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Seneca crowd slams Parrott for axing of grants

By Ian Kellogg

Five hundred angry students confronted Ontario's minister of colleges and universities, Harry Parrott, at Seneca College in Toronto last week.

The students were bussed in from all over southern Ontario and came to confront Parrott about his Ministry's (MCU) recently announced changes in the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP).

It was the fourth stop in his five campus tour designed "to answer questions about the plan and discuss the philosophy behind it" as the MCU put it.

But at the meeting Parrott said he was there not so much "to answer questions" about the unknown specifics of the plan, but to seek student suggestions on how to fine tune it.

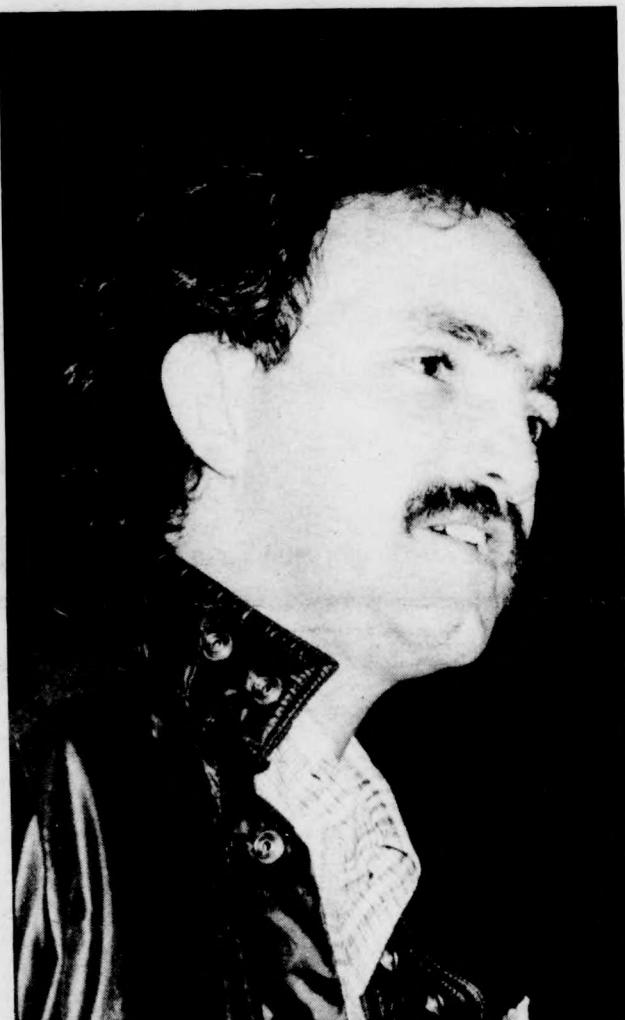
Judging from their vocal reactions, the students left unsatisfied with what he did say.

Most of the students charged that the changes in OSAP were contrary to the stated goals of both the Interim Committee on Financial Assistance For Students (on which Parrott ostensibly based the OSAP changes) and the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS).

For both the Committee and OFS, a student aid plan should have as its central goals the promotion of financial accessibility to post secondary education and of equal opportunity for all people to post-secondary education, regardless of income or social class.

In particular, students attacked Parrott's intention to cut off all grants after four years of full-time or part-time attendance in a post-secondary institution whether or not those were grant collecting years for the student.

*see GRANT PLAN page 2



York student council president Paul Hayden.

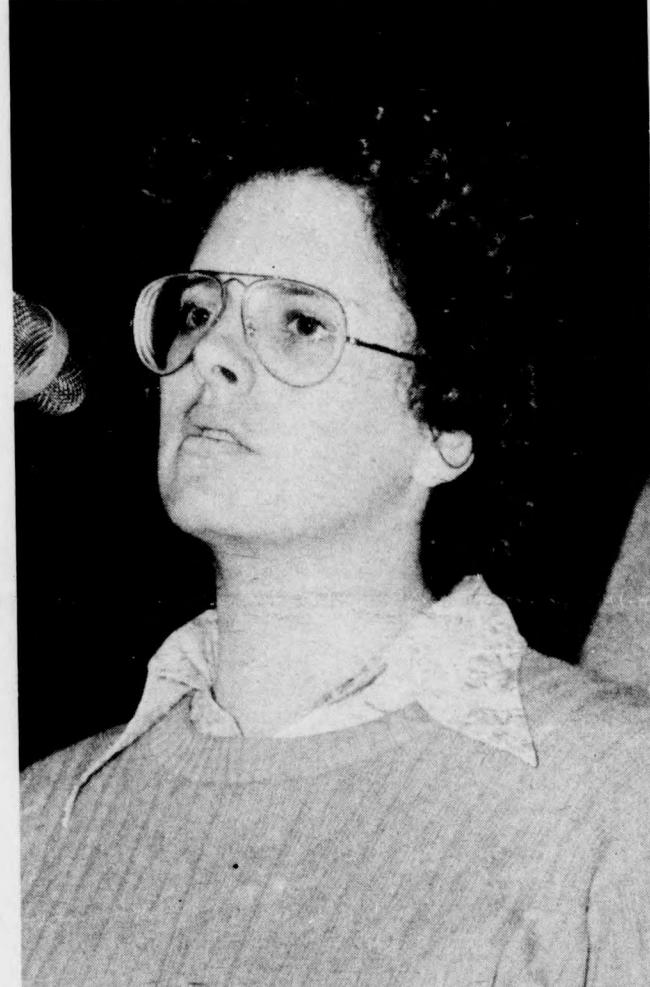


Student rep. on York's Board of Governors, Harvey Pinder.



Confronted by over 500 students and student leaders (like the ones pictured above), minister of colleges and universities, Harry Parrott looks somewhat overwhelmed.

* Bryon Johnson photos



Ontario Federation of Students chairperson Miriam Edelson.



Executive member, Osgoode Legal and Lit., Murray Miskin.