

## Professors question private sector's research grants to Ontario universities

By TIM O'RIORDAN

A recent book to be published by two York professors has sparked a campus debate over the government's matching grant system, and the influence which the private sector exercises over university research priorities through corporate funding.

Janice Newson and Howard Buchbinder, both York professors, co-authored *The University Means Business*, a book which studies the influence that corporate sponsors have exercised over universities in assigning research priorities.

At present, the federal and provincial governments provide one dollar for every dollar York raises either on its own or through corporate grants. But usually, the university cannot match the government grant on its own, so it turns to the private sector to obtain the remaining funds. The corporate sponsors are then in the position to select the research project which most appeals to their interests, and according to Newson, this often neglects the research priorities of the university.

"There exists several [approved] programs at York that are shelved for lack of funds," says Newson, "... but in 1987 money is provided to a program that a corporate sponsor likes." One example Newson cites is the Critical Work Study Program (CWS) at Glendon College which, though approved by York's Senate in 1984, remains inactive.

Newson notes that though matching funds to Canadian Universities has risen by 150 per cent since 1984, programs such as CWS are not of interest to the private sector and have been "effectively shelved by the matching policy of the government."

Newson suggested that a mandatory tax levy on corporations be implemented in order for governments to increase funding to university research. But several members of

York's Department of Research disagree.

Associate Vice-President of research Dr. Paul Lovejoy accuses Newson and Buchbinder of over-reacting to the situation. "Their statements are too strong... there's nothing in the system that forces me from doing anything different from what I'm doing," said Lovejoy. For Lovejoy the corporate sector has a direct interest in research at Canadian Universities. Lovejoy defends matching grants and plays down the concerns of Newson and Buchbinder saying, "York failed to raise its 1984 target of \$15 million from the corporate sector... how can they say then that corporations are influencing research?"

Lovejoy feels that there was no distortion of research priorities at York which resulted from the 'matching grants' program. Unless private companies are abolished we should not only expect but welcome corporate funds and matching government grants."

Research Department Secretary Nole Swapman shares Lovejoy's sentiments: "We [the University] are out for all the corporate funding we can get," she said.

Michael Copeland, Chairman of the York University Faculty Association expresses these reservations: "If the corporate funding grants come to a scholar without strings attached, O.K., but if and when the corporate sector attaches conditions, then we are concerned."

According to Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations (OCUFA) Executive Director Howard Epstein, "The concerns expressed by Newson and Buchbinder are legitimate as far as OCUFA is concerned. Now that corporate ties have arrived we're anticipating more corporate pressure... the matching grants that link us to cor-

porations may well hurt long-term, basic research.

Epstein feels that the problem revolves around the corporate sectors' need for quick return on their funding dollar. "They [business] are attracted to short-term, applied research in the area of pure science," explains Epstein, "but it is long-term basic research that gave us today's micro-chip supercomputers and genetic discoveries."

Like Newson and Buchbinder, Epstein feels that matching grants encourage researchers to pursue areas more attractive to corporate sponsors and, consequently, researchers will be discouraged to do basic, long-term research due to lack of capital."

In a speech to a joint meeting of the Empire Canadian Club following the receipt of a Nobel Prize in Chemistry, U of T Professor John Polanyi also raised concern over the prolonged neglect of basic research.

For Polanyi the problem stems largely from persistent Government underfunding of university research. "Rather than increase funding levels as promised in 1984 they [the federal and provincial governments]... cut funding still further and proceeded to introduce the matching program," he said.

Polyani explained that there "exists two basic philosophical schools of opinion regarding research funding... many believe that the government is duty-bound to fund research for the good of all Canadians. Others believe that, government being inherently wasteful, the private sector can do the job at least as well... Obviously, I subscribe to the former."

Newson and Buchbinder's collaborative study of corporate research funding in universities is scheduled to appear this October from Garamond Press.

**ORIENTATION BASH CRASH-LANDS:** Students were treated to a Blue Jays blow-out and lots of York hype during CYSF-sponsored Orientation event. Electrical problems at Glendon College prevented two bands from performing.

## Band delays dampen Orientation concert

By DAVID DOLLARD

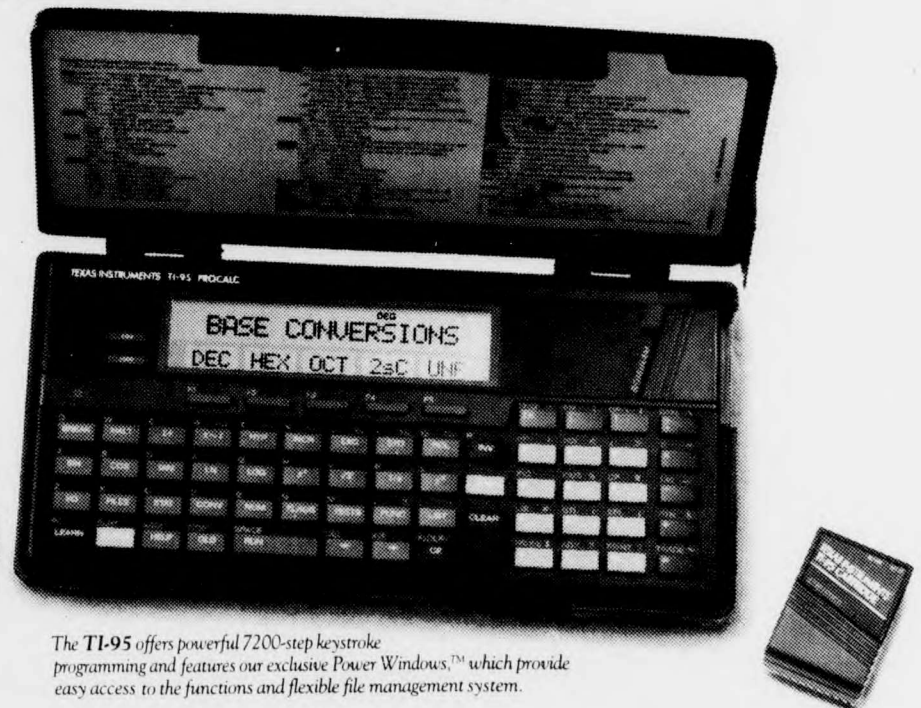
The Glendon College Student Union (GCSU) has decided to stop payment on cheques issued to three companies involved in the failure of the Council of York Student Federation (CYSF)/GCSU co-sponsored "Glendon Day" concert. According to Bill Keays, Vice-President of GCSU, a decision as to what, if any, legal action they may take should be forthcoming within a week. The companies involved are OPTEX (lighting), PA+ (sound), and Jack Frost (power).

Glendon Day, September 12, was to include a Blue Jay baseball game followed by a three band concert at Glendon campus. The concert portion of the day was to have begun around 7:00 p.m., but the failure of the main power supply generator forced "G-Day"

organizers to scramble for a back-up. A second generator supplied by Jack Frost, as well, had to be brought in from Mississauga forcing a delay in the proceedings so that the concert began at shortly after 11:00 p.m. Because of the delay the two bands (Directive 17, and Four On the Floor) who were to warm-up for headlining Mesenjah were "dropped" from the line-up, but they were paid, \$600 and \$400 respectively.

CYSF President Drew McCreadie commented that, "When you hire professionals you expect professional work." McCreadie also complained of the feeling of powerlessness, "(When) you've done everything in your power, and you leave it in the hands of professionals, and they screw it up."

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