



Boisterous Barb Taylor contemplates NUS proposals with a friend

Better student aid ahead

Jonathan Mann

The National Union of Students is continuing its struggle to improve student assistance programmes in Canada.

In a November 23 meeting with the Council of Ministers of Education (composed of provincial education ministers) NUS pushed for a new loan schedule and lower eligibility requirements. As a result, both are now endorsed by the Ministers' Council, which is preparing proposals for new student aid legislation to be introduced into parliament.

In the past, loans to needy students have been allocated on the basis of an eight month school year. NUS argued for a weekly based schedule in its brief to the Ministers, asserting, "The current structure does not recognize that students enrolled in courses longer than the traditional academic year (eight months) require more assistance."

A second NUS recommendation requests loan eligibility for students enrolled in programmes lasting at least three months. Previously, the minimum period of study qualifying a student for government funds was twenty-six weeks.

Both proposals are expected to be included in the amendments to the Canada Students Loans Act to be introduced into the house of commons by Secretary of State David McDonald. However, the fate of a third NUS suggestion is still uncertain.

The organization is still fighting for aid for part-time students, which, according to their brief, "is essential if the student aid programmes in Canada are to recognize the increased enrollment in part-time studies while full-time

enrollment continues to drop off."

According to Barb Taylor, CYSF Vice-President for External Affairs, and a member of the NUS contingent at the meeting, this proposal is still alive, although the support of the ministers is not yet assured. On the whole, she was very pleased with the outcome of the meeting. In an interview with *Excalibur* late last week, Taylor remarked, "I think it's amazing that we've been so well listened to. It shows that the Federal Government is starting to recognize NUS as the voice of Canadian students."

In addition to these short term changes in Canada's student aid legislation, the Federal Government is also preparing a Student Aid Task Force to undertake what Saskatchewan Minister of Education McArthur termed "a fundamental review of student aid programmes."

NUS is currently attempting to get a place in the task force for one of its members. Taylor feels that student input is indispensable, and indicated that "all provincial student organizations across the country have mandated NUS to represent them on this matter." NUS feels as well that a representative of the National Organization of Financial Award Officers is essential to any meaningful discussion. For this reason, the organization is proposing that they be given a seat on the task force as well.

Taylor explained NUS's motives for this request, declaring, "They're the group that has to deal with student's complaints about the system, so they're most qualified to explain what's wrong with the various details of the system."

Rape on campus

Debbie Bodinger

A women's group at U. of T. is planning to present President Ham with a petition pressing for better lighting and security on campus some time this week.

According to Karina Kane, a member of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Safety and Freedom of Women on Campus, one of the committee's concerns is that the university administration has failed to fill six positions on the security staff which have been vacant since March, 1978. Kane told *Excalibur* that she and several other committee members are volunteers at the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre, and therefore have direct knowledge that at least eight rapes have occurred on campus since September. Furthermore, several of these rape cases were definitely reported to the University administration.

Last month the group formed a patrol along Philosopher's Walk, an area which they consider to be particularly dangerous, in order to call attention to the problem. During the patrol a number of women approached members of the committee and informed them of even more incidents involving either themselves or close acquaintances. So far both the police and the administration have continued to deny any knowledge of the occurrence of these rapes and have not taken any action to improve the security situation.

Excalibur spoke with several members of the York Women's Centre about security on the

York campus. Jennifer Gonsalves, a member of the Centre's steering committee, and Women Affairs Commissioner on CYSF, expressed what seemed to be a generally held feeling that security on campus is adequate but that women at York could be better informed about the risks they may be taking and better prepared to defend themselves should they become involved in an incident of this nature.

Gonsalves and several other members of the Centre are concerned over what they consider to be poor attendance at a recent seminar on rape. In addition they feel many women who intend to take self-defense courses never get around to actually doing so. (The Centre offered a "Wen-do" course this fall, and will be offering another in January.)

Gonsalves also pointed out the CYSF is still maintaining the student security service that was initiated last year after several women were approached in the tunnel. A student concerned with having to walk through a deserted area of the campus after dark may request that a member of the service escort them. She said that it is part of her job as Women's Affairs Commissioner to monitor the effectiveness of this service, and to impress upon the administration the continuing need for adequate lighting and security.

Neither the Women's Centre nor Harbinger were aware of any rapes occurring on the York campus during the past year. A

member of the staff at the Rape Crisis Centre also did not know of any incidents. George Dunn, head of York Security, said that he knew of only one incident which involved an attempted rape last year. Fortunately the attempts were interrupted by a member of the security staff. He added, however, that he was aware of statistics indicating that only a small percentage of rapes are reported. Dunn also stated that he was concerned with the attitude he had heard expressed by some women at York, that the campus was somehow safer than the community at large, as it represented some kind of "sanctuary." He stressed that women should take the same precautions on the York campus as they would anywhere in Toronto.

Who wants to strike?

Lydia Pawlenko

Following a breakdown in contract talks with the university administration, the York University Faculty Association (YUFA) is awaiting negotiations with a conciliation officer from the Ministry of Labour. Although the union is not eager to strike, they will be in a legal position to do so 16 days after the failure of conciliation.

According to YUFA President Al Stauffer, "We don't want a strike, but they don't seem to come up with reasonable offers."

He expressed a concern over the disrupting effects of a strike on students, but asked for a sympathetic response. "We basically want to make students aware of the situation we are in — that we are in re-conciliation. There will be a strike if that fails," he said.

Meanwhile, the possibility of a

"After all, a university is not a factory, and the human aspect of all involved, especially the students, must be taken into consideration," he explained, objecting to the possibility of the faculty striking in order to achieve its goals.

Professor Ellen Baar feels torn on the issue. "I certainly wouldn't hold classes," she said. "The York faculty should not be the poorest paid — we should at least rise to the average level of pay."

Baar expressed concern with forecasting and financial planning, especially cutbacks in the library which directly lower the quality of education for students. She feels the administration has not thought of enough consequences like the low morale of the staff.

"Any approved union has the right to strike," Baar proclaimed. "There has to be some appreciation of the task we're doing, not merely saving money. We have to make sure the way we save money is not disrupting our ability to teach."

The last thing philosophy professor Michael Gilbert wants to do is go on strike. "Strikes are very unpleasant, unpopular, and disruptive things," he declared. "But how long can an individual accept a salary which puts him below the cost of living? And especially when you don't have such a high salary to begin with?"



Isaac Bar-Lewaw

YUFA strike has drawn mixed reactions from members of the faculty.

"It is a very sad phenomenon if the faculty cannot get along with the administration," said Professor Isaac Bar-Lewaw, who feels a strike will not solve the problems of the university.

Human rights talk runs awry

Maureen Brown

Last Thursday's discussion of Human Rights, sponsored by the York Muslim Student Federation, was reduced to mud slinging, according to one of the panelists, Professor M. Ayoub, a professor of comparative religion at the University of Toronto and McGill. In addition to the four panelists who spoke on children's rights and Islam and the Palestinians, two films were screened.

It was after the evening's last and most controversial speaker, Sami Hadawi, that the mud slinging began. Several members of the Jewish community challenged Hadawi's statements, which were drawn largely from his own experience in Palestine.

Hadawi recalled being thrown out of his own home and having

his property confiscated by the Israelis in 1948. "I can't believe that other human beings would do the injustice they have done in Palestine," he declared. Last month Hadawi visited south Lebanon, and "shivered with anger and disgust" as he witnessed a child "destroyed, shattered" and a woman with two feet blown off by Israeli planes dropping U.S. bombs.

"It is Begin's policy of murder," he said, in reference to the bombing. "This man's hands are soaked and dripping with blood. How can a Jew look at this man as a human being?" He remarked that he considers what the Israelis are doing in South Lebanon to be worse than what Hitler did to the Jews. Hadawi accused Jews in Canada and the U.S. of supporting a group of

criminals, adding "it is high time the Jewish community woke up." He said that he is confident that Israel is not there to stay, and wonders how long it can exist while refusing to recognize the rights of the Palestinians.

Ayoub commented on the U.S. hostage taking incident in Iran saying that, in fact, it is illegal, but insisted that any country has the right to see justice done. He said "the U.S. speaks in terms of humanitarianism" and added that "the Shah has lots of money in their banks. Carter was blackmailed by Kissinger," he insisted.

Other panelists included Paul Weinzwieg, president of the U.N. association in Toronto and Dr. M. Siddiqi, chairman of the U.N. office of the World Muslim League.