

Social Science, Humanities send SOS for research funds

By GRAHAM THOMPSON

York's faculty, student, and administrative bodies are lobbying the federal government for an increase in funding for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada.

York's Office of Research Administration, the Senate Committee on Research, the Faculty of Graduate Studies and the Faculty of Arts Student Caucus have corresponded with federal ministers and officials in their attempt to solicit funds from the financially strapped Liberal government.

SSHRC funding, which is distributed to universities across Canada, must be approved by a Priorities and Planning committee chaired by the Prime Minister, the federal cabinet and the treasury board. University bodies lobbying for more funds and SSHRC have presented the federal government with a five-year plan designed to provide unemployed post-doctoral students with annual research awards, "increased support of priority research on subjects of national interest," aid to research libraries and smaller universities, and a communication network, said John Leyerle, Dean of Graduate Studies at the U of T.

According to Leyerle SSHRC only needs to increase its 1983-84 budget by \$4 million to \$60.4 million in the 1984-85 school year to meet the goals of their five-year plan.

Bryan Massam, York's Dean of Research, said York is particularly dependent on SSHRC funding since fully 900 of the 1,100 faculty members at York work in fields funded by SSHRC, with the remainder being funded primarily by the National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC). In addition, York does not have the large endowment funds that older universities such

as the U of T have to fall back on when SSHRC money becomes scarce, Massam said.

York's Dean of Graduate Studies, David Bell, says that if the necessary funding is not forthcoming, "there will be a heavy cost to pay five or 10 years down the road."



Bell referred to a projection by the SSHRC which declares that "after a period of low replacement of faculty (in the social sciences and humanities) in the 1980s, the number of positions will mushroom in the 1990s.

To help keep the large number of graduating and unemployed post-doctoral social science and humanities students in academia until a "large number of faculty retire in the 1990s,"

SSHRC hopes to set aside \$5 million for a post-doctoral research fellowship program. The program would provide "support for up to 20 fellows a year in amounts of \$25,000 each, annually," said Leyerle.

Dean Traves said that if the post-doctoral research program is not funded Canada may again be in the undesirable position of having to plunder U.S. universities for faculty members, as happened when the Ontario university system boomed during the 1960s.

The SSHRC, with an operating budget of \$56.4 million, maintains that it is underfunded in comparison to the NSERC, whose budget is \$258 million. Leyerle said that while 55 percent of the full time faculty in Canadian universities is funded by SSHRC they receive only 12.5 percent of the federal research funds allocated to universities.

Traves says the disparity between the operating budgets of the SSHRC and NSERC "reflects the federal government's perception of the utility of social science and humanities research. It is easier to sell cancer research to the federal government" than social research, said Traves. Yet, "given the range of social problems in Canada this type of research can be just as important," he concluded.

Ralph Nicholls, chairman of York's Senate Committee on Research and director of York's Center for Research in Experimental Space Science, said that there were at least two reasons for the discrepancies in SSHRC and NSERC's funding.

First, scientific research can be "terribly expensive," according to Nicholls, because of the equipment costs in experiments such as those in nuclear physics.

Second, Nicholls said he suspected that the SSHRC is not as "realistic in what it takes to do

research (in monetary terms)," as NSERC is. Nicholls also said that NSERC has traditionally made a much more concerted effort at lobbying the federal government for funds.

Massam echoed Nicholl's sentiments when he stated that social science and humanities researchers "tend to sit quietly in their offices and libraries not telling the government or public about their work," while NSERC made a "strong case to the government and received significant increases," in funding as a result.

Clara Thomas, a York English professor and member of the Senate's graduate research council, said there are other factors that hinder the effectiveness of SSHRC's efforts to obtain funds.

Thomas said SSHRC contains two separate functions: the Canadian Federation of Social Sciences and the Canadian Federation of the Humanities. They were both established during the 1940s and thus predate SSHRC which was established in 1978. Thomas stated that this hierarchical division of power makes for a "heavy bureaucratic structure" within SSHRC.

Another problem for SSHRC is the system by which they must compete for federal funds. In this "envelope system" SSHRC has to compete for a slice of a fixed budget with such cash starved federal ministries as Health and Welfare, Employment and Immigration, Labor, and Indian and Northern Affairs.

Thomas says that within SSHRC the "humanities are dominated by the social sciences." She went on to say that it is the "responsibility" of those in the humanities to become more "visible and aggressive" in the promotion of their funding needs.

Jewett appraises Trudeau

By DAVE BYRNES

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's peace initiative was "too little too late," according to New Democratic Party external affairs critic Pauline Jewett, speaking at Osgoode's Moot Court last Wednesday.

Jewett, the New Westminster-Coquitlam MP who represented the NDP at last month's opening of the Stockholm Conference, said she was "very glad" that Trudeau was able to talk peace with new Soviet leader Constantine Chernenko, but she criticized the prime minister for taking a peace initiative now and not five years ago.

Jewett also speculated that Trudeau will retire. "My guess is that the prime minister will advise us of his retirement within two or three weeks and the Liberals will begin to search for a new leader," she said.

In her speech, Jewett focused on the question of cruise missile testing, calling it "Canada's particular touchstone on the whole nuclear issue." She criticized the Liberal government's sanctioning of cruise missile testing in Alberta and called the Liberals "totally dishonest" and "immoral" to say that our hands are clean of

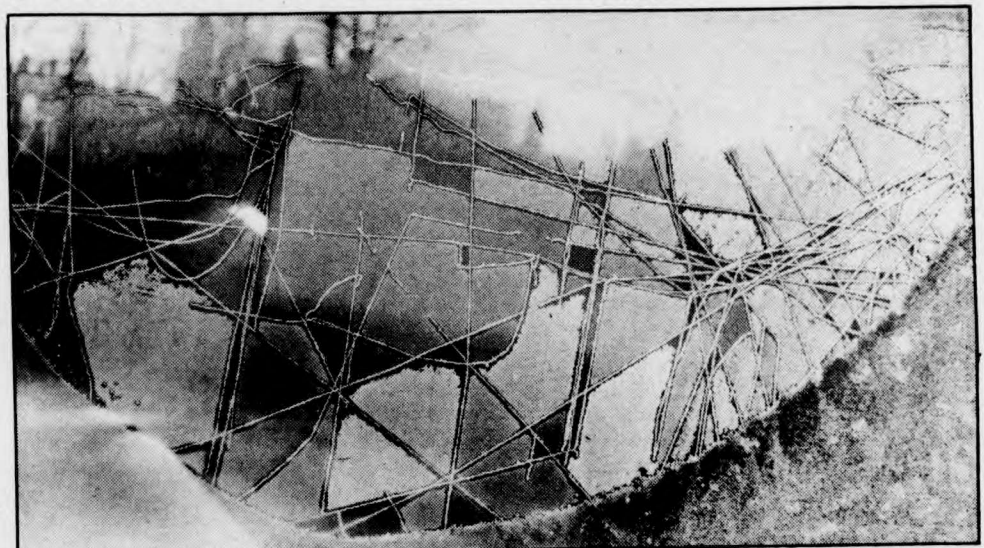
nuclear involvement.

She said Trudeau's peace initiative went largely unnoticed at the Stockholm Conference, partially because it was not seen as being independent of the interests of the big military blocs.

Despite the impression created by the Canadian media, the prime minister's globe-trotting peace efforts were overshadowed at Stockholm, Jewett said. In Stockholm, "everyone is talking initiatives," most prominently the West Germans, and Trudeau received little attention in the press there, she said.

Jewett suggested some initiatives her party would like to see Canada take.

Foremost of her proposals was that Canada refuse to allow cruise missile testing. The government should provide more funding for disarmament research and should not support the manufacture of nuclear weapon components, she said. Jewett also suggested restrictions on trade in uranium and conventional arms, a pledge by NATO members not to use nuclear weapons first, and a global referendum on disarmament.



Psychodelia? No, just ice crystals forming on the lens of X-ray photographer Roman Pawlyshyn's camera as it overlooks Stong Pond.

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