



Not profitable for Toronto Dominion Student loans to drop

Jonathan Mann

If you're hoping for a Canada Student Loan, you may have to bank off campus this year, because the Toronto Dominion Bank is reducing the funds it makes available.

A spokesman for the bank's Metro-West division explained in a telephone interview late last week that the loans are costing the bank too much money, since "they yield a rate of return that is below the cost of the funds."

Just how many students will be unable to get their loans through the TD bank is unclear. Ken Bromley, Manager of the York Campus branch, guessed that the bank would likely be reducing between 50 and 70 per cent the number of new student loans. "But," he cautioned, "it's based on volumes." If fewer apply, the funds the bank makes available will go farther.

A TD spokesman, who declined to name himself, described Bromley's figure as an "overestimation". He told *Excalibur*, "I don't think we could cut ourselves that low", but said that he was unable to furnish a more accurate estimate.

While the decision is not widely known among students, the reaction of those privy to it has been both immediate and negative.

Keith Smockum, President of the Council of the York Student Federation reacted strongly to the new policy. "I've never seen such low regard for consumer interest by a corporate body in my life," he declared. "Last year's move to close the sub-branch at Founders College resulted in long line-ups and inefficient service, and now with this move they are demonstrating that they are willing to use the students as pawns in order to change government policy for their own benefit."

When asked which policy he was referring to, Smockum indicated the reference was to the Federal Government's policy of putting a ceiling of 13.25 per cent on Canada Student Loan interest rates.

The TD spokesman did not deny Smockum's charge, but rather said, "I'm not aware of

anything like that...I'm not aware of anything of that nature totally."

Personal loans from the TD yield the bank a substantially higher rate of interest than the student loans, ranging, according to Bromley, from 15 to 17 per cent.

Currently, the prime lending rate charged to financial institutions borrowing from the Bank of Canada is 12.5 per cent; .75 per cent below the rate charged to students.

Harbinger becomes 'York Connection'

Reg Hunt

Harbinger, a York Community service for the last 14 years, will open its doors for the 1980/81 term as The York Connection.

According to Gary Yorke, a coordinator of the student-operated service, "The name, 'Harbinger', didn't seem to convey what we were."

"We want to emphasize the York Connection as a group of informed and trained individuals offering help and support in working through life's problems," said coordinator Aileen Pinto.

In addition to the name change, the group plans to maintain a higher operating profile as the York Connection. Among the activities planned for the coming term will be an assessment of student needs concerning the service, which in the past has offered peer-counselling, information, and referrals.

Peer-counselling, the coordinators explained, involves discussion of problems. "We don't give advice, we present the options," Yorke stressed that the York Connection is not a professional counselling service, as the one offered by the Counselling and Development Centre, and while the service relies heavily on the use of its telephone lines, it is not a crisis line.

The coordinators found the problems they dealt with in the past fell into three main areas: birth control, sexuality, and pregnancy counselling. In addition, the service helps many students with other personal problems brought about by drug abuse, loneliness, and heavy work loads.

A publicity campaign for the York Connection will start this

month, with an information table in Central Square. Information packets will be sent out to Dons and Residence Tutors. Several Awareness Weeks and Film Days are planned for later in the term.

Currently the York Connection's greatest need is for

volunteers. Pinto said that between 15 and 20 will be needed, and a training weekend will be held in late September.

Students in need of the York

university and the union met three times, but only once to go over the issues."

"The part-time budget has been shrinking. Last year we gained a good seniority clause, but this year it is being taken away," explained Steve Dranos, a part-time instructor who completed his Ph.D. two years ago. "We are the most vulnerable group and the easiest to cut."

Teaching assistants are paid a unit 2 part-time salary plus what is termed a "grant-in-aid". A graduate student will earn different salaries depending on whether he is employed as a tutorial leader, demonstrator in science, marker or coach in fine arts, and a "grant-in-aid" sum brings the salary level of each job to \$3,500.

Part-time tutorial leaders are not eligible for grant-in-aids and therefore receive a salary of \$1,355 per year for working one hour a week. A part-time faculty member employed as a course-director, equal in status to that of a union faculty member, receives a sum of \$3,920 per year.

"We've asked a differential increase for equal pay for equal work," said Bill Johnston, Vice-President of the CUEW.

Dranos, a part-time teaching assistant employed in the social science department, the writing workshop, and Stong College, feels he was fortunate to have

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Aid changes proposed

OTTAWA (CUP) Major changes to current student aid programs have been proposed by two student groups in reports to the federal-provincial Task Force on Student Aid.

The National Union of Students (NUS) is proposing a system of non-repayable bursaries which would be available to all post-secondary students who need them. NUS believes that the current system penalized the most needy students by saddling them with unmanageable debts through the current loan system.

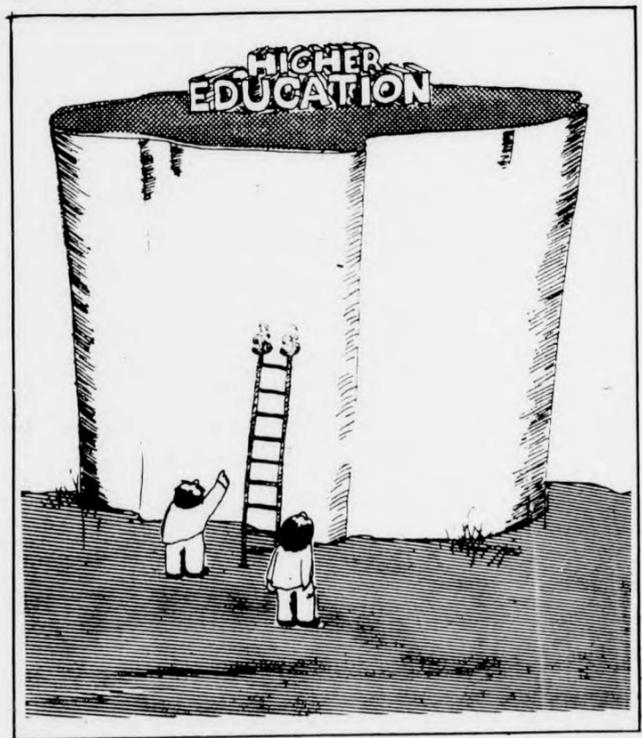
The bursary program "would be a fairer and more effective tool to overcome financial barriers to post-secondary education," according to the NUS brief.

The NUS brief also emphasized the need for a more accurate assessment of students' needs and resources.

"There needs to be a fundamental restructuring of the programs," said John Doherty, NUS executive officer.

The Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) brief says that the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) underestimate the amount of money students need to live, and place too great an emphasis on parental contributions.

The OFS brief recommends to the task force that targets be set



for lower income student participation rates in post-secondary education. The report also calls for progressively decreasing both the loan portion of assistance and the family contribution levels.

According to Doherty, most of the briefs presented to the task

force were from students and that other groups may not have had the time to prepare reports.

The task force, composed of senior student aid officials, does not include students. The task force is scheduled to present responses to the briefs by mid-November.