

Ron Kelly reports on AIDS conference

On Saturday June 3, I arrived in Montreal to register for the Fifth International Conference on AIDS, held from June 4-9. The media centre was very crowded and confusion was the order of the day. I talked with several reporters from a CBS affiliate in Chicago and the consensus was that this conference was not going to produce any major breakthroughs. The next six days would put such thoughts to rest.

On Sunday the events in Beijing overshadowed the opening of the conference at the Palais des Congrès in Montreal.

The mood was one of militance. AIDS activists from New

Ron Kelly is a third year music student at York who carries the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). He is the founder and president of York's Council on the Prevention of AIDS, which offers counselling and support services for anyone who has, or is concerned about AIDS. He recently attended the Fifth International Conference on AIDS in Montreal. He wrote about his experience at the conference for *Excalibur*.

York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and small contingencies

from Montreal and Toronto, stormed the podium to read a human rights Manifesto which included demands for anonymous testing and more drugs to treat AIDS related illnesses.

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney was jeered by many people because of government inaction regarding AIDS. Mulroney made it clear, however, that his government is committed to slowing the spread of AIDS and he appealed to the world to band together to fight the pandemic.

Next on the speaker's list was Kenneth Kaunda, the President of Zambia. Kaunda made an eloquent speech in which he talked about his son who died of AIDS

more than two years ago. He suggested that the fight against AIDS would be less expensive if money was diverted from the arms race. He received a standing ovation for his appearance.

Kevin Brown, a co-founder of the Vancouver Persons with AIDS Society was scheduled to speak at the Opening Ceremonies. He passed away on May 9. A video, produced a few weeks before he died, revealed the human side of AIDS. He demonstrated an ability and desire to encourage people with AIDS to take control of their lives and emphasized "We are not part of the problem, we are part of the solution."

The highlight of Monday's sessions was a demonstration organized by the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT-UP NEW YORK) from New York City. The activists strongly criticized Stephen Joseph, New York City's Health Commissioner, for his support of mandatory and widespread testing for the AIDS virus. Joseph denied the allegation at the conference but back in New York, according to ACT-UP NEW YORK, he spoke openly about the subject and appeared to have changed his position from one of uncertainty to 100 per cent support for mandatory testing. ACT-

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Construction Update

Construction on the New Academic Building and the Entry Pavilion will begin in October 1989. At present, working drawings are being made. Certain modifications to the Scott loading dock and service area will be

made and the fire access route will be completed in July to accommodate future construction.

Seventy per cent of the foundation work on the Student Centre is complete. Occupancy is still slated for February 1990.

Both the Student Apartments and Fine Arts Phase III are on schedule and in progress. Fraser Drive and the road around the apartments will receive their final layer of asphalt soon.

Payroll tax squeeze eased by government

by NANCY PHILLIPS

The provincial government has agreed to help universities deal with the financial pressure caused by May's budget. Treasurer Robert Nixon announced on Thursday June 15 that universities, along with colleges and hospitals, will receive a total of \$23 million. The money will cover the cost of the new payroll tax for three months.

The budget eliminated the Ontario Health Insurance Plan. In its place employers must pay 1.95 per cent of their total payroll to the provincial government. This would have cost universities \$37.5 million this year — about \$2.2 million for York.

The Council of Ontario Universities (COU) met with Nixon Monday June 12 to express its concern over the cost of the new tax. Dr. Will Sayers, communication director of the COU, said, "We convinced him."

Sayers estimates that \$6.3 million will go to universities to cover January through March, and he expects that Nixon will announce another relief package after this time. He hopes that Nixon will return to the matter in the fall transfer announcements, which typically take place in November. Sayers would like to see "ongoing relief instead of supplementary funding."

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