

EDITORIAL

Money without mandate

If last Tuesday's throne speech is any sign of what's in store for universities in the upcoming pre-budget announcement, we might as well paint the new Liberal government Progressive Conservative blue. Either way, it seems that universities are the first to go on the agenda once a political party obtains a comfortable majority government. Universities barely received a mention in last week's throne speech, and the only time they did was in the context of the Premier's pet project, the Centre for Entrepreneurship.

Now the first prerequisite to any programme is to decide whether or not such an addition will enhance the existing system. The government clearly failed to look at this consideration before creating its Entrepreneurial Programme. How exactly this project will differ from existing college business programmes could not be explained by an official at the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU). Moreover, some of the choices were rather confusing, such as Centennial College over Seneca, considering that the latter possesses the largest college business school in Ontario. Also, how three institutions (Queen's in Kingston, Loyalist College in Brockville, and St. Lawrence College in Cornwall) plan to divvy up the annual \$150,000 grant and all effectively benefit from one centre is difficult to imagine. These are only some of the concerns which the programme leaves unanswered.

Luckily enough, thanks to the campus Entrepreneurial Development Centre, and Professor Rein Peterson of Administrative Studies, York possesses the requisite infrastructure and detailed mandate to effectively implement this programme. In fact, Peterson's proposal demonstrates how such a programme could be successful if the government did actually have a sound philosophy behind the programme and if they targeted sufficient funds to ensure its viability.

But Premier David Peterson seems to be attracted to "sexy" words like "entrepreneur" and "excellence" and he'll stretch the government dollar to create these inadequate programmes, so long as they carry these names. Why the government doesn't take this money and simply give it to MCU in order to help address the already overcrowded university and college business programmes is a mystery. Why, for once, can't we simply fund an existing programme properly, before we decide it's time for a new one?

Ignoring bilingualism

Most university students acquire their education in the standard classroom way, where a professor merely instructs while pupils scramble to absorb as much information as possible. But some are lucky enough to engage in those courses or seminars that offer first-hand experience, giving the students an inside look into their field of study.

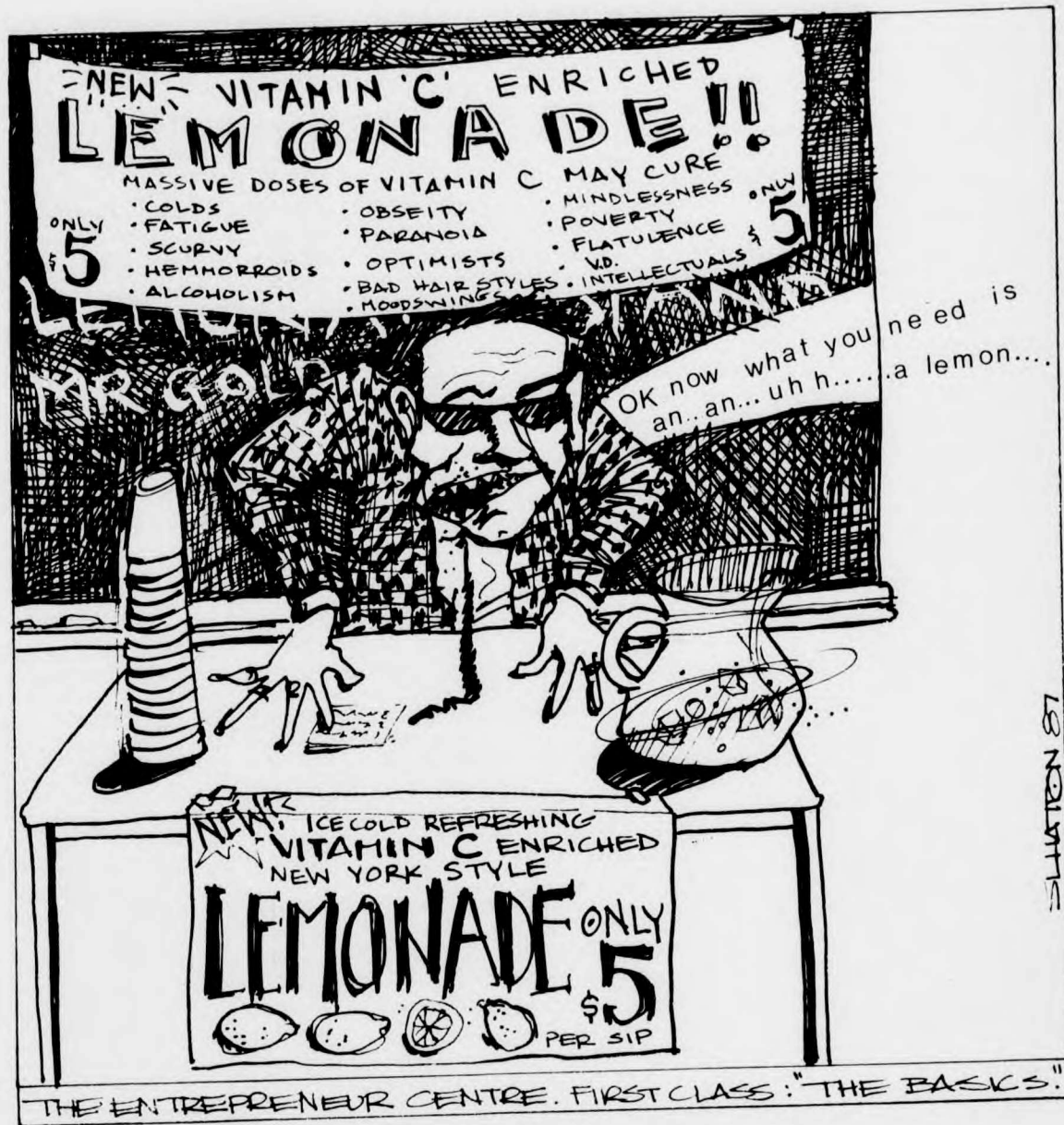
This is an especially important method when one attempts to learn a second language. Understanding the value of practical experience, York University has in the past coordinated a summer French Immersion Programme in Quebec. Recently, the future of this important initiative was called into question due to administration confusion over its funding viability. Fortunately, the administration has given the programme a temporary financial endorsement, ensuring its continuation for at least one more year.

York's commitment to French Immersion, however, seems fragile at best. This can be explained by the mostly administrative and financial nature of the decision leading to the programme's continuation. As one administrator put it, the programme received the go ahead simply because of the timing of the funding request, giving little concern for its actual worth.

Incredibly, the debate over the future of the programme did not include representatives of the French Department or the programme's organizers. Nobody involved in the decision could explain how York's past commitment from year to year has allowed the programme to develop a local infrastructure of volunteer workers in the small town of Saint George de Beauce, Quebec. These people include families who have been carefully screened from year to year in order that they provide a welcome environment for incoming students.

In addition, any debate over the future of the summer programme must include students who have attended it in the past. How else can the administration begin to appreciate the exhilaration of overcoming a linguistic gap and becoming a member of a Quebecois family; or the cultural experience of seeing local plays, partaking in song and dance and performing improvisations with the students of a local high school—of course all in French.

Language is merely an extension of culture. One can never really learn a language without an appreciation of the culture that gives it its vibrancy. In justice to an exceedingly valuable programme, next time its future is under review, some input from the organizers and participants would be welcome.



Vanier Pres responds

Editor,

As President of Vanier College Council, I felt that I had to answer the allegation brought against us.

At our meeting on Oct. 20, a motion was brought forward to waive Appendix E of the Constitution in order for Council to review the actions of the *Vandoo* Editor. Please note that it is perfectly within our jurisdiction and constitutional right to do so. An appendix is simply that. It does not overrule the Constitution itself.

The issue was centred on editorial policy; specifically on whether the editorial guidelines for the *Vandoo* were being adhered to. In these guidelines it says that the proceedings of Council are to be accurately and fairly interpreted. What we wanted was for the paper to fairly report all Council and College events and save the Editor's personal opinions and biases for the editorial column.

In the meeting we identified three purposes for the *Vandoo*: to report all College and Council issues to the public of Vanier College, to act as a vehicle for students to express their views and concerns in the form of letters to Editor, and to give Vanier students the opportunity to gain the practical experience of working for a newspaper. Clark Hoskin, since become editor, has done an excellent job in two of the three areas. The *Vandoo* has never had as large a staff as it now enjoys, and there has never before been so many letters to the editor. I also feel that the coverage in the November issue was excellent. We feel that this is the result of proper communications being opened between Council and the *Vandoo*. We also feel that this closes the issue.

It was never stated that Council will not accept criticism, nor was it ever said that we wanted the *Vandoo* to be Vanier College Council's "Water Buffalo." We want Vanier students to know the truth; good, bad, or indifferent. There are no issues we will cover up.

Mr. Hoskin, I commend you publically on the staff you have built up, the great appearance of the paper, and especially on the coverage in the November issue. Everyone on Council believes that this is the finest *Vandoo* yet. It is unfortunate that this issue has been blown out of all proportions. I hope this letter will help to clear up some of confusion.

One last thing... the motion to temporarily remove the *Vandoo* Editor was defeated 8-3. Thank You.

Sincerely,
Andy McRae,
President, Vanier College Council

Trade deal lacks humane vision

Editor,

The moral bankruptcy sale continues at low final close out prices. Resistance to manifest destiny would have required imagination and the courage to face the deepening crises that neglect has allowed to weaken Canada's foundations. Faced with the realization of his government's necessary inadequacy, Brian Mulroney has abdicated his responsibility for leadership to continental market mechanisms. This subordination of the nation to the economic sphere is a sacrifice of sovereignty, increasing the power of capital—especially American capital—to determine its relationship to government, thus setting the course for harmonization with American practice.

The debate over the free trade deal will necessarily generate a new definition of Canada, and for this reason

it should be a central focus of the university community. If we do not seize this opportunity to consider the future of our society, to critically analyze our past and present, to question our values and aspirations, we will be shirking our responsibility to society. Now more than ever, we should actually think about the inscription on the Ross Building and its humanistic values.

The "free" trade deal proposed by the PC government is inherently restrictive on the domain of positive human action. A humane society requires more than the vision of accountants focussed myopically on the bottom line. We must determine our own future according to principles of social justice, aspiring to a higher purpose. If we lack such aspirations there really is little point to the continued existence of a Canada.

Our society will require increasingly creative solutions if we are to deal with the social, economic, and environmental crises which are the legacy of our complacency. Whether we will have the will is questionable, but the question itself will be academic if we deny ourselves the means by which to meet the challenge. We cannot afford the bondage of American "ideals."

Milan Djordjevic

Who decides what's obscene?

Editor,

This letter is in response to the article "Beckett Theatre plans to censor obscenity." I felt I had to respond so as to express my rage. I commend Mr. Clark in bringing this issue to the surface.

There is nothing more frightening than the word "censorship," especially in a university. It appalls me to think that certain individuals have

cont'd on page 5

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