

A battle plan for your body

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Rae kills grants, hikes tuition and breaks promises

by Eric Atkins

Bob Rae is not the education premier he said he would be. This fact was confirmed last week when the Ontario government dealt the university system a cruel blow by raising tuition by \$132, eliminating student grants and backing out on a promise to increase payments to universities in the future.

Treasurer Floyd Laughren said the cutbacks are an attempt to reduce the provincial deficit in the face of declining revenue.

Nikki Gershbain, president of the York Federation of Students, expressed disgust at the announcement and predicted reduced student services at York.

"Say goodbye to women's and race issues. The university is probably going to ... slash and burn services and programs."

"I worry about the prospects for potential university students in the Metro area," York president Susan Mann said in a release last week, adding that York will suffer badly, "given its history of underfunding by the provincial government."

Colleges and Universities Minister Richard Allen announced a tuition increase of 7 per cent. According to one report, Allen said the fee increase will not amount to "a hill of beans" for students.

EATING OUR YOUNG

Somebody's giving all the money to that generation



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Many student leaders feel betrayed by the New Democratic Party. "The government was elected on a campaign to freeze [tuition] fees," Gershbain said.

Ken Craft, chair of the Ontario Federation of Students said

Allen should resign. "I wouldn't be heartbroken if he left. This government seems hell-bent on dismantling the post-secondary education system in Ontario."

The OFS is staging a demonstration at government buildings at Bay Street and Wellesley Avenue on Thursday Dec. 3 to protest the tuition increases.

Allen announced the province would cut grants from its aid program, but make more money available for loans. The government is making \$800 million available for students next year - up \$130 million from this year.

Students who qualify for more than \$5,570 in loans will receive anything extra as a grant. Student leaders say that will not be much of a break, because last year, students received an average of only \$4,861 in grants and loans combined.

According to Gershbain, the virtual elimination of grants makes Ontario the only jurisdiction in North America that does not provide grants to students.

— with files from Canadian University Press

Students set up Somalia support group

by Gurbir Jolly

Urgent concern over Somalia's famine, civil strife and distorted media images have led York students to initiate a Somali Support Committee.

York's African and Arab student associations combined efforts with the Federation of Students and the Centre for Race and Ethnic Relations to form this committee, which will

raise funds for the Red Cross and increase awareness of the "politics of hunger," said Delroy Luke, the committee's chair.

"It's the legacy of colonialism," he said, referring to the international apathy and internal violence which have seriously hampered relief efforts in Somalia.

Luke further charged popular media for "blaming clan rivalry [in Somalia] for starva-

tion," and portraying Somalia's civil violence as a case of how "niggers" can't control themselves."

Immigration Minister Bernard Valcourt did little to dispel suspicions of apathy and racism when he suggested Somali refugees were "nomadic people that... just don't want to leave" Somalia.

Dimbel A-Hashi, a Somali York student, feels popular

media has done little to explore the deeper issues which surround the crisis in Somalia.

"These people didn't just wake up one day and starve, their political infrastructure didn't just one day collapse," A-Hashi said.

He believes few are aware of the affects of American and Soviet militarization of the Horn of Africa, or of the thousands of dollars being sent each month by Somalis in Ontario to the troubled region.

Most people are not even aware "it's two separate states we're talking about: Somali Land and Somalia," A-Hashi said.

The committee had planned on having a media panel discussion to deal with these issues, but media representatives they contacted would not respond to invitations.

"They just gave us the run-around," said Gamel Abdel-Shehid, a member of the committee.

The committee will still be holding a discussion on Thursday, December 3, concerning the media's coverage of Somalia.

On December 10, the committee will be hosting a benefit concert at the El Mocambo where all funds raised will be used by the Red Cross to bring medicine and food to Somalia.

The committee will also schedule events for January and February, to coincide with African history month.

Questions concerning events and contributions may be directed to Delroy Luke at 736-5293, or Teferi Adem, York's Race and Ethnic Relations officer at 736-5682.

Community group will search for racism in York security

by Danny Abraham

A province-wide coalition of Black community groups will lead an investigation of York's security department to find evidence of racism.

An independent committee will look into the department's behavior and ethnic or cultural representation, said Enid Lee, chair of the Black Secretariat of Ontario.

The committee would fulfill a final demand from last year's protest against racism in the security department.

Over nine months ago, two security guards demanded identification from three Black students without probable cause or provocation.

This protest forced university officials to agree to demands made

by angry students — who identified themselves as "Jane or John Doe" and then occupied the York president's office in February.

Lee said the proposal was delayed because the secretariat wanted an expert board with qualified members who could construct a "systemic approach" in the investigation.

Don MaGee, manager of the security department, said he had no knowledge about the secretariat's plans. "It has been almost a year, we all figured they had forgotten about it."

He also expressed regret that the two security guards had demanded the students' identification.

According to him, the guards were "two bad

seeds" out of the lot, but he feels his force is "a top notch, good team."

MaGee's team has met one of the initial demands of the protest. A two-day workshop on race relations was held last summer within the security department.

The workshop focused on diplomacy and understanding, said MaGee, adding it has had a very positive effect. He also feels that student federation vice-president Heather Dryden will now have good things to say about the security office.

Dryden was surprised at MaGee's satisfaction over the two-day workshop, saying that one workshop a year is not enough.

A two-day workshop,

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Not much holiday cheer

Volunteer Shireen Jones with total donations for a five-day food drive last month. Jones' group wants to start a campus food bank.

• photo by Wayne Todd