

# Students walk extra for money

by Daye Cox

Banks are making it more difficult for you to process your student loan this year.

Most banks have consolidated the processing of student loan applications to one branch.

The Bank of Montreal has moved their branch for this "way out on the west end" according to Teresa Gonzales, vice-president External of the Students' Union. NAIT and Grant MacEwan students will therefore have to go further to process their loans this year as well.

Besides shuffling branches, some banks are actually limiting the availability of funds for this purpose.

Toronto-Dominion in particular is trying to put a ceiling on the total available for student loans. "Even if you've had an account with T.D. for years, you might not be able to cash your loan there," Gonzales said.

Secretary of State Gerald Regan has been approached by the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) and the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS), and promised that no student will be denied access because of what the banks are doing.

"That's pretty hard verbiage for him to back up," says Don Millar, President of the Federation of Alberta Students (FAS). "How he's going to stop it, I'd like to know," says Gonzales.

Loan applications have jumped from 8,000 last year to 18,000 this year. The number of students attending the U of A has increased by 600 to 1,000.

Summer jobs, for students have been scarce, so that more have need for loans, but may have trouble getting them because the Summer Savings Requirement for student loans has not been waived as the Students' Finance Board had earlier promised.

"It's going to be very difficult to get student loans this year," says Teresa Gonzales.

Mercifully, the Bank of Nova Scotia and Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce aren't consolidating their loan departments. Toronto-Dominion's sole office will be at 99th Street and Whyte Avenue; the Royal Bank's downtown at 10107 Jasper Avenue, and the Bank of Montreal's at 118th Ave. and 149th St.

"Be prepared to stand in line for hours," Gonzales warns.

The ceiling set by T.D. is ten per cent above last year's rate, despite the fact that twice as many students are applying this year.

As if this weren't enough, some banks (notably the Royal Bank) are not accepting loan applications unless you have an account with them. Nor can you open an account solely to take out a loan.

The Royal Bank claims that having everything in one center improves handling. Millar advances another theory. "This is another pressure tactic in their attempt to increase the interest rate."

The Canadian Bankers Association has been trying to raise the interest rate on these loans from being tied to the rate of Canada Savings Bonds (as at present) to the prime rate plus one per cent. This seems rather greedy in light of the fact that these are guaranteed loans, with a default rate now standing at 7%, and it was lost to the government, not banks.

The Federation of Alberta Students is collecting information

for a more comprehensive public statement. "This couldn't come at a worse time for all those students needing aid province-wide," says Don Millar, President of FAS.

The situation is worse in other areas. In Ontario, T.D. is closing all banks on campuses and putting in "green machines", which (obviously) don't give loans.

"This is making it tougher for students this year," Millar says.

## Foreign students demand back pay

# Students hungry for money

OTTAWA (CUP)—Zairean embassy officials are doing their best to ignore nine students starving in their midst.

The students all dependent on Zairean government scholarships, recently began a hunger strike in the embassy to protest the fact that their last payment was almost 11 months ago.

They also say their average debt load is \$2,500.

Delegations from the

Carleton University African Students' Association and the Quebec General Union of African Students (UGESAQ) tried to present letters of protest to the ambassador Sept. 1 but he was unavailable.

An embassy spokesperson told the students that the ambassador was in Toronto for an international meeting of finance ministers.

Thetophile Mandala of the UGESAQ said the students have

been denied access to washrooms and medical supplies in the embassy. He added the embassy room they are occupying has no heat.

He added the government of Zaire is "directly responsible" for the plight of about 30 students sent to Canada on government scholarships.

"We are astonished to see the authorities neglecting these Zaireans who find themselves in this situation," said Mandala.

Among the other students at the embassy, some have finished their studies and want to return to Zaire but have no money. Others have had their Zairean passports withdrawn since the strike began.

Olema Obhovvapi, a Carleton University graduate student who joined the strike said his aid was cut off in September 1981. He had to leave residence in May and the embassy paid one month's rent for him at a rooming house.

He has received no money since then and has been evicted from the rooming house.

Although Olema has completed his Master's degree in comparative literature, the university will not release his marks because he owes them money. He could not apply for his Ph.D. program at any other Canadian university because his transcript was withheld.

Olema said the students contacted the bank in Belgium that administers their accounts but the bank had received no money from the Zairean government. The students repeated appeals to the embassy and the government have been met with silence.

"It's precisely because there's been no explanation that these students have taken the desperate measure of this hunger strike," said Sully Gariba of the Carleton African Students Association.

Victor Ndovi of the association, said Zairean students in France and Belgium faced with a similar situation had their government grants reinstated only after they vandalized the respective embassies.

Although there has been no official explanation from the government, Ndovi said, "Zaire is going through a very difficult economic period."

D.G. Anglin, a Carleton University political science professor, said the country was \$120 million in debt in 1981 and the projections for this year are \$250 million.

"The country is in utter chaos," said Anglin. "The government is out of control. People survive by corruption and exploiting the system." He said the government even owes money to civil servants in Zaire.

**JAVA JIVE**  
*welcomes*  
*new and returning*  
*students to*  
*the University of Alberta*

Winter hours are:  
 Monday to Friday  
 7:30 a.m. — 9:30 p.m.  
 Saturday and Sunday  
 10 a.m. — 5:30 p.m.

TWO DELICIOUS GOURMET COFFEES  
 BY-THE-CUP  
 DAILY  
 PLUS SEVERAL FRAGRANT TEAS

**JAVA JIVE**  
 at the south end of  
 HUB & SUB