

# War might force Croatian students out of offices

by Josh Rubin

On October 30, the cash-strapped Croatian Students Association was given 30 days to come up with the remaining portion of their \$70,000 lease or face eviction from their new Student Centre offices.

Normally, the \$16,000 the group still owes the Student Centre Corporation wouldn't cause too many difficulties, but that's not the case at the moment.

According to some Croatian students at York, many of their associations' usual sources of funding have dried up.

"The people in the Croatian business community have a lot of other concerns right now because of the war," said Zdravko Bilic, past president of the CSA.

But according to Rob Castle general manager of the Student Centre, the Croatian students would have likely faced financial difficulties even without the war in Yugoslavia.

"If they knew they had a smaller community to draw money from, then they shouldn't have signed this contract in the first place," said Castle.

Still, Bilic doesn't blame the SCC's Board of Governors or Castle.

"We knew what we were getting into," said Bilic of the CSA's 50 year, \$70,000 lease.

Other Croatian representatives weren't as diplomatic about the decision made by the SCC.

"I'm pretty pissed off. I think they're being a little too hard-nosed

about this. We've been here at York 10 years," said a visibly angry Mike Gaspic.

Gaspic, the CSA's vice-president of internal affairs, says the new 340 square foot space is vital for his club to continue.

"Right now, we're trying to keep our club together by people hanging out in the halls. What's going to happen when we leave here?" asked Gaspic of the new office, which is one of three large-sized spaces on the Student Centre's fourth floor.

Castle says he understands the Croatians' plight, but also says the SCC didn't have much choice.

"We've got to enforce the terms of this lease in the same way for all of these clubs or we'd be open to a lot of legitimate criticism from other groups in this centre," said Castle.

Castle says the Jewish Student Federation had a similar problem in June, but the situation was quickly resolved when the JSF came up with the money.

## Bookstore faces record loss, student complaints

by Jennifer Lim

It's the biggest show in town, but it's still losing money.

Despite its campus monopoly, the York University Bookstore entered the 1991-92 academic year with a \$552,000 deficit, according to Executive Director John Hedgecock. And delays and expenses this year could make the situation even worse.

According to Hedgecock, there is little or no profit in running a university book store.

Obsolete inventory, students defaulting on their book store charge cards payments and an expensive new computer system are only a few reasons for the store's financial woes.

In addition, the store is still reorganizing after a costly move into the York Lanes shopping mall.

As a result, many students were unable to find stocked textbooks in early September and went to downtown stores instead.

To make matters worse, many textbooks did not arrive in time for

students. According to Hedgecock, the postal and Public Service Alliance strikes have created delivery problems across the border.

And students continue to complain about the bookstore's high prices.

"The books are expensive compared to other bookstores, and there is also tax added on," said Kishore Moorian, a second year student.

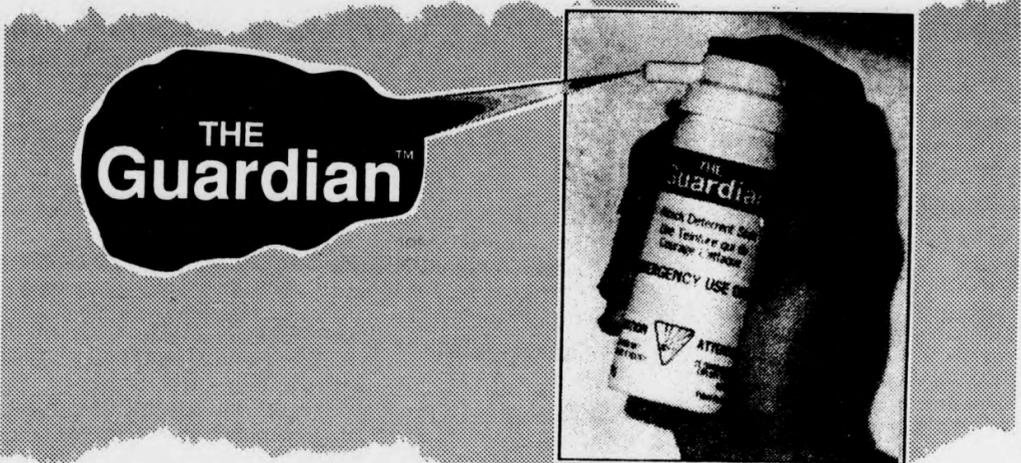
Hedgecock denied his store's prices are high.

"The prices are set by the publisher and are virtually fixed in all university bookstores. The university has no interest in profiteering from students," he said.

Although the bookstore and York University are technically under the same ownership, the bookstore operates on an independent financial budget, Hedgecock explained.

"We are not allowed to use public or university funds. We simply try to balance the books."

Hedgecock says it might take the next five years for the bookstore to pay off their losses.



## Product profits from women's fear

Vancouver (CUP)

A new "anti-rape" product is being greeted with disdain by women's groups who say the recent state of self-defence products is not helping women.

When Dye Witness is sprayed on an attacker's face, it foams up causing temporary blindness and leaves a green stain that lasts up to seven days.

Belinda Shelton, a member of the Vancouver Rape Relief Collective, said the trend of anti-rape gimmicks including whistles, sprays and alarms capitalizes on women's fear.

"Since the Montreal massacre, every Tom, Dick and Harry has been coming up with these devices taking advantage of women's victimization without actually helping the women," she said.

But Dye Witness distributor Bob Monaghan said the device is being marketed to help women, not frighten them.

"I don't think the man who invented it did it to scare women," he said.

"Dye Witness won't guarantee that you're safe. What we hope is that this product will stop (a rape) from ever happening."

Members of the University of British Columbia women's centre said they doubt the effectiveness of the product. They cited Vancouver police statistics which state that in 85 per cent of reported cases, the woman knew the man who raped her.

"(Dye Witness) perpetuates the myth of a stranger coming out of the bushes," said centre member Meesan Eglan.

The problem is not identifying the attacker, she said.

In light of the recent Supreme Court decision which altered the federal "rape shield" law, fewer women are going to be inclined to use the legal system, Eglan said.

Neither Vancouver Rape Relief nor the women's centre endorses the so-called anti-rape devices—they recommend self-defence courses.

Members of the Women's Centre are concerned that self-defence products may be a way of profiting from women's fear of rape.

Women's Centre member Sarah Demb said that marketing these devices puts the onus on women to defend themselves from rapists, rather than combatting rape at its source.

"If I'm raped, they'll ask, why didn't you have a bottle of mace or whatever?" Demb said.

"They're trying to scare women into spending money—trying to sell the idea that you're safe. The fact is women can't prevent rape. If a man wants to rape you he can get a gun and rape you."

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## NEWS FLASH

### Get your macaroni ready

Michael Wilson, Canada's honourable Minister of Industry, Science, Technology and International Trade, will be visiting York University on Thursday, October 3 at 2:15.

He will be speaking to "future business leaders" in room 038/039 of the Administrative Studies building, according to the Graduate Business Council. Student activists and union members will be holding a special reception before and after the speech.

Pasta will be served.



## Arthurs warns of massive cutbacks

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rector for the Ontario Federation of Students, said the first students to be hit by the cuts could be those who are already suffering financially.

"What we're worried about is that if universities have to reduce costs, the areas they will cut will affect sensitive groups like Native students, students with disabilities and single-parent students," said Bhat.

Both Bhat and Kistal-Kovacs expressed the same worry: that Allen will attempt to solve university funding problems by legislating either a large tuition increase or a wage freeze.

"That would be a way to split the [university] employees and the stu-

dents," said Kistal-Kovacs.

"This is the track that the ministry [of colleges and universities] seems to be taking. They're trying to divide faculty and students," said Bhat.

"We've heard that the government might be implementing wage restraints on faculty and that's something students should not tolerate," added Bhat.

According to Arthurs, York University is "a victim of discrimination" from the Ontario government. York only receives 94 per cent of the funds given to other universities, he said.

"To maintain our financial viability given that shortage of funds is going to constitute a very, very difficult challenge on everyone's part," Arthurs said.

## Black Caucus

Get up • Get into it • Get involved

A black writers' caucus of *Excalibur* has been formed to work toward the promotion of issues and concerns of students of African descent. We're a small but vocal part of the *Excalibur* staff and we need you, your ideas and your input. No previous experience is necessary.

The Black Writers' Caucus will meet this Thursday, Oct. 3 at 3:00.

Or come in and speak to Jeannine.

Our issues • Our concerns • Our voice

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