

Award Money Released

O.F.S. Wins at York

DOWNSVIEW (CUP) — Student occupation of building on York University's two campuses last week (Jan. 11) persuaded the administration to release provincial grant cheques to students supporting the Ontario-wide fees strike.

But students occupying the student aid office at York's main campus remained, demanding the university endorse the position of the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) that the provincial government rescind tuition fee increases and decrease the loan portion of student awards.

The York actions started January 9 as the OFS-sponsored fee strike began on 10 Ontario campuses. Students at York's Glendon College campus occupied the registrar's office demanding the release of student award money so students could decide whether to withhold it from the university rather than cover tuition.

The next day students at the York main campus followed suit and took over the student aid office.

And, in a complete reversal of its original stand, York administrators announced on January 11 that all student award cheques would be released without first deducting tuition fees.

Before its reversal the administration would have blocked a potential 3,000 students out of 13,000 from taking part in the provincially organized fee strike against the government. The 3,000 are those students receiving awards.

But today (Jan. 11), in a complete reversal of its original stand, York administrators announced that all student award cheques will be released without first deducting tuition fees.

York president David Slater announced fines for late payment have been waived for the term. At Glendon, students

who were forced to pay their fees in order to get their grants will have the full sum of their cheques returned to them.

Delegates from Glendon said the response satisfied their demands and Glendon students voted to end the occupation. But the students at the main campus also asked the administration to endorse the program of the OFS in its cutbacks campaign.

Slater refused, "I strongly support improving the lot of students. But I will not commit myself and the administration to your package," he told the 40 students occupying the awards office. The students later decided to stay because the demand had been ratified at a meeting of 250 students earlier in the afternoon.

The occupiers are asking other campuses to support the OFS campaign and demonstrate solidarity with the York action by occupying buildings at their campuses.

Glendon students said in a press release (Jan. 11) that the administration's change of policy was "a small victory in attempts to bring about major change in government policy. The occupation would never

have been necessary if York had been a democratic institution. We shall now continue with the tuition fee strike and our fight in university financing and structures."

Slater claimed the reversal in policy on OSAP cheques came from new directions from the provincial government. Slater said Ontario colleges and universities minister Jack McNie told him in a telephone call the morning of Jan. 11 that the universities could release cheques "as if the students receiving cheques will make arrangements for payment of their fees."

"This position differs greatly from directives we had as late as yesterday afternoon," Slater said. McNie was quoted in the *Globe and Mail* (which has a late afternoon deadline) as saying that universities had a free hand in deciding whether to release award cheques. He talked to a reporter no later than that afternoon to which Slater was referring.

On January 9, Slater called the university "the innocent and

sympathetic intermediaries in the OSAP relationship."

He said York was following a 1969 government directive that said the "first call on the funds issued to students... is the payment of outstanding fees owed to the institution."

Slater also asked McNie for assurances that after releasing the cheques, the university would not be forced to give out information on students who didn't pay their fees. Slater said McNie recommended withholding marks or deregistering students as penalties for unpaid fees. But a 1970 York resolution passed by senate forbids academic penalties for non-academic offences in the university. Slater said this would not be changed.

At its final meeting before the first term ended, the senate endorsed the demands of the OFS which is pressing for a more equitable loan program, a lower age of independence, and full and public discussion of government policy in post-secondary education.

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Drastic changes proposed

by Mike Donovan

It may be possible to remove the President of the Student Union next year with only the signatures of 25 percent of the student body. This is one of the many proposals being considered by the Committee on Alternate Student Government. The theme of these proposals is to make an effort to create more contact and communication between the Council members and the Executive. These proposals will be presented to Council on Sunday, January 28. Some of the major proposals are:

1. Two vice-presidents to be elected.
2. An elected treasurer, instead of an appointed one.
3. Tentative proposals to cut down duplicate representation of Council (from twenty-three to eighteen representatives). This would eliminate Howe Hall and Sheriff Hall as well as cutting down the number of Arts representatives.
4. The principal recommendation to put forward will be the creation of an electoral slate under the leadership of the prospective candidates for president. Each presidential candidate would have to obtain the support of at least fourteen out of the eighteen in order to run for office.
5. Other proposals are that no elected officers may be chosen by acclamation, and that in order to remove representatives from Council, only fifty-one percent of the members of the respective faculties divided by the number of representatives allotted to that faculty, must give their approval.

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