

Saying No to accord is vote for unity, Rebick says

by Sara Singer

The new constitutional accord will take Canada backwards by leaving out disadvantaged groups and giving more power to the premiers, Judy Rebick told a conference last week at Osgoode Hall Law School.

"We believe a No vote is a vote for unity and a vote for Canada because this agreement, gives less power to the people of Canada and ...Quebec, and will create more division and more disunity over the years," said Rebick, chair of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

Rebick said the accord is flawed because it puts the equality of the provinces above the equality of their citizens.

"Equality of the provinces, while it sounds good, [will create] a fundamental framework in which the people in the provinces will be more and more unequal," said Rebick.

According to Rebick, this inequality will



Judy Rebick, chair of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

stem from the transfer of federal spending power to the provinces in the new accord. This would allow provinces to 'opt out' of federally-funded social programs.

"The spending power of the federal government has been the central instrument for the development of social programs in Canada. The new accord will mean provinces can take matters into their own hands," said Rebick.

As part of the dismantling of federal pow-

ers, the premiers, instead of the federal government, would be the ones to set the "national objectives" which govern federal programs such as medicare.

"It's not the federal government who will set national objectives. It's the first ministers, behind closed doors, in the most inaccessible form of government."

Rebick also criticized the omission of people with disabilities, gays, lesbians, and older people from the proposed Constitution.

But not everybody in the audience agreed with Rebick's argument.

According to Jamie Cameron, an Osgoode professor, Rebick's belief that the provinces will eliminate social programs is unfair and unfounded, since historically the provinces have shown initiative in spending federal money in this area. Local implementation of federal money would in fact improve the programs, Cameron predicted.

Patrick Monahan, a professor at Osgoode

Hall, said he does not see any plausible basis for arguing that the Canada clause infringes on women's rights. Monahan argues the Canada clause prioritizes gender and ethnic equality by including them over other rights such as the freedom of speech.

"If the referendum fails then nobody gets anything," said Cameron. "It will mean the country will be deeply divided and in a state of profound disarray and it will be ten times more difficult to get any discussion started the next time round."

However, Rebick said it's wrong to think a Yes vote will stop constitutional rambling or create Canadian unity.

"It's difficult to say no in face of this barrage of yes propaganda and the crisis that has been artificially created," said Rebick. "What we think our presence in the debate can do is to force a debate on the issues and not just on 'if you're against the accord you're against Canada' and an enemy."

Leaked document calls for tuition fee increase

Province considers raising tuition by 500%

by Naomi Klein

Canadian University Press

TORONTO — The provincial government will consider raising tuition by 500 per cent, taxing provincial student grants and selling student loans to banks, according to a memo from the province's deputy minister of revenue.

The leaked copy of the confidential government memo dated July 28 lists a series of ideas designed to increase the government's non-tax income and reduce the province's \$10 billion deficit.

In the memo — which was addressed to all deputy ministers — then Deputy Minister of Revenue Kim Noble described the initiative.

"An inter-ministerial working committee has been established to develop ideas on new major revenue generators across the Ontario Public Service," she wrote.

Among the proposals are plans to levy a three-per-cent tax on Ontario Student Assistance Program grants and to increase tuition to "full cost recovery" — making students pay the full cost of their education.

If university tuition was increased 500 per cent, students would pay at least \$10,000 a year.

Currently, undergraduate tuition represents approximately 18 per cent of the full cost of a student's education. The rest is funded by government transfer payments to universities.

Student loans are presently administered by the government not by private banks—and although there is a three per cent federal tax on student loans, student grants are not taxed.

Government officials at the province's Ministry of Colleges and Universities and Ministry of Treasury and Economics said the list of civil servants' ideas will be considered by the government.

"I can't rule out anything, I can't rule in anything either," said Bob Parker, senior advisor to the minister responsible for post-secondary education.

"This is for the treasurer's information, he may decide some

are viable."

Parker added that the ideas came from the treasurer's office and not his ministry.

"For these projects to see the light of day, they would have to go through the ministry's (of colleges and universities) office."

Nicole Seguin, spokesperson for the Ontario Federation of Students, said she was surprised the government is considering actions that oppose the party's policy of freezing tuition in the short-term and eliminating it in the long-term.

"They are looking at a 500 per cent increase in tuition fees and making OSAP more inaccessible when students are facing increasing costs with less money," said Seguin. "I think this demonstrates a real desperation on the government's part to increase revenue."

According to Larry Till, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Treasury and Economics, the information in the memo will be considered by Ontario's treasurer.

"It is just an ideas paper. Nothing is written in stone," Till said. "From here the treasurer will move it through the treasury board and then through cabinet."

Till said a decision on whether to use the recommendations will come in the spring before the next provincial budget.



Protesters who said they were dressed as 'space cadets' carry a banner at last Thursday's rally in front of Vari Hall. Ken Craft of the Ontario Federation of Students and Maud Barlow of the Council of Canadians were among the speakers.

Photo by Rose-Ann Bailey

Space university opponents rally against bid

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campus, we don't want it in Canada."

Education is becoming an impossible dream to anyone without money and this hurts our society instead of helping it, said John Clarke from the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty. He argued the space university would be an introduction for Ontario to a type of system where only the rich can pursue their education at a high level.

"Post secondary education is being grossly underfunded and eroded at the federal level," said Clarke. "It seems that the space university represents a Trojan horse of privatization brought on to this campus and brought in to the educational system of Ontario."

Mary Ann O'Connor from the Action Canada Network insisted that the ramifications of winning the bid go far beyond York University.

"\$500,000 has already been spent just to produce the bid. This is money that could feed people, that could

make sure more people get into this university," said O'Connor.

Meanwhile, ISU bid supporters, including summer alumni of the space university's non-credit courses, gathered together opposite the rally and chanted their support for the bid.

Science dean Kim Innanen and Institute for Space and Terrestrial Science consultant Peter Mueller, who leads the bid, were among the project's supporters at the rally.

Mueller was distributing folders from the institute which contained promotional material related to the bid.

Innanen said the ISU will bring prestige to York and its research will be available to assist the university's faculty.

Rally speakers also promised they would never allow the space university to open at York, even if the bid is successful.

"We have to cause so much goddamn trouble here that they won't want to be here," York biology professor Janice Newson told the crowd.

Security confiscates decal from student's car

by Sheena Jarvis

York's parking and security services have come under fire from a student whose decal was taken from his car by security.

Graduate student Charles Simon's decal was taken during a routine check this summer. Simon received 18 parking fines over the next month and a half while his decal was still in the possession of security.

York security director Don MaGee said his department was not wrong in their actions. "It's not theft, that [decal] belongs to the university."

Simon said taking the decal was inappropriate. "Where's it going to end? Are they going to be coming into my apartment next? It's unnecessary and uncalled for and I want

practices like this stopped."

"I felt annoyed and angry and violated because it was my vehicle," Simon added.

Simon said he returned to his vehicle on July 6, found his decal gone and a Notice of Insecure Premises in its place. These notices are usually placed by York security officers on doors to campus buildings and offices they find unlocked.

The notices warn, "In the time it took us to leave this notice, a thief could have removed something from this room." On Simon's form the word 'room' was crossed out and 'vehicle' written in its place.

Despite this, MaGee said taking decals and leaving notices of insecure premises in vehicles is a com-

mon practice for security patrols.

By doing this security was trying to assist Simon, said MaGee. "His vehicle [window] was left open and his decal was taken [by security]. We've had a rash of decal thefts lately. We're trying to prevent these thefts from occurring."

Between Sept. 10 and 23, five decals were reported stolen on campus.

Simon received the first of his fines on the day security took his decal. "Once you give me one or two [tickets], it's a warning. But once it's one or two a day... it becomes an expression of bureaucratic harassment"

Simon said there is a lack of communication between the parking and

security branches of the department.

"There's a need for change" he said. "If security took the decal from my car, then parking should know I had one. That was my attitude."

Although Simon did not formally petition, Investigations Coordinator Bob Stevens agreed to cancel the tickets.

Stevens said he was not concerned about the incident. "I think we did everything possible to assist this individual."

Although Simon does not intend to file a formal complaint he said he will write a report about this and "other incidents" that happened when he was working for parking services last year. Simon declined to comment on the other incident.