

Task force to look at federal role in post secondary education

By JAMES FLAGAL

A task force set up by the federal Liberal opposition visited York last Friday to hear a series of briefs from university representatives in an attempt to establish what the federal government's role should be in post secondary education.

The National Liberal Task Force on Post Secondary Education, headed by Roland de Corneille (MP for Eglinton-Lawrence and the official opposition critic for Secretary of State) accepted briefs from faculty, staff and student representatives outlining the problems these parties face in the wake of immense capital and operating fund shortages.

Gerard Blink, president of the Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF) addressed the student predicament resulting from post secondary underfunding.

Blink first described the affect of York's chronic space shortage on students and how "many students

cannot even find a place to study." According to Blink, the University is presently accommodating almost double the amount of students than figures previously projected in the early sixties. Moreover, the master plan called for double the amount of buildings. "So in essence," Blink explained, "we are managing with twice the population and half the buildings than previously projected."

With all these problems, Blink told the task force that "the University has done exceptionally well in keeping up the quality of education, but now that quality is being seriously threatened."

de Corneille explained to Blink how the underfunding spiral started in Ontario with the federal government's initiation of bloc funding. This allowed the provincial government to take federal transfer payments and allocate it to policy areas as they see fit instead of following certain stipulations. Before bloc

funding, university allocations stayed at 7.4 percent due to federal regulations but after these regulations were withdrawn university funding decreased to five percent.

"Unfortunately keeping post secondary funding at inflation is suicide," said de Corneille, because there are many specialized equipment requirements for universities where prices rise far beyond the inflationary index of five percent per annum.

In response to de Corneille's suggestion of increasing student contribution to rectify underfunding, Blink said that such an increase must

be accompanied by the support of the Ontario Student Aid Program (OSAP) reform. Blink said that the majority of students who need aid are presently not eligible for funding, and that before student fees go up, the OSAP system must be changed.

de Corneille also informed Blink about the feedback he and other members of the task force (Senator John Godfrey, Senator Royce Frith, and Bill Rempsey, MP for Newfoundland Grand Falls) have received throughout Ontario post-secondary institutions, and indicated that the persistent theme in all presentations seemed to be "we are on

the verge of collapse."

de Corneille also told Blink that conditions for post secondary education are much worse in the Maritimes and Atlantic students already pay considerably more for their education than Ontario students. "Furthermore," de Corneille explained, "job prospects in Atlantic Canada are far less encouraging than in Ontario, so those students who borrow money have many problems paying the loans back."

"A priority should be set," responded Blink, "that the future of our country relies on the future of the student."

Founders pub blamed for brawl

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status was restored, but McLaughlin chose to hold only two dances (one licensed) that term. The college coffee-shop, the Argh, then became licensed and is now being considered for renovations (to expand and install more facilities).

The second incident involved Norman Bethune College, when on September 25 the college held a Toga dance in their dining hall. A brawl took place, and a week later Crandles suspended the college's privilege to hold licensed dining hall functions, such as dances.

Crandles then stipulated that six measures must be taken for the college to be able to hold licensed events. These included doubling the regular number of door staff (from six to 12), selling bar tickets individually, and having the manager (Dave O'Sullivan) present at all functions.

After agreeing to the above measures, Norman Bethune's dining hall license was restored. O'Sullivan said however that "the college's management board has decided that there will be no dances held for outside organizations, only college dances."

The most recent incident, at the Cock & Bull Pub, involved a group of seven men (three York students and four guests), who wanted a jug of draft at 12:50 a.m. on October 10. The bartender informed the patrons of the pub's policy that no jugs may be served at last call. Two of the guests then swore at the bartender and would not leave the pub after being requested to do so by the doorperson.

York Security was called, but according to Cock & Bull manager Patti Bergan, the guests wouldn't listen to Security staff either. The Security officers called Metro Police, but they were unable to come to the scene. A fight then ensued when the doorperson was forced to physically expell the two men.

A security report was filed and it was later learned that the students numbers registered in the pub's guestbook were false. One, for example, was registered as a female student. "This means that the ID check was not properly carried out," wrote Crandles. "This is where your problem started; not at 12:50 a.m. when fists were flying."

"It was our fault, since we didn't

get the correct sign-in," Bergan said, "but we are checking ID and someone's going to get through if they want to badly enough. You can make a mistake."

Bergan stressed that the issue "isn't all black and white; there are grey areas in terms of checking people. We thought we had the right name . . . (but) the University would prefer no margin for error."

"In the past, most of our disciplinary measures have been against the troublemakers," Crandles said, "but when we don't know who they are, that in itself is the start of problem." However, Founder's College master Arthur Haberman claims that "falsified ID has never been a problem before."

At last week's security forum the topic of photo identification cards surfaced, one which the Administration is presently considering implementing. Bergan feels that photo ID is a very good idea; it would help a lot." Yet Thomas Pelletier, Inventory and Operations Officer for Food and Housing Services, stresses that York photo cards "would not be a legal substitute for Ontario Age of Majority Cards."

Security's morale plummeting

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situation," and the extra pay has been mailed out to the security officers with this week's pay cheque.)

Other aspects of the schedule have had a demoralizing effect on security and played a role in squad D's actions the source said. Because each squad rotates shifts every week one's body "can't get used to anything. There's too much switching and it's too taxing on the system."

A number of security officers also feel they are not receiving adequate training from the University before starting the job. "We answer domestic complaints, bar fights, traffic accidents, everything cops do," the security officer said, "but the University does not give any formal training. Sometimes you get two

weeks with a squad before you start, if at all.

"Security guards at York do everything the police do but without the authority," the source said. "Pseudocops, that's what we are here. All we have are our flashlights and our badges."

The October 7 incident in McLaughlin College where a man with a gun told a York student he was going to kill someone that day, lowered the security staff's morale even more, according to Claude Williams the union's (United Plant Guard Workers America) chief steward. Williams, along with two other guards, were dispatched to the scene but not told the man was armed. The police were not even called, Williams added.

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