

# Ritch predicts crisis in housing at York

By PAUL STUART

"There are at least 40 people who want to come to York and may not because they don't have any place to live. I call that a crisis," declared CYSF president Dale Ritch last Thursday.

Most of the people Ritch referred to are from outside Ontario and are new students. Their applications for housing were among the last to arrive and be processed.

Contacted last Thursday, D.A. Nesbitt, York's Director of Housing said the deadline for applications was five p.m., September 12.

"The deadline has to be enforced so that we can begin handling local or returning applicants who have been sitting on a hook," he said.

"We are torn between the different kinds of applicants; the new students have a problem but what do you say to someone from, say, Brantford, who has been on a waiting list for three months and calls and says, 'you must be able to let me know about a room after all this time.'"

### WAIT-LISTED

An Excalibur survey of Residence secretaries, has learned that as many as ninety local and returning students are listed as waiting for residence rooms. It is likely, however, that many have found their own accommodation since signing that list.

Nesbitt does not see the situation as a crisis. "I don't see us turning away very many new applicants," he said.

Dale Ritch, who has been quoted in the Toronto daily papers as saying that York will have a housing crisis on its hands if a lot of

people apply at the last minute, levelled a number of criticisms at the administration's housing policies.

Ritch cited a North York by-law (prohibiting non-family members from sharing a single dwelling) as being a key factor in the shortage.

"I know personally of a whole street that's been cleaned out of tenants by one angry complainant. Another difficulty is that homeowners won't fix up their places and rent out flats if they know tenants can be evicted."

### WISHY-WASHY

Ritch said that York President H. Ian Macdonald, had written a letter to North York Mayor Mel Lastman last June concerning the by-law but that the letter "didn't put forward any demands; it was wishy-washy."

He called York's off-campus housing office a "half-assed operation."

"It's only set up for three months of the year and has a budget of just \$5,000. Ryerson puts \$15,000 into its off-campus housing budget. Why doesn't York put some of the \$2 million the Board of Governors raised in its fund raising drive into housing?" he asked.

He also said that the government's Student Assistance programme (OSAP) does not allow students enough money to live on and once again called for the administration to demand a better deal for students.

"But Macdonald won't do it, and that shows that the administration isn't prepared to deal with the



Peter Hsu's fish-eye lens view of the quadrangle above Central Square, from a vantage point high up in the Ross building: York's long-awaited, much

debated chapel (or, as it is now being called, religious centre) is under construction on the left.

housing problem."

Administration officials had plenty of comments on Ritch's charges.

Terry Boyd, who runs the Advising Centre said that, "the feeling I get from talking to students is that our off-campus housing office is not very good."

"But the only way to find out if the service is better elsewhere would be to actually go there."

### EFFICIENCY

John Becker, Assistant Vice President, pointed out that "York may be more efficient than Ryerson."

"I am not aware that because we spend less money, students are

being inconvenienced."

Becker did not share Ritch's assessment of the "housing crisis".

"What is a crisis?" he asked. "I think you would have to ask the people affected if they felt they were in a crisis situation."

"I haven't any doubt that there is a dislocation, that there are people who are uncomfortable but this happens every fall. At present its affecting citizens throughout the community, so it doesn't follow that the university is at fault."

Asked to comment on Ritch's charge that Macdonald's letter on the housing by-law wasn't forceful enough, he defended the university. He stated that in addition to Macdonald's letter, both he and Nesbitt had spoken to borough officials concerning the matter.

"But I don't know how many approaches Dale would say were sufficient. And I don't think it would serve anyone's interests, for the university to become embroiled in controversy with the borough."

### NOT FEASIBLE

Becker, like Nesbitt, indicated

that because of construction costs and the difficulty of projecting enrollment into the future, it is not feasible to build another residence building at this time.

Becker does not think that Ritch's demands for an increase in the OSAP living allowance will be met.

"I think Dale is saying that if the administration, students and people in the borough all get together and demand an increase in student loans, then they will be increased for the second time in a year."

"I don't think that is going to happen."

Becker was referring to the fact that in the past year the OSAP weekly living allowance has been upped from \$32 to \$40.

When it was suggested that the \$32 figure was set in a 1971 and that the increase might be making up little more than half the value lost in inflation since then, he replied, "Oh, I'm not saying it's adequate. I'm just stating that there has been an increase."

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## \$2. per day to eat? "Insane!"

By PAUL KELLOGG

The official university statement on food services states on page seven that a residence student should spend scrip (funny money) to the tune of "\$2 per day on the average." Excalibur questioned several students in complex one about the accuracy of this figure.

Excalibur: How much did this meal cost you, what did it consist of and how much do you think it will cost you per day to eat in this cafeteria?

Luigi Mattia: His meal cost \$1.20, and consisted of a roast beef sandwich, a salad, a bun and a glass of water. He estimates that two square meals a day would cost him \$3.50.

Brian Johnson: Johnson paid \$2.15 for corn beef, one potato, bun, salad and a carton of milk. He estimates that food costs him at least \$2 a meal.

Joe Grzelewski: For \$2.10, Joe ate a roast beef sandwich, a ham sandwich, soup with crackers, and a glass of water. He estimated \$5 a day to be his minimum food costs.

Marc Obonsawin: Marc paid \$2.50 for shrimp, cabbage, one potato, milk, a pastry and an

orange. He estimates a minimum of \$5 a day to eat at the cafeteria.

Dave Patteson: He paid \$1.70 for shrimp, one potato and no drink. He says that he will only eat one meal per day at the cafeteria in order to make the scrip last.

Doug House: For \$1.75, he ate corn beef, milk, salad and one potato. Two meals would probably average \$3.50 a day.

Anonymous: For potatoes, corn beef, a salad and milk, she spent \$1.75. She estimates a daily cost of three dollars.

Martha Randall: \$2.45 got Martha corn beef, cabbage, potatoes, salad, soup, milk and a roll. "And I'll never eat this much again." She thinks that by eating less, she might get away with spending three dollars a day.

Sharon Grogan: For \$2.25, Sharon bought shrimp, a salad, milk and a bagel. For \$3.75, she estimates that survival is possible.

When asked what they thought of the \$2 per day allotment, various cries of "bullshit," "ridiculous", "insane" and "starvation" were heard, covered with a curtain of laughter.