

Excalibur

Vol. 13, No. 14

York University Community Newspaper

Thurs., 11th January 1979

Government axe hits York again

By Brian Gillett

Last week's announcement of funding for post-secondary institutions — including a five per cent tuition fee hike — will mean a budget cut for York of 2.5 to \$6 million, according to David Atkinson, executive assistant to York vice-president George Bell.

The \$2.5 million minimum assumes no decline in enrolment — a reversal of the present trend.

Universities, Ryerson and the Ontario College of Art will receive \$782.4 million, an increase of \$36.9 million 4.95 per cent. Colleges will receive \$285 million an increase of 14.1 million or 5.2 per cent.

The increases will be nowhere near enough to keep up with inflation, which in November was running at 8.8 per cent. Certain key expenditures are rising far beyond the average rate of inflation. Atkinson cited electricity, gas, heating fuel, library books and lab and film equipment as areas where costs are rising 13 to 14 per cent or more.

The government decision to limit the increase to 4.95 per cent, was made against the advice of the Ontario Council of University Affairs (OCUA), that

the increase be at least 6.1 per cent.

On Monday, Chris McKillop, treasurer of the Ontario Federation of Students, expressed the Federation's dim view of the tuition increase.

"Our major concern is that this is the first in a series of similar hikes we may see in future years. Each may be relatively small, but consistent increases would erode the ability of many people to get a college or university education."

The tuition fee increase will mean a full time student taking five courses next year will be out of pocket by approximately \$35 (slightly higher at Osgoode).

Reaction to the government's action was swift. Miriam Edelson, chairperson of the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) which represents 160,000 students, criticized the 4.95 per cent increase as severely inadequate and believes that students will not stand for the resulting loss of services and staff.

Steve Shallhorn, an OFS field worker, told Excalibur that meetings of the Federation are planned throughout the coming two weeks to determine what action the OFS will take in response to the government's actions.

Atkinson expressed disappointment at the increase in funding.

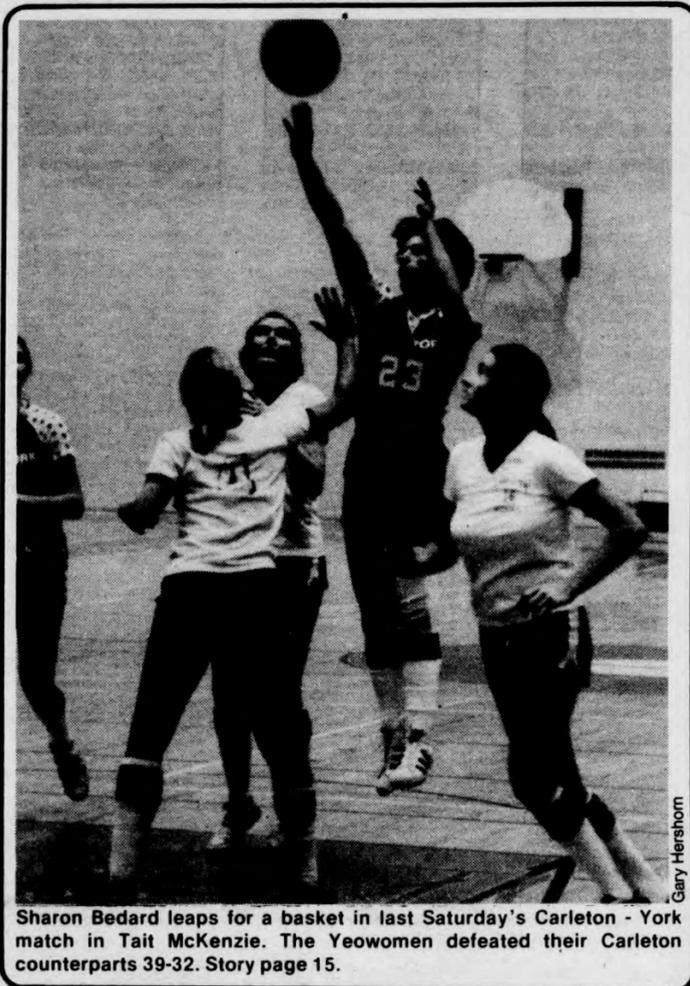
"A 4.95 per cent increase is about what we expected, though."

Atkinson emphasized that the increase in tuition won't begin to cover the expected deficit for the coming year.

"If enrolment is down, and contract settlements and inflation are high, then York University could easily face a deficit of \$6 million."

Atkinson also strongly disagreed with a recommendation of the soon-to-be revealed P.S. Ross Report commissioned by the Tory government which suggested allowing universities to set their own tuition levels. "I don't feel that unpegging tuition fees is a viable option. It will only increase the competition that already exists among universities attempting to attract students and hurt those that can least afford it."

David Chodikoff, President of the C.Y.S.F., had strong words for the government's funding policies. "I am extremely disturbed by the lack of responsibility shown towards post-secondary education by the Progressive Conservative government," said Chodikoff. "I feel that the presidents of all Ontario universities must publicly demand assurances of adequate funding from the government. If the present trend continues, the University may be forced to declare a state of financial emergency which would be to enable the dismissal of tenured faculty," he added.



Sharon Bedard leaps for a basket in last Saturday's Carleton - York match in Tait McKenzie. The Yeowomen defeated their Carleton counterparts 39-32. Story page 15.

Gary Hershorn

Faculty settles contract

By Bruce Gates

Although they ratified a new one-year contract by a vote of 190-44 on December 15 after close to eight months of negotiations, members of the York University's Faculty Association negotiating team were not completely satisfied with parts of it and plan to be back at the bargaining table sometime in February to hammer out what they hope will be a better agreement for the 1979-80 contract year.

The newly approved contract is retroactive to May 1, 1978 and expires this coming April 30. It gives the 850-member bargaining unit salary increases that total slightly more than six per cent.

Both the York administration and YUFA are determined that future contracts will be negotiated more quickly.

"We want a new contract before the old one expires on May 1 this year," says YUFA spokesman Nicky Lary.

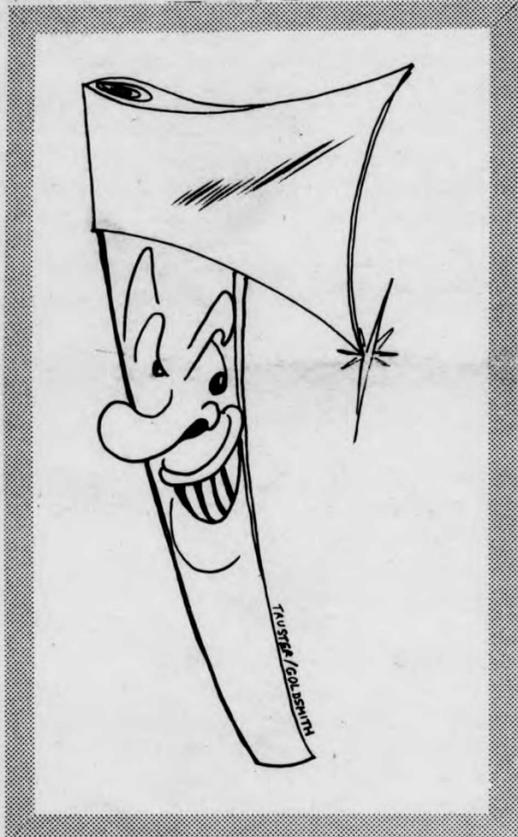
Lary has agreement in this regard from vice-president (employee-student relations) Bill Farr, who says negotiations will have to be speeded up "unless we want to be negotiating contracts a year behind."

The current contract gives all YUFA members a 2.3 per cent increase across the board and a "Career Progress" allowance of 2.7 per cent, which Farr says works out to a flat amount of about \$740.

In addition to these increases, the contract includes what is called "Merit" — a one-half of one per cent sum that is computed by each department in terms of each faculty member's performance.

"For example," Farr explains, "a professor making \$36,000 a year gets 2.3 per cent plus the \$740, and if he has average Merit he gets one-half of one per cent of the \$36,000."

(see Increase pg. 3)



Funding cuts dismay deans

By Hugh Westrup

"Disaster!"

That was the initial reaction of Fine Arts Dean Joseph Green to the provincial government's announcement that funding to universities will increase by half the nation's inflation rate, which means a major net loss in York's operating income for the second year in a row.

"There's going to be real pain in our faculty," said Green, referring to the allocation of money for 1979-80.

In less dramatic words, other administrators contacted by Excalibur expressed similar distress when contemplating cuts like those endured in the last budget.

"I really do not see how I could make cuts of the same level," said Dean Margaret Knittl of Atkinson College, which lost \$368,000 last year. "We've gone probably as far as it is wise. We couldn't do it without damage to programs and the administration of the college."

C.S. Mayer, associate dean of administrative studies was disappointed but not surprised at the announcement.

"We'll do the best we can but it won't be as good as last year. We're down to the bare minimum right now."

Mayer said budget cuts will likely result in fewer electives and cramp new initiatives like the proposed program in third sector management.

York's library system, already faced with skyrocketing costs of books and journals, will have to continue the reductions in services begun last year, said Leonard Draper from the office of the Director of Libraries.

"There will be a continuing erosion in the quality of service and our book collection," said Draper.

He expects a reduction in book purchases and staff time devoted to book binding, shelf reading and stacking but insists that library hours won't be reduced.

The library system, which includes the Scott, Steacie, Glendon, Business and Law Libraries terminated 14 positions and reduced student casual assistance to make up for a loss of \$228,000 last year. Although its book budget increased last year by \$50,000, inflation and

the devaluation of the Canadian dollar actually reduced book buying power by \$125,000-150,000.

Though disappointed with the offer, most of those questioned are approaching the new budget as a challenge to their administrative capabilities.

Dean R.L. Overing of Education said, "it's now a question of how we can respond to the challenge."

(See York, pg. 3)



Lydia Pawlenko

Inside

- Women's lecture series pg. 4
- Islanders' plight pg. 8
- Profile of York rocker pg. 8