

Hard work key to success at NAMUM

By SUJATA BERRY

Students from universities across Canada gathered at the Inn on the Park last week to stage the second annual North American Model United Nations Assembly (NAMUN).

The objective of the four-day-event was to simulate the functions of the United Nations (UN) Assembly. This year 350 delegates enthusiastically

represented 60 of the UN member states. (York students themselves represented nine countries.)

NAMUN is jointly organized by students from York and the University of Toronto (U of T). The idea to stage a model assembly was conceived three years ago when a group of York students attended a similar assembly at Harvard. "We looked at the organization and structure at Harvard and thought we could run a model assembly for students, run by students. This has grown into NAMUN," said Matthew Rotenberg, the Under Secretary General.

"Most UN conferences are controlled by a governing board. This is the only conference that is run from top to bottom by students and because it is run by students we are more open to student concerns," stressed Henry Morton, the Executive Director. This aspect of the administration was quite evident in last week's conference. Last year, for example, delegates were concerned about the high cost of food at the hotel. Consequently, this year, the administrators provided very reasonably priced breakfasts and lunches.

Funding for the assembly came from donations from the student governments and the related faculties at U of T and York. Additional funds were generated through corporate donations and government grants. This year's fundraising efforts were so successful that NAMUN produced

surplus funds which will be used for next year's conference.

The planning committee, consisting of 35 volunteers, had been working on the conference for eight months. Initially they contacted the university programs that dealt specifically with international affairs and related subjects to inform prospective participants of the assembly. Once the delegation applications were received and accepted, study guides were sent out to help delegates educate themselves about the foreign policy of their respective country.

For the delegates attending the assembly the hard work began long before they arrived at the conference. The rigorous preparation centred on two major areas: theoretical preparation, including familiarization with regional issues and the status of the country; and fundraising in order to pay their conference expenses. The funds needed included \$54 in delegate fees plus travel and accommodation expenditures.

One support system the delegates could rely on was the Travel Subsidy Program, by which a delegate could claim financial assistance if his travel expenses exceeded \$125. This made it easier for delegates to travel from as far away as British Columbia. Funding for this particular program was provided in part by the Canadian Department of External Affairs.

At York, one professor combined NAMUN with her regular course requirements. A compulsory feature of course work for students in Professor Margaret Royal's course "Introduction to International Organizations" was to actively participate in NAMUN. The Canadian, East German and Cuban delegations were represented by students in this course. York is the only university to incorporate participation at NAMUN as part of a course.

Under the leadership of Kathryn Seymour, a part time student taking the course, a three-part fundraising program was employed. In the first part, a Bowlathon was organized where each student raised money through individual pledges. The goal of the Bowlathon was for each delegate to raise enough money to cover delegate fees.

Next, a T-shirt was designed to commemorate NAMUN 1987. The shirts were sold by the NAMUN administration on behalf of the students. Lastly, local businesses and York school governments were approached for donations. Through these ingenious methods, the students were able to considerably reduce their personal expenses.

The total costs for the conference can run as high as \$300 per delegate.



THE POLITICS OF POWER: Under Secretary General Matthew Rotenberg and Executive Director Henry Morton put hours into planning this year's North American Model United Nations Assembly.

While all delegates may not engage in fundraising, the financial preparation is still an essential part of the conference.

Each of the 60 countries were represented by a five to seven member delegation. Each delegate was responsible for a specific subject area defined by the parameters of the committees within the U.N. These committees were the Security Council, International Court of Justice, Special Political, Political Security, Economic-Financial, Disarmament, and Social Humanitarian Cultural.

The Soviet delegation was represented by members of the York Chapter of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. In order to prepare the groundwork for the conference members of the delegation visited the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa where they were briefed by the Press Secretary. Additionally, they received the advice of John Holmes, former Canadian Ambassador to Moscow. While some of the delegations may not have had the opportunity to visit the embassy of their respective country, all of them spent considerable time in libraries studying the books outlined in the bibliography of their study guides.

Before the conference begins each delegate is responsible for handing in position papers stating the general policy of their country in the respective committees. At the conference each delegate received a compilation of the position papers of

all the countries represented on each committee. An additional resource that the delegates could draw upon was advice from the faculty advisors which accompanied each delegation. The NAMUN administration also published two daily editions of the NAMUN to inform the delegates of current world events and keep them abreast of committee matters.

An ironic spectacle was staged by the Libyan delegation, comprised of members from the Jewish Students Federation at York. David Adithol, the head delegate, sported a *yamulka* while speaking in anti-Semitic terms. In keeping with the Libyan foreign policy, Adithol refused to recognize Israel, although he continually referred to it as a "Zionist imperialist racist entity."

"The fact that I can sit here and convey a diametrically opposite view (to what I believe) and be convincing is exactly why we are here . . . I do not believe any of the rhetoric that I spew out and I hope nobody else does," Adithol stated.

The immense success of the conference stands as a testament to the meticulous planning by both the delegates and the administrators. The conference allowed the delegates to see how the UN functions and for a lot of them, it re-affirmed their commitment to the state of International Affairs. In the long run, it is the friends made and the education received at the conference that will remain significant for delegates—not the terms of the resolutions passed.

Ambassador offers global perspective

By SUJATA BERRY

Last Friday, Douglas Roche, Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament to the United Nations (UN) spoke to a captive audience of delegates to the 2nd annual North American Model United Nations.

Through a series of everyday occurrences Roche described the web of tangled realities facing the present international situation. During his speech Roche spoke, for example, about the plight of a woman in Bangladesh, who hopes that some day her eight malnourished children will have food and an education. Such is the reality of 800-million people in the world today.

"People often have a negative reaction to world news . . . We cannot judge the shape of the world by what the media displays since the media tends to concentrate on the negative. In my view there exists a positive and a negative view," Roche

said. "The two themes of militarism and deprivation are negatively portrayed. How we deal with these two themes dictates how our world survives."

On the positive side, Roche applauded the new technologies that have defined the modern era. "The new movement (globalization) brought on by new technology) unlocks within you a creative response you did not know you had," Roche said.

Yet Roche cited the escalation of the arms race, the increase of human rights violations and the realities of underemployment and unemployment, as setbacks against global development. "Recognition is increasing that the negative is mounting and I appeal to you to accentuate the positive without disregarding the negative." Roche said that the U.N. is an instrument capable of achieving this goal.

Financial problems have been a

major concern of the U.N. "There is a budget of \$5-billion for all programs and 80 percent of the budget goes to the programs," Roche said. He blames the financial problems of the U.N. on the respective governments of the countries involved.

"The U.N. does not cost too much . . . The U.N. problem will be solved when the governments of major countries clean up their act."

Roche denounced the ABC television series *Amerika* as a misleading representation of the Soviet Union. "At the very moment when Gorbachev is trying to improve the situation . . . it is disgraceful," that the Americans would allow the series to progress.

"We see an increasing convergence of interdependence in a physical sense and this unifies us," Roche concluded. "Now we see why the process of reconciliation on global terms is the true maturation of the positive signs in the world."

CITATIONS OF EXCELLENCE

Citations of excellence were awarded by the administration to the delegates that represented their countries the best. Recommendations for the citations were made by the delegates attending the conference.

BEST DELEGATION

U.S.A. (McGill)

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