

# CUSAD: Black unity

by Andy Marshall

Andy Marshall, president of the Caribbean Students Association at York, offers his thoughts about the Conference for the Unity of Students of African Descent.

The Black Students Alliance at the University of Windsor held its third Conference for the Unity of Students of African Descent (CUSAD III) on January 5. It proved to be quite interesting and was fairly well attended, with representatives from seven Ontario universities and colleges in attendance.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Pedro Noguera, an expert in multiculturalism from the University of California-Berkeley. He stressed the importance of the Pan-Africanist movement and the necessity of advancing the status of blacks (or Africans) all over the world. He highlighted the historical role of students as leaders in civil rights movements, from the Black Panthers of the '60s to Tiananmen Square just last year.

He challenged students to follow the lead set in the past, to challenge the system and push for what's right. We need to take matters into our own hands, he suggested, challenging students to be political.

Guest speaker Dr. Howard McCurdy also challenged students to become politically involved. He presented a workshop on government politics, suggesting there is room for all of us, once we are skilled at being political. He proposed that the way to

acquire these skills was to become involved in a leadership capacity of any organization or students' association and to accomplish a goal in that capacity. By accomplishing an objective, by actually doing something, you have acted in a political fashion, McCurdy said. Keep doing things, and you will become skilled at being political, he stressed.

Other workshops were given by Dudley Laws of the Black Action Defense Committee (When Justice Fails—the Community Response); Kwakou Diallo of the All African Peoples Revolutionary Party (Pan-Africanism: The Role of the Student); Ken Sutter of the Alliance for Non-Violent Action (Networking to Fight Apartheid); Dr. Ramcharran, ombudsperson for the University of Windsor (Combatting Racism); and Dr. Noguera with Dee Baptiste of the Black Students Alliance (Developing an Afrocentric Curriculum).

The various discussion resulted in some concrete recommendations which the Black Students Alliance will present in a publication documenting the weekend event. Also, the conference encouraged a sense of commitment to the struggle. It was a day well spent and the BSA should be commended for the fine effort.

If interested in receiving a copy of the publication of the conference, contact the Black Students Alliance at University of Windsor, 401 Sunset Avenue, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P5.

# Library petition opposes GST

by Samantha Winter

York University libraries are currently participating in a nation-wide petition to exempt books from the proposed federal Goods and Services Tax (GST), which library officials say will result in higher library costs.

Director of libraries Ellen Hoffman predicts that "an increase in the cost of purchasing books will result in a decrease of the number of books the libraries buy." She added that York students could be directly affected by increased book costs since library services, such as the new phone renewal service, may suffer.

The seven per cent GST was intended to replace the old federal manufacturer's 12 per cent tax and will be levied like a provincial sales tax on goods and services. The tax has been attacked for covering many things not covered by its predecessor.

The proposed GST would increase the cost of books, which until this point have remained tax-free. Currently a full federal tax exemption applies to books and newspapers published in Canada and Hoffman fears the GST will overturn the traditional federal tax exemption on these items.

According to a 1987 study prepared by Woods Gordon Associates for the Don't Tax Reading Coalition, a group representing

Canadian newspaper, periodical and book publishers associations, Canadian writers will be hurt by cheaper import book prices. The Coalition maintains that this is in opposition to the government's priority of social and cultural support for the arts community.

The study predicted that a 10 per cent increase in prices will produce a 10 per cent drop in sales of Canadian literature.

Hoffman said libraries would be expected to compensate for the shortage of Canadian-made books but would also be buying fewer books. Since libraries cannot handle the extra budget pressure, she added, Canadian content in public and university libraries would shrink.

Communications officer for the ministry of finance Paul Geroux said, "In principle [the GST] should not have an adverse effect on library purchasing" because libraries will receive a rebate on the tax. He said despite concerns felt by members of the Don't Tax Reading Coalition, Geroux feels, "The bottom line is libraries will not be in a worse situation under the GST."

Hoffman said, however, the rebate may not come directly to the libraries which purchase the books and that as of now the rebate is not certain. She said libraries will spend so much time and money on paperwork, keep-

ing track of the rebate, that they will spend its equivalent.

According to the study, the province would receive the rebate and then distribute it to the institutions that have made purchases, if they qualify. The study states that distributing to individual institutions would be difficult and the administrative costs could be as great as the tax revenues themselves.

The Canadian Library Association (CLA), as a member of The Don't Tax Reading Coalition, is encouraging circulation of a petition which will be presented to the federal legislature to encourage the zero-rate of tax on reading material. York libraries are cooperating with the CLA by posting the petition at the circulation desks of Scott, Steacie, Government Documents/Administrative Studies, Law and Frost libraries. In addition, post cards are available which may be sent as a personal protest to Parliament.

Petitions will be available for signature until the end of January. Hoffman has no exact figure of how many signatures have been collected in York libraries, but hopes that "as many as possible" will add their names to the list.

Universities across Canada, including Quebec, are petitioning for The Don't Tax Reading Coalition.

# Security BEAT

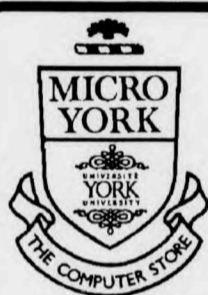


A car's convertible top was sliced open in lot 8A on either January 4 or 5. A radio and six cassette tapes were stolen. Estimated loss/damage is \$1,000.

A car's convertible top was cut open in lot 1A on or near Saturday January 6. The car's ownership papers and a garage door opener were stolen. Estimated loss/damage is \$2,100.

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