

Student says unpaid interest represents larger problem

ADAM BRYANT

Michael Adam, a fourth-year philosophy major, wants to know why he was not paid interest when his course refund was delayed, and argues that his personal frustration represents a larger problem.

Adam describes his problem: "I cancelled my half-course Nov. 10 and was informed by Student Accounts that the cheques would be out Dec. 20. Jan. 24 I returned and was told that Student Accounts was suffering from computer problems, but that if I completed some paperwork, I would receive the money within two weeks. Despite help by a sympathetic assistant vice-president's office, student accounts did not return my cheque until Jan. 28."

Adam was directed by the assistant vice-president's office to J. O'Neill at Accounting. O'Neill said that after hearing Adam's case, "I offered him the interest out of my own pocket."

Adam was eager to point out, however, that "the interest I lost on my course fee was not much, but I think that my experience is representative of something that is happening on a much larger scale, and is representative not only of the collective interest being made on every student's delayed course refund, but also of the frustration students encounter in dealing with the administration."

M. Bider, the Registrar, provided an explanation for the delay of the course refunds. "York had to deal

with the fundamental problem of installing a completely new database system. All faculties (Atkinson, graduate and undergraduate) had to be put under this new system. The process of standardization is a fantastic task." Mr. Bider said, however, that the Registrar's office did not deal with the matter of interest money from delayed course refunds, and suggested the comptroller's office be contacted.

J.A. Heber, the comptroller, responded to the issue by pointing out that "the cost of labour and the cost of sending out and processing cheques for the interest money would turn out to be much more than the interest itself." When asked what the university plans to do with the interest from the course fees, he said that he would need time to contact large businesses to find

out what their procedures are under similar circumstances. Heber has been unavailable since mid-reading week.

Vice-President Becker has been

unavailable for comment for the past three days, as well.

Michael Adam comments, "It's the principle of the issue. I feel I have a right to my money."

Council elections delayed

JOHN P. SCHMIED
The Council of the York Student Federation's failure to reach quorum last night stalled the 82-83 budget once again, and also delayed approval of a date for this spring's council elections.

Because elections have a set timetable of 10 consecutive business days for a nomination period followed by a campaign period of 10 calendar days, the council must give its ascent within two weeks if the elections are to be held before the

last day of Faculty of Arts classes, April 8.

The council now only requires ten members for quorum, because some members have been removed for missing more than four meetings since the beginning of January and because some college council's terms have expired. Quorum if fifty per cent of the voting members of council. On March 2 the council will discuss the questions of suspended members and members whose terms have expired.

Student government analysis

Article raises question of conflict of interest

John Schmied regularly reports on the affairs of the student government for *Excalibur*.

JOHN P. SCHMIED

In the February issue of Vanier College's newspaper, the *Vandoo*, there appeared an article about the present members of the CYSF, York's central student government. The article was written in report card form, and its author was identified only as an "independent observer" of council activities. Other observers of council, however, would necessarily have to disagree with some of the *Vandoo*'s conclusions as well as question an apparent conflict of interest in its publication.

The article appeared unsigned and this should concern anyone who has read it. The only indication given of the author's identity is that he/she is an "impartial observer". Neither Editor-in-Chief Rob Carrick nor Managing Editor Larry Till are at all willing to disclose the author's name, no matter how often they are questioned. Given their determination not to reveal the author, as well as the highly opinionated nature of the article (which reflects well upon members of students' council who may stand for reelection this spring), one can only question the impartiality of the article.

First, although there is a disclaimer which states that the opinion of the writer is not necessarily that of the editors, it must be assumed that the editors did have prior knowledge of it. In his position as managing editor it would have been virtually impossible for Larry Till not to have seen the article before publication. It will be remembered that Larry Till was awarded the C.Y.S.F. position of Chief Returning Officer (term salary of \$650.) this spring by members of council's executive without being interviewed after four candidates (including Mr. Till) submitted applications for the job. Coincidentally, the *Vandoo* report card is flattering to members of that executive.

Secondly, those executive members will be among the CYSF representatives examining the *Vandoo*'s request for funding as a CYSF activity. The *Vandoo*'s request would

have to be approved by a student referendum, and the CYSF will discuss in upcoming meetings whether or not to include the *Vandoo* on the ballot with other activities. If the newspaper's request is placed on the ballot and if the majority of students vote yes, the *Vandoo* will receive direct funding from council's budget; the paper would be the only one of several college newspapers to receive special treatment.

Apart from an apparent conflict of interest in the publication of this article, a certain amount of criticism must be levelled at the grades which the report bestows upon various council members. Morris Bevilacqua, although not an incompetent president of students' council, has not been a dedicated one deserving of the A- given him by the *Vandoo*. He has acted in minimal regard to many of his campaign promises: the creation of a multicultural office run by students; improving food quality and services; and giving ethnic clubs and foreign students a greater voice in CYSF. For a president who promised "to provide York students with a leader that is devoted to representing the needs and concerns of all students", Bevilacqua spends extremely little time in his office and has been known to miss scheduled appointments with members of the York community.

Business Manager Tony Finn's B grade is certainly not an earned one in view of the fact that it is now the end of February and council does not (at the time of this writing - Feb. 22) have a budget for the '82-'83 academic year. Granted, delays in its passage have been a result, in part, of numerous council meetings having to be cancelled for lack of quorum however, Finn's budget proposals have also been returned to him by council on at least three occasions because they were "unintelligible and vague". The delays by Finn are unacceptable for a person in his paid position and most certainly not worthy of a B grade.

Marcello DiFrancesco's involvement in the ordering of buttons for the anti-U of T campaign and the fact that he misled council members about their purchase should have been a mark against him, not for him as the *Vandoo* claims in giving him a B-.

Most distressing in *Vandoo*'s "CYSF report card" is the D- the author inflicted upon Ellen Liebman. She was given the D- because she "did not bring down a budget" while in the position of Finance director. We are still without a budget (four months after Liebman's resignation) yet no other council members seem to have suffered *Vandoo*'s ire for it. What Liebman does in council is question motions and procedures at council meetings (when no one else has the courage or knowledge to do so) in an effort to prevent members from passing items without first analyzing their consequences, and she deserves at least a B for this activity alone. Additionally, the *Vandoo*'s vicious remarks about Ms. Liebman were both unwarranted and unquestionably in bad taste. In particular, the personal remarks would be unworthy of any serious newspaper.

Although Services and Communications Director, Susan Cocomile did not receive a grade in the article, she did receive a very favourable review for having "shown concern in her work." Not only was her involvement with the buttons in the anti-U of T campaign as questionable as DiFrancesco's, she is also one of the four council members who recently lost their seats because they missed four council meeting since the beginning of January.

The nature of the *Vandoo*'s "Council report card" raises too many questions for the article to be considered an educated evaluation by an independent observer. It is hard to find justification for many of the grades given to various members, and there are also coincidences involved which suggest that the *Vandoo* had something to gain by its publication. Finally, although *Vandoo*'s editors refuse to accept responsibility for the article, their determination not to name the author of such an extremely opinionated article arouses the suspicion that they indeed have something to hide. At the very least they are ignorant of the implications of such an article or are incapable of performing a rudimentary investigation which would have easily demonstrated the outlandishness of the grades.

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CORRECTION

In a recent issue of this newspaper Beverley Luetchford was listed as winner of the second Ford Mustang in the TransCanada Telephone System's Hello Again Sweepstakes. The winner's name should read **Renzo Purchio of Dawson College, Montreal, Quebec.** The TransCanada Telephone System apologizes for any inconvenience this may have caused.

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