

# Resident meal plans: Does Marriott care?

by Stephen Moses

**T**he Marriott Food Corporation lacks respect for the culinary habits of York University's approximately 2,000 residents. Since all residents are held hostage to a 10 or 14 meal-a-week plan, or an all-scrip plan, some of you are already aware of what I am talking about. It is to edify the rest of the York population that I write this, so please keep reading; I wouldn't want to suggest you experience a meal here if you don't have to, since taste buds must be desensitized gradually.

Since I am one of the unfortunate individuals who does frequent the dining halls, being a meal plan and scrip holder, I will be speaking from my own personal experiences and those that I have heard expressed by my fellow sufferers.

While the food quality at most cafeterias on campus is at least palatable, the same cannot always be said for the residence dining halls run by Marriott. Marriott food is almost always served cold and half cooked, and if that doesn't bother you, check out the skimpy portions.

In case you do not believe the above, try to make a 12-inch submarine sandwich with two thin slices of processed meat

and one slice of cheese. The remainder of the roll is to be filled with your choice of shredded lettuce, tomatoe and butter or mayo.

In the 10 and 14 meal-a-week plan, students are permitted to have unlimited seconds, but after sampling one plate, would you go back for more? I would rather think York residents are not that masochistic, and even if they are, who would be hungry for two bread sandwiches?

Since I believe in equal opportunities, I will cease to regale you with the 'submarine' descriptions, and go on to better (?) things. Since the start of my meal plan, there has been no end to the amount of greasy and creamed food I have eaten. I honestly don't think my teeth are strong enough to enjoy an apple any more. I hate to think what meals might be like two months from now; creamed corn and strained prunes anyone?

In a further effort to cut costs and increase profits, the management at Winters dining hall have made further demands upon its customers. They have 'requested' that its users bring their trays to a designated area near the exit, and deposit the plates, cutlery, glasses and finally the tray, in separate bins; of course, all food must be

removed from each item first, by the student and placed in the garbage. What next, wash your own plates after using them? Speaking of washing plates and cutlery, has anyone else received same with crusty dirt on them?

In another attempt to add insult to injury, has anyone noticed that when kitchen staff or management bring their food to the tables (to sit among their subjects), the food isn't the same as ours? It usually consists of whole and solid portions of food that we simple folk can only dream of; yes Virginia, there is real food, but not for you.

On October 11, the users of the Winters dining hall spread the word that if you were not satisfied with the quality of food and service you were to leave your plates and trays on the tables. By the closing of that day, the tables were filled to capacity with trays; some were piled two layers deep. Upon leaving, I felt sorry for the lone worker who was ordered to clear the tables.

It is a sad time indeed, when university students must resort to a childlike tactic to dramatize their concern for their health. The main question on most students minds is whether Marriott has heard us, and if so, do they care?

# Ramp remembered

by Mark Wright

**R**emember the Ross Ramp? It was a strange sight to see when I first arrived at York. I filed out of the 106A bus with the other fresh cow-eyed students and came face to face with "THE RAMP."

What a spectacle it was. It looked like something out of an Egyptian "B" grade movie. I half expected to see Yul Brynner standing at its pinnacle with his hands on his hips.

"So let it be written!"

Questions flooded my mind. Who built this sucker? What possible purpose did it serve? But the Ramp just stood there silent and profound; an enigma.

So I started asking questions about this eighth great wonder of the world and everyone had an answer.

Some said that it was made to allow the authorities [ie. Military] quick and easy access if a student uprising ever arose. It was a product of the radical '60s, they said. Radicals at York?!

Others, somewhat more esoteric in their thinking, said that it was a landing strip for interstellar travellers. They claimed that from the sky the whole campus looked like a giant turkey. They further claimed that the Ramp was the only man made structure that could be seen from outer space. [That is, besides the Great Wall of China.]

Still others jokingly maintained that it was just another way of getting to the second level of the Ross Building. I found that hard to swallow.

Was "THE RAMP" built for a reason or was it simply a matter of a bunch of guys with a lot of concrete, and a lot of time on their hands, got bored one day and said, "Let's build a ramp up the Ross!"

What the SkyDome does for the CN Tower, the Ramp did for the flag pole.

Whatever anyone's opinion was, it didn't really matter. What did matter was the fact that the Ramp added some character to a characterless landscape. [York architecture being similar to that of a Russian Gulag].

The Ramp stimulated the imagination. When I first stood before it, it seemed to be offering me knowledge. It beckoned me towards a new beginning, the dawning of a new age of university life. It was also the only way I found to get into the Ross building.

Then one morning the Ramp was gone! Obliterated! Wiped-out! What the hell happened?

In the place where the Ramp once stood there was now a sign. "Welcome to the new home of the York Entry Pavilion."

No one had said a word about getting rid of the ramp. Instead, in the middle of the night, armed with little sledge hammers, the heathens brought the behemoth down. That was over a year ago. And there's still no pavilion.

We lost something when we lost the ramp, even if it was only something to talk about over a beer in the Grad Lounge.

# York wants a \$40-50 million slice of \$176 mil provincial grant pie, says Farr

by Doris Montanera

**I**t's called the *Brief to the Ontario Council on University Affairs (OCUA) on Enrolment Corridor Negotiations*, and it will help decide how much of the \$176 million of provincial grant money allocated for Ontario universities goes to York.

The OCUA is an intermediary body, established by the provincial government, which advises on university funding, distribution and other areas of concern. With a new system of distributing money being put in effect, York hopes to get a bigger, and fairer, slice of the pie this time.

Since 1986, universities have been receiving approximately \$80 million of this \$176 million as incentives for taking additional students. The government has now decided to take the \$80 million and add another \$96 million to make a 'pot of money' to be redistributed among the universities.

Since 1976, the government has reduced the grant given to universities for each incoming student. Unfortunately, as York's vice-president (finance and administration), Bill Farr, puts it, "York's period of growth has been concentrated during the time when the greatest discounts on growth money were in place." What this means is, at the time York saw its greatest exansion in the number of incoming students, grants were cut by the government. This means less money in York's system.

Farr says the new distribution negotiations with the OCUA is an "opportunity to redress some of

the shortfall" that York has suffered from.

Each university is to submit to the OCUA outlines of its future academic and enrolment plans. This will decide what percentage of the money each university will receive. Farr said York is asking for "\$40 to \$50 million" of the \$176 million.

However, as Sheldon Levy, vice-president (institutional affairs), points out, "You can't be precise on the amount of money York is asking since it depends on the mix of graduates to undergraduates at other universities."

The universities will continue to negotiate among themselves, raising or lowering their expectations of the amount of money they will receive. Hopefully, this will result in a fair distribution of the funds. The money will filter into the system for four years, beginning in the 1990-91 financial year.

York argues in its *Brief* that its "academic profile was largely chiselled in ice, if not stone, in the mid '70s when funding began to collapse. Our promised medical and engineering faculties never appeared... [then] evolution of our... science of faculty was thwarted... [the] development of our graduate programmes... forestalled — all because we came on stream later than universities which had the good fortune to grow at an earlier period." This is why York feels it should receive approximately 23 per cent of the total amount of grant money.

This is quite a large sum, but as Farr says, this is York's chance to regain the money it was entitled to since 1976. He argues, "If we can

enrich our operating grant money — the average amount per student — then there is a little bit more to go around for everybody... you might find classes a little bit smaller, services a little bit better, buildings a little bit cleaner. It's along the edges."

Levy hopes the money will move "the university slightly in the direction that was envisioned in the academic [profile] and provide students with more popularity for discipline studies that don't exist at the moment."

Here are some of the *Brief's* specifics of what York proposes to do with the money:

- Increase the average enrolment by 11,178 — from 39,464 to 50,642 students.
- Begin a new applied science and technology programme within the faculty of science. This is York's response to a concern by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities that students in Metro may not have access to sufficient opportunities for studies in this field. Through this programme, York hopes to solve this problem and meet the demand for technologically oriented education.
- Follow through with plans for an undergraduate, direct entry programme in environmental studies. This would complement York's current Masters degree and PhD in environmental studies.
- Make the undergraduate, part-time, evening social work programme at Atkinson available also as a daytime, full-time programme.
- Allow high school graduates direct entry to the Bachelor of Business Administration programme.
- Establish a BA programme in nursing.
- Expand the faculty of education.
- Increase graduate enrolment. One of the aims of this programme is to increase the number of women professors. In this direction, York wants to open the first graduate programme in women's studies in the province.
- Set up a PhD in Fine Arts.
- Expand the French language programme at Glendon so that at least half of all instruction will be in French.
- Attempt to alleviate York's notorious space shortage. For years, York has had only 70 per cent of the space it needs. This is no surprise to anyone who has walked through Central Square. By 1992, phase two of York's construction programme will leave it only 2 per cent ahead in trying to solve its space shortage problem. The money will be used to help York athletics, an area where the university is behind, compared with other universities.

These are all important proposals that York was previously forced to put aside. Because it grew during the wrong period, its allowance was smaller. York fell victim to bad timing and now it must try to take a larger proportion of available money. The idea is to make everyone else think so too.

remember, the meeting is at 4 pm