

Editorial

Unoccupied minds

The student occupation of the President's Office during the first three days of this week has to go down as one of the most mindless and misdirected activities to have occurred at York in recent memory. To understand why, one only has to review the events which led up to the occupation.

This year the Ontario government decided that it would increase university funding by 7.2 per cent which is well below the current 10 per cent inflation rate.

The York administration, in their effort to maintain all existing programs with a dwindling supply of money, were reluctantly forced to incur a \$1.3-million deficit and raise tuition fees by 12.5 per cent. Increase tuition fees further and accessibility might well be threatened. Lower the fees and either the deficit grows larger (a decidedly unfavourable proposition) or programs and faculty get cut. Down would go morale.

The decisions to incur a large deficit and raise tuition, a substantial amount, while not pleasant or desirable, were the best options in the current situation. Only so many members of the faculty can be cut and library acquisitions reduced before the quality of education available at this institution is seriously eroded.

After the budget decisions were made, President Macdonald announced that there would be no further increases in student

fees until a study was conducted examining their effect on accessibility. He called for an immediate review of OSAP and stated that he would be willing to devote a portion of his discretionary fund if OSAP proves inadequate and endangers accessibility.

In response a score of students take over his office and demand that there be no tuition increase in the coming year and that Senate cancel classes on March 27 to focus attention (and presumably draw more supporters) to the anti-government rally to be held at Queen's Park on that day. It's a pity Senate gave in.

Not only are the group's methods to be deplored (getting classes cancelled for thousands of students in return for leaving the President's Office) but so are their motives. If they want tuition to remain as it is they should be pressuring the provincial government—not an administration fighting the same cause.

Undoubtedly the "occupiers" regard themselves as quite radical. They are radical only in that they have discovered yet another means of expressing lack of intelligence. Large deficits and layoffs are really rather reactionary but that's what would happen if their demands for no tuition fee increase were met.

Perhaps on March 27, between noon and 6 pm, a professor of logic could be persuaded to stay behind. We know a group of students who would benefit greatly from his instruction.



Excuse me, Mr. Macdonald, sir. Which way to the washroom?

Thought control

Last week, Bob Wales felt compelled to quit his job because he chose to show two 3-D sex films as part of the CYSF film series after he had been ordered not to by President Keith Smockum. Smockum's request came because of "strong objections" voiced by the York University Women's Centre.

What the Women's Centre requested was clearly an act of arbitrary censorship. In the words of one spokeswoman from the Centre, "there must be guidelines for offensive films." Guidelines indeed.

On a university campus, we are presumably developing our

critical faculties so that we can in some way rationally judge the value of material presented to us. And theoretically, we are at liberty as individuals to accept any material we choose for our consideration. One group does not have the right to decide for another what will be deemed acceptable.

This would sound to most like one of the more obvious of democratic traditions, however, the Women's Centre, with no evidence of majority representation, endeavoured to effect an act of censorship that went directly against the principle.

The spirit behind the showing of the films was not intended as destructive. It was a joke, and for anyone ignorant of that kind of film, it was an education. Had the Centre produced support for their demands in the form of a petition, or chosen as a group to formally and publicly boycott or denounce the proceedings, their point would have been better made and better taken.

As it was, however, the Centre went ultimately against their own interests. They have been labelled as a censorious body, more concerned with trivial victories than with attacking the roots of their problems.

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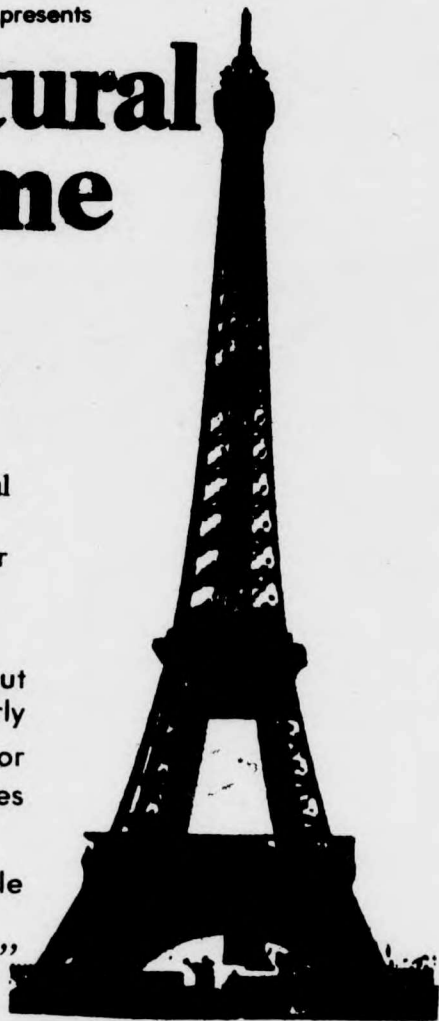
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Thurs., March 20, 1 pm - 3 pm;
 Friday, March 21, 10 am - 1 pm;
 Monday, March 24, 10 am - 2 pm
 At G.S.A. Office, N922 Ross.