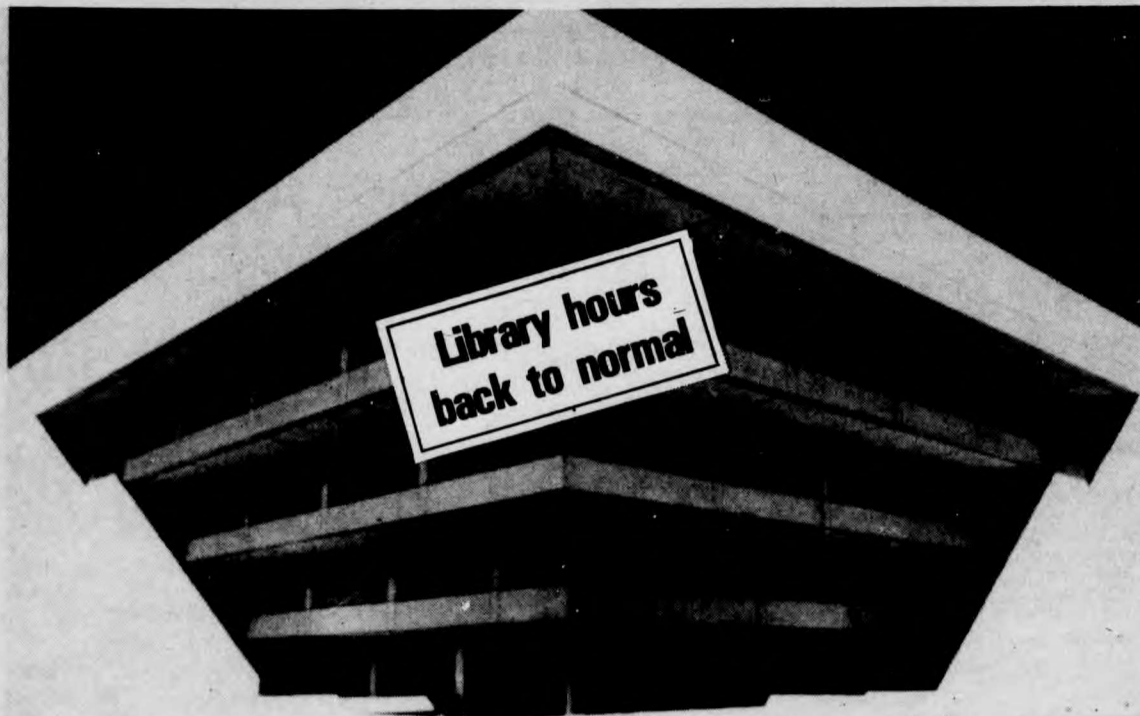


letters & comment

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, Excalibur, room III, Central Square. Please type letters, triple or double spaced, and keep them to around 250 words. Name, address and phone number must be included, but name will be withheld on request. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for grammar and length.

Deadline Monday 4pm.



Library now re-opened

Sit-in tactic had impact

The library hours have been reinstated as a result of a bit of student action. While CYSF and its President Hayden did nothing, the Legal and Literary Society of Osgoode, the student body representing law students, proposed a study-in.

They held a mass general meeting of law students which supported the idea of remaining in the Law Library until the normal, pre-cutback closing hour.

get the information.

The refusal of the President's Office to disclose financial information to a governor of the university creates the ludicrous situation in which a governor can only have detailed budgetary information if the BOG as a whole approves and passes a motion to that effect.

Since the BOG sits once a month, it would be a millenium before the budget would be exposed. I fail to

1973-74 to 1976-77, the budget of the central administration grew by 95% in comparison to the 44% growth in the budgets of Glendon, Atkinson, and the Faculty of Arts . . . (and in the same period) the budget allocation to administration salaries has grown by 65% compared to a growth of 33% in the allocation to academic salaries".

My feeling is that we can do with fewer bureaucrats and divert that money to the academic side of the university.

While the administration has been busy protecting their interests, they have not publicly opposed the policies of the Ontario provincial government which have created the budgetary crisis. YUFA is quite correct to say, "the administration could be taking active leadership to protect academic programmes and York employees from certain of the budgetary pressures rather than accepting them as unchangeable. For example, the President could aggressively seek to challenge provincial funding policies".

Neither, I must say, has the CYSF been vocal in its opposition. Perhaps Hayden, who wished to withdraw from the provincial body of students (OFS), and who believes in lobbying, has some secret effort afoot. Perhaps his weak exertions in organizing around the OSAP meeting with Parrott (the minister in charge) can be balanced by future activity.

In any case, we, the students, have no input into the budget. The faculty hardly has more, with the support staff trailing with absolutely nothing. If this university is actually to become a community (as the administration fondly refers to it), then the members of the community must help determine the budget and the priorities of York. Does the administration come first when extra dollars are around? Will it come last when cuts are made? Why are library services cut before free food and liquor at exclusive university functions?

Until students, staff and faculty have significant control over the budget of York it is farcical to speak of community; rather, the reality is an adversarial one. The faculty and staff have unionized in order to protect their interests. The student union, our CYSF, is ineffectual.

Hopefully they will arouse themselves to a defense of our interests. At a minimum they should start a petition to oppose any cutbacks which hurt students until the administration can prove the necessity of the cuts.

In short, the university should open its books, explain its priorities, and why the cuts cannot be made elsewhere.

If the university refuses then the example of the Legal and Literary Society should be remembered by all.

Harvey Pinder, BOG



I believe it was this planned study-in, reinforced by my suggestion of a petition against the library hours cutback, which prompted the administration to cancel their cutback.

Hopefully CYSF will take the example of the Legal and Literary Society to heart. They should spend less time persecuting student political clubs and more time opposing unilateral actions of the administration which hurt students. They should start representing the interests of students. In this vein it is quite revealing that no one from Hayden's executive has ever approached me and inquired, let alone suggested anything, about the BOG.

In my letter of last week, I stated that, "The university has the money. It is being spent on frivolous and unnecessary things, such as tens of thousands of dollars on free liquor and food" and then mentioned one example I was familiar with, the Chancellor's Dinners. Due to deadlines I was forced to estimate the cost and because I wished to be precise I asked the President's Office for the actual figure.

As a governor of York, a member of the body with ultimate responsibility for finances, I expected the figures to be produced without opposition.

Quite to the contrary, for after several days wait I was told that the information would only be released if the BOG expressly directed the President's Office to do so. A second reason was cited, namely lack of time, but this red herring was put to rest when it was stated that even if time was available I wouldn't

see how a governor can be responsible for finances if he is prevented from examining the details.

The administration has increasingly become a power unto itself. Not only is it refusing information to governors, but it is usurping the power of the BOG. In the spring the BOG passed a budget which set out how much money could be spent in each of the very broad categories.

In the fall, President Macdonald came back and announced that he was not spending \$1.5 million. There was no new budget, no amendment to the old one, and not even an endorsement in principle of the "embargo".

Currently the BOG does not know how much was removed from which category. In effect the BOG now sets maximums within which President Macdonald spends as he sees fit. All in all I feel that the President has usurped the powers and responsibilities of BOG. This is not to speak in favor of the BOG as it stands but, regardless of the non-representational composition of the BOG, it is still much more public than the closed offices of the administration.

Miraculously the President's Office has found time to answer some people's questions. I am very grateful that YUFA has sent me a copy of their Progress Report No. 3 which indicates some disturbing trends.

The time YUFA has devoted to examining the budget gives credence to what they say, such as "from

The following are letters we received prior to the reversal of the library hours schedule, but were unable to print last week. -Ed.

Bethune dismayed by library closings

As a result of discussions at the October 28, 1977 meeting of the Bethune College Council, I am writing to you, to put on public record our dismay at and complete disapproval of the proposed restriction of library service.

All students living on limited funds in our age of economic restraint are well aware of problems faced by unexpected decreases in budget allowances. Increasing costs of living and education, combined with decreases in education allowances and limited summer employment opportunities, have necessitated that students allocate their funds in such a way as to optimize the alternatives subject to each individual's priorities; education being number one.

One cannot help but wonder where the priorities of a university lie when a shortage of \$9,000.00 (a mere fraction of any university's budget) restricts access to the students' primary pedagogical tool.

The ridiculousness of this recent development is particularly evident in light of the further necessity to considerably reduce the amount of money available for purchasing new sources. Such a reduction will, no doubt, mean fewer duplicate purchases of new and old editions. The student will again find himself/herself with a two-hour restriction in the reserve reading room but he/she will now have to leave at 5 pm on Fridays and 9 pm on Sundays (the hours when the student might normally stand a better than average chance of finding the source available).

Those students who spend a good deal of their evenings involved in research that requires the use of non-loanable periodicals have seen a sizeable portion of their research time hacked away by

administrative obtuseness. The student who pursues an academic career, while gainfully employed during the day, will take no pleasure in a move that reduces the only available library time considerably. Consider a full-time worker who attends classes three or four times a week. His/her library time has effectively been reduced by 1/3. Such students are by no means uncommon and, no doubt, universities with a less restrictive policy on library hours can expect a boost in enrolment.

The university administration calculates enrolment on the basis of full-time equivalents. Reasonably, this means they take the total course enrolment, divide by five (the number of courses considered full-time), *et voila*, full-time equivalents. If one considers the university enrolment to equal 18,000 full-time equivalents (as is the current estimation) then the deficit per head is 50 cents.

If instead one considers the number of *people who attend* the university and consequently use the library, the deficit per head is much smaller. In any case, it would not appear to be enough to force the libraries closing especially in light of the additional \$5 each student has been charged which totals \$90,000 (full-time equivalent).

Budgetary cutbacks are not something new to York University. Indeed, its current half-completed physical state is a perfect example of unexpected fiscal "belt-tightening". However, the effects of attending a half-finished university is of small significance by contrast to the decision to reduce the opportunity of access to the primary source of learning.

Bruce Terry, Chairman,
Bethune College Council

Our administration has wrong priorities

While George Bell, Executive Vice President, tells Excalibur that the libraries must take their share of the financial cutbacks, I would suggest that for the past five years the libraries have taken a great deal more than their share. Library staff has dwindled each year since 1972, and the book budget while increasing slightly in dollar figures, in inflationary terms has decreased maybe 50 percent.

During the same period

teaching and support staffs in the faculties and departments have grown, as has the student body, at least until this year, and departmental libraries and reading rooms have mushroomed and expanded all over the campus. What kind of financial crisis is this when academic departments, who I thought are not primarily in the library business, can go on funding books and periodicals for these reading rooms, and hiring staff to maintain them?

In the libraries we are having to let student assistants go (some of them are leaving the university entirely, taking their fees and BIUs with them) and engage even more rigorously this year in what has become the annual exercise of cancelling subscriptions to periodicals.

President Macdonald states in the York Reports for September 14, "The increasing impact of financial constraint makes it imperative that the university ensure that it has the capacity to decide on priorities and to allocate resources equitably," to which I answer, "hear, hear!"

Mary F. Williamson,
Fine Arts Bibliographer,
Scott Library

