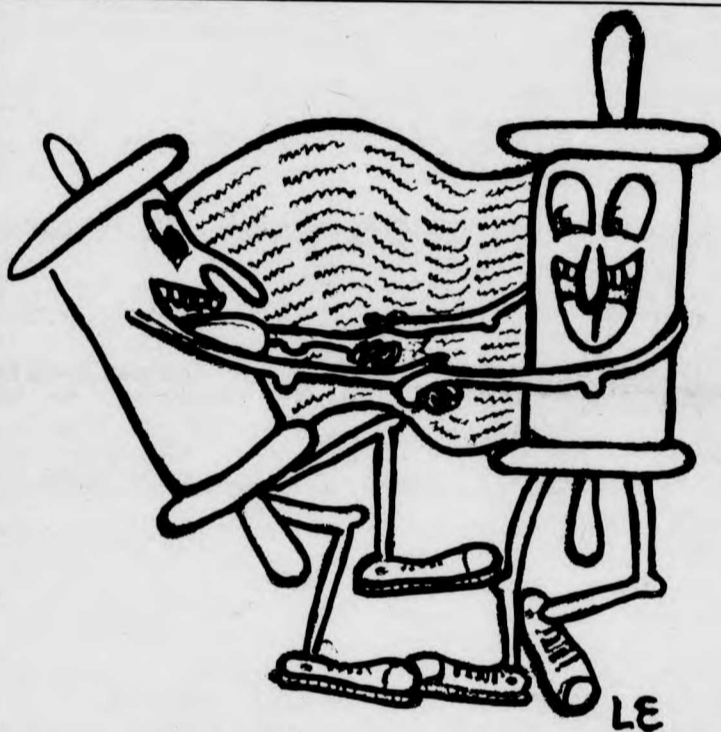
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BASIC JUDAISM...an introduction to Jewish beliefs, practices and customs taught by Rabbi Gansburg every Monday afternoon from 2-3 p.m. in Ross S128 beginning September 25.

HEBREW CALLIGRAPHY...scribal arts and techniques for beginners will be taught by accomplished calligrapher Lisa Matlisky every Wednesday evening at 7:30 p.m. at Temple Sinai starting Sept. 27. There is a small materials fee.

ISRAELI DANCING...all are invited to come and dance every Tuesday night from 7:30-9:30 p.m. in Vanier College R202. This is a freebie.

YIDDISH...learn some basic phrases, conversation, proverbs and stories by Samuel Mitzmacher every Thursday at 1:00 p.m. in Ross S122 beginning Sept. 28.

GOURMET JEWISH COOKING (kosher vegetarian delights)...discover the culinary delights within your reach with gourmet cook Harvey Rabin at B'nai Brith House 15 Hove Street (Bathurst-Sheppard) beginning October 19 every Thursday night at 8 p.m. There is a small materials fee.

THE GOOD BOOK...an introduction to the Bible using commentaries. Rabbi Ganzberg will conduct this course Monday's at 3 p.m. Ross S128.

WHEN WE LAST LEFT OUR HEROES...a weekly study session looking at the weekly Parsha, every Thursday from 11:30 - 1 p.m. in the JSF Office, Ross S101...Chevrusa Style (you teach me & I'll teach you) learning.

...once again... a \$2.00 administrative fee will entitle you to take as many courses as you like. But, if you've joined JSF and have a discount card, the courses are as free as the air you breathe. So...come on and join up. The fee for Non-York Community members is \$5.00. All classes meet for 6 sessions except for High Holidays and Sukkot. Call 667-3647 for more interesting information.

GAA

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thur. Sept. 28. 4 p.m.
Curtis Lecture Hall "B"

Agenda:

- 1) report on bargaining and conciliation
- 2) election of officers
- 3) cutbacks
- 4) new business

Important. Please attend.

In the event of a YUSA strike, the meeting will be held at Driftwood Public School (auditorium) East of Stong Cr. from Jane Street. North of Finch Ave.