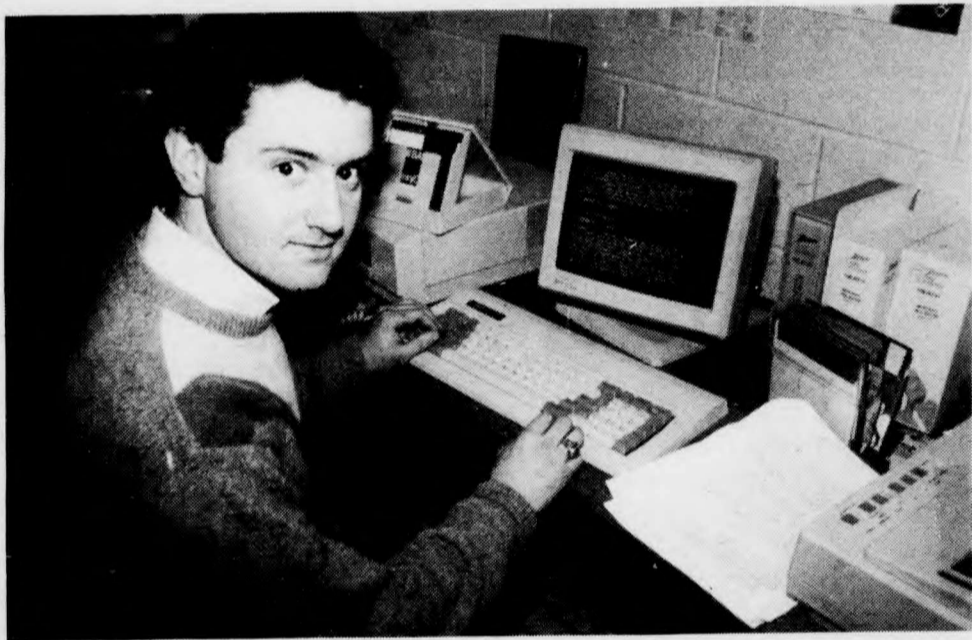


The executive viewpoint on problems in CYSF

Last week, *Excalibur's* CYSF beat reporter David Dollard assessed the problems besetting central government at York. For this week's feature, Dollard asked the CYSF President and his seven directors to outline what they believe are the problems thwarting student government's effectiveness. What emerged is a tale of underfunding, overwork, lack of communication, and an unsympathetic Administration—all contributing to CYSF's inability to forcefully represent their undergraduate constituency.



According to the executive directors, unless action is taken to alleviate these problems, central government will continue to be weak at York. Several Directors have suggested revisions to the system, and have already made improvements in their individual portfolios to instigate the necessary changes required to begin making student government more efficient, more effective, and more responsible to its constituents on campus.

The lifeline of any government is money. Without continued transfusion of funds into the institutional corpus, programs and activities will cease.

As inflation rates change, so too must the flow of money. However, according to CYSF Finance Director Nadine Changfoot, the budget allocated by the University Administration to the CYSF has remained essentially unchanged for the past three years.

The inadequate funding of CYSF, according to Executive Director, has undermined its ability to implement all the programs it had initially desired. Each director complained that given more money they could have provided the undergraduates with far more extensive programs and services.

The CYSF Executive is strapped for cash, and as a result they have been unable to hire a much needed researcher and/or administrative staffed CYSF's attempts to hire a lawyer in order to negotiate contracts with their Business Manager, the Liquor Management Authority, and the manager of the Reel and Screen.

Administrative financial restraints have debilitated the CYSF Executive and their capacity to effectively represent York undergraduates. Changfoot suggested that "pressure from student representatives is necessary for press-

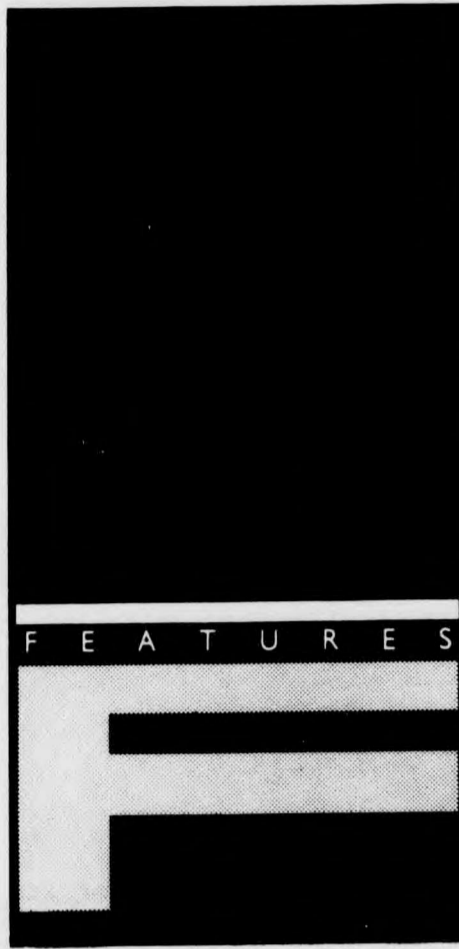
ing the Administration for greater money allotment." Moreover, she said that alterations in the system of allocation might help develop an Administration more sympathetic with CYSF's financial needs.

At present, "money for the (CYSF) Council is presented through a third party," Changfoot said. Basically, the Executive must go to the Provost, who then goes to present their request to the Office of Student Affairs (OSA). Changfoot concluded that a more direct channel to OSA might produce a more responsive Administration.

The CYSF Executive will run at a deficit of \$7,000 this year, an increase of slightly over \$4,000 from last year. When asked about balancing the budget, Changfoot said that the Executive decided to up the deficit as they "wouldn't cut programs at the expense of student."

Changfoot cited increased operating expenses as one reason for the increased deficit. As well, she said that certain changes in Administrative policy have resulted in the loss of close to \$5,000 for the CYSF. Last year the CYSF rented out the display tables used in Central Square, which made for a \$4,900 profit. Yet in 1986-87, this responsibility and the subsequent revenue was transferred to the OSA.

Another funding-related grievance is the failure by the York University Administration to provide a satisfactory breakdown of incidental/ancillary fees paid by York students. According to CYSF President Gerard Blink, York is the only university in Ontario that has not complied fully with this request from the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU). Tuition fees are set for all Ontario universities by MCU, on top of which university



administrators are legally allowed to charge only 10 percent. At York students pay an extra \$216 (Tuition + 10%, + \$216).

President Blink explained that out of the \$216, only \$46 has been accounted for as "student government fees" by the Administration. The remaining \$170 is explained as "Health Insurance, Student Activity Fees, and Other Central Charges," but no further breakdown is given.

This educational 'extra-billing' has increased from \$147 in 1985-86, to this year's fee of \$216, with an associated increase in Administration revenues the increase in such fees has not been justified by the Administration to those who pay these fees—the students. He is pursuing this matter through the Office of the Provost and the Assistant Vice President of Management Information and Planning.

The members of the Executive also voiced their disdain for Administrative policy, in areas other than funding. Academic Affairs Director Allan Armstrong said, "Those turning the wheels (the Administration) are generally responsive, (but) the low level Administration often can't act because of present policies. They (the administrators) are usually inflexible, not out of malice, but because they don't have the power (to change policy)."

Unlike the CYSF Executive, the Administration is not forced to lobby students for support in order to preserve their mandate, so they can afford to remain out of touch with student needs. In addition, Administrative positions are not filled on a year to year electoral basis as they are on the CYSF Executive and in the Council. As a result, the Student Executive must deal with a permanently entrenched Administration, resembling a fortress-like bureaucracy.

Catherine Lake, Director of Women's Affairs, said that there is "too much 'lip-service' and not enough money power. Because (the Administrators) have money power, without have to inform the students, they have the bottom line, especially with security, on power.



There is a lack of respect for student government by the Administration." It is this situation, according to Lake, which forces "failure of the University Administration and Security to recognize sexual problems," at York.

Lake said that despite the support of Provost Tom Meininger for her Sexual Assault Educationals (designed to sensitize York Security, residence dons and masters, and telephone operators on how to deal with victims of sexual assault), and his recommendation of holding an open forum to discuss security on campus, she bemoaned "the total neglect of Administrative insight into the understaffing and undertraining of the Security staff." Though people would not expect this in a university, Lake pointed out that "myths and stereotypes about sexual assault (still) pervade the Administration."

Similarly Michael Latchana, Social and Cultural Affairs Director, indicated that "for a university that stresses its ethnicity, little has been done to address racial and ethnic concerns." He feels that the Administration has failed to effectively address students' complaints about racial and ethnic distress, as opposed to sexual or academic distress. There are avenues to pursue for the latter two disputes, but not for racial concerns. Latchana feels an ethnic centre should be set up by the Administration to deal with racial concerns on campus.

Latchana also addressed the Housing and Food Services (HFS) policy, regarding the preparation of ethnic foods. At present, if HFS cannot meet ethnic students needs, the clubs must alter their needs accordingly. This problem has existed for some time, but according to Latchana, it was not until he took charge of his present portfolio that greater inter-club communication took place and revealed this problem.

Latchana has suggested to HFS that if they cannot prepare the desired foods, such food could be brought in by students, while HFS and its tendered caterers could serve the food, with a fee paid for the use of heating supplies, cutlery, etc. This way, Latchana explained, the caterers would not lose money, and the students could get their desired menu.

Latchana also complained of the difficulty ethnic clubs experience in gaining access to York facilities. He cited recent problems in renting York's Tait Mackenzie gyms for the ethnic clubs to practice for their intramurals. The Croatian Students' Association was forced to go off-campus to find practice facilities, he added.

Latchana is also disgusted with the present policy of the Department of Instructional Aids and Resources (DIAR). "At present no student groups can have access to video equipment," he said, explaining that without a budget number (which must be applied for through the Administration) and a requisition form there is no student access. He has sent a memo to the

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Here are the faces of the CYSF Directors we didn't show last week: Joe Baiardo, Director of Services and Communications (above); Catherine Lake, Director of Women's Affairs (below left); and, Michael Latchana, Director of Social and Cultural Affairs (the only one left).

