

## York laments plight of Soviet Jews

By ZENA KAMOCKI

"They may bring us to our knees, but we will never die." Shari Feldman sang these words during the opening ceremony of Soviet Jewry Week last Monday. As Feldman explained to the small crowd gathered in Central Square's East Bear Pit, the song is one of tribute to Anatoly Sharansky, a Soviet Jewish dissident, recently granted permission to leave the Soviet Union after many years of denial.

According to Nicol Brin, chairperson for the Soviet Jewry Committee of the Jewish Student Federation (JSF), the event was prompted by "the media attention and information about *glasnost*" (the Soviet government's new policy of "openness"). There was a desire on the behalf of the JSF to "better educate the York community about what is really going on with Soviet Jewry," she said.

Brin emphasized during Monday's ceremony that no matter how much *glasnost* the Soviet government advertises, it is not enough to ensure the rights and freedoms of Jews in the Soviet Union.

York Provost, Tom Meininger, speaking on behalf of President Harry Arthurs, echoed Brin's words, calling the plight of Soviet Jews seeking to leave Russia one more "gripping drama in the universal struggle for human rights."

Meininger pointed out that the "Soviet Jewish population has reason to look with great caution and suspicion upon (*glasnost*)," as they have seen many promises made and broken in the past by oppressive governments. He stressed the importance of informing York "about one of the greatest struggles of all time."

Meininger also called attention to the "sacrifice and courage it takes (for a refugee) to leave it all behind and seek a new and better life. Their success is the community's success," he concluded.

Clariss Hartman then read a petition prepared by the Soviet Jewry



**TRYING TO OPEN DOORS:** Ex-refusenik Sasha Cooperman discussed life in the Soviet Union in the east bearpit on Monday afternoon.

Committee, protesting the Soviet government's oppression of Russian Jews. Meininger was the first to step forward and sign, followed by representatives from all of York's clubs and organizations. All interested students were also encouraged to sign.

According to Brin, student response to Soviet Jewry Week has been positive. "A lot of people stop by to listen and ask questions," she said. "Some want to write to refu-

niks in the Soviet Union. In general, students want to know what the *glasnost* policy is really about and what it is doing (for Soviet Jewry)."

Events planned for the week included a talk by ex-refusenik Sasha Cooperman, a presentation by several Canadians who recently travelled to the USSR, a chess tournament with Soviet Jewish chess master Anna Gulko, as well as thematic and informational displays all week in the East Bear Pit.

## Feds are mostly to blame

cont'd from page 1

by encouraging collaboration between universities and industry infringes on the autonomy of universities. She says the study in the humanities and social sciences will be sacrificed to study in sciences and applied research. Also the establishment of thirteen centres at seven universities, implies those universities that are not Centres of Excellence will become 'Centres of Mediocrity.'

Despite Weir's harsh criticism of the Peterson government Bob Richardson, Executive Assistant to Lyn McLeod, Minister of Colleges and Universities, says, "We're pretty

proud of our record." Richardson says the federal government should shoulder most of the blame for the underfunding of PSE, because the feds have put a cap on transfer payments to the province, and have reduced funding for student job programmes by \$30 million.

Commenting on the Centres of Excellence Programme he said, "In my opinion (there are) no losers. And by and large the university community is happy with the implementation (of the programme)." He added that the government welcomed the financial support from the industrial sector as a means to alleviate pressure on government funding.

## Conflict emerges over Student Centre deal

By LENNIE LONG

Conflict arose between the Student Centre Committee and the Administration in a January 13 meeting concerning the scope of the Student Centre's authority.

The conflict arose as a result of the university's modification of the Draft Management Agreement signed by both parties last September. Changes include the challenging of the authority of the Student Centre Committee to make contracts and maintain commercial freedom.

According to the Agreement, the Student Management Board would have authority over: space allocation; the employment of staff; the annual operating budget; contracts and leases for services and facilities in the Centre; and generally the power to make regulations governing the use of the Student Centre. Now, the university's lawyer has advised the manager of the Student Committee not to commence any legal proceedings against any third party without first obtaining the written consent of the university. This is a new condition which was not in the terms of the original agreement.

Robert Castle, chairperson of the Student Centre Committee, is unhappy over the new conditions and desires that the corporation have freedom to sue autonomously, without the university's consent.

Regarding commercial tenants, the university wants to lease its commercial space to the Student Centre and extend a form of sub-lease to be entered into between the Manager of the Centre and the prospective tenant. Both forms of agreement must be contracted by the relevant parties before any commercial tenant is permitted to commence operations in the Student Centre.

The fundamental problem for the Committee is that from the outset, the university would not discuss the possibility of the Student Centre's

Management Board leasing the entire building. The University, having space problems itself, wants to lease only certain areas in the building. In addition, the University wants to insure that any commercial tenants coming to the Student Centre are fully aware that their lease is with the Student Centre and not with the university. The Committee disagrees believing that it should have operational control over the building, since it is responsible for its financial viability.

Castle noted that "This would give the university de facto veto over our commercial operations, especially in areas where we're going to make money."

In the Agreement in Principle on the issue of Dispute Resolution last September, the Committee and the university agreed that in certain situations the university would be justified in terminating the Agreement, such as in the event of a declaration of default or bankruptcy. The university's lawyer has since proposed a provision specifying that the university terminate the Agreement if the committee breaches any term or provision of it.

Castle thinks the new condition is too harsh. He explained "It is not proper to allow one party to a contract to terminate that contract if they breach any one of the particular terms."

The university wants the Committee to agree to step aside and allow the university to take over the building. The Committee would prefer to submit contentious matters to arbitration. Castle said, "We have difficulty with this structure because first, I would be fully prepared to expect them to see our bank account and take basic control of everything; and second, how do we then pay our legal fees?" referring to any dispute period which might arise.

The Student Centre Committee and the university will hold further meetings to resolve these issues.

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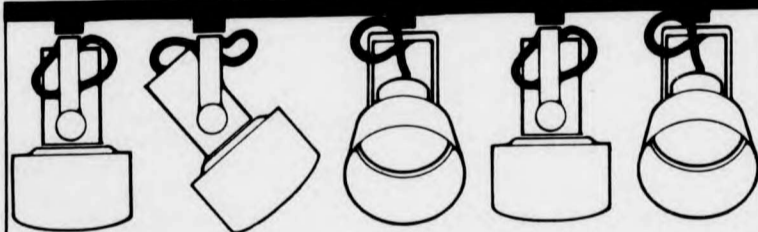
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