

ADVOCATE

CUNY Budget Under Attack

By Marriah Star

DAMOCLES' SWORD IS HANGING OVER THE City University of New York in the form of budget cuts. However, due to intense political haggling, the extent of the cuts will not be known until the beginning of the summer.

The uncertainty over the budget puts the Graduate Center in a state of limbo.

Provost and Senior Vice President William P. Kelly said that the Graduate Center is dealing with three unknowns for next semester: (1) how big will the budget cut on higher education be; (2) what the tuition revenue will be, on whether it will increase or decrease; and (3) how many students will be enrolled in the Graduate Center in the coming semester.

Until these factors are known, the administration has apparently adopted the

unenviable position of hurry up and wait.

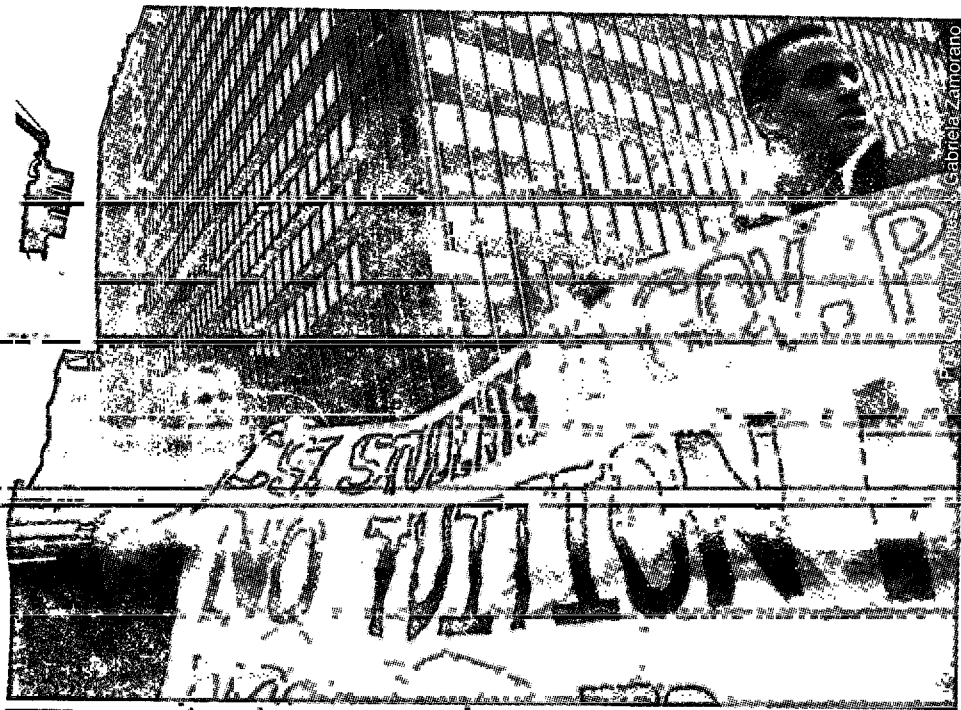
"Beyond-Austerity Budget"

Based on the budget proposed by Governor George Pataki, the entire CUNY budget will have approximately \$81 million in budget cuts. This amount assumes that the CUNY system will be able to raise \$121 million in revenues. Toward this end, the state government has proposed a tuition fee increase of as much as \$1,200, starting this fall. It has also proposed a substantial reduction in financial aid, including decreasing the Teaching Assistance Program budget by one-third. (The TAP has been providing financial aid to eligible New York State residents, based on a sliding income scale, since 1974.)

Noting that the majority of CUNY students have family incomes of under \$30,000, CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein recently told the *New York Times* that CUNY will try to keep the level of increase below Albany's proposed amount. He told the *Times*, "An increase of this level would be very harmful to many of our students."

Accordingly, neither is the Graduate Center administration jumping the gun, so to speak. It is awaiting the final figures of the budget cuts, and how much of this amount will actually be borne by the

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Rolling Up the Welcome Mat on Foreign Nationals

By Kimberly Chase

THE RECENT IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIAL Registration, under the rubric of the USA PATRIOT Act, has drastically increased the Bush administration's right to determine the fate of foreign nationals. Since the September 11 attacks, the government has sought to improve its ability to track foreign citizens on US territory, but civil rights advocates have challenged the government's methods as unconstitutional. While registration may give the government a better idea of who is in the country and what they are doing, it has also resulted in the infringement of the rights of immigrants and foreign citizens.

What's Controversial about Registration?

In October 2002, the government began Special Registration, which requires men over the age of 16 from a list of 24

predominantly Muslim countries and North Korea to enlist with the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS). They are also required to provide the agency with a photograph and fingerprints, and to come in for an interview with an INS agent. Some 46,000 people are expected to register, excluding US citizens, legal permanent residents, people seeking asylum prior to specific dates, and diplomats.

The first deadline was for citizens or nationals of Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Libya, and Syria—all considered by the US government to be states sponsoring terrorism. More recently, deadlines passed for citizens or nationals of Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Eritrea, Lebanon, Morocco, North Korea, Oman, Qatar, Somalia, Tunisia, The United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Citizens of other nationalities are also scheduled for registrations.

Special Registration is part of the

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DSC Issues Statement Against War on Iraq

By James Trimarco

AFTER AN HOUR AND A HALF OF HEATED debate, the Doctoral Students' Council (DSC) of the Graduate Center approved an official statement against the proposed US-led war against Iraq. The most contentious discussions focused on what role the DSC could or should play in political matters, rather than the actual anti-war position of the statement.

Upon the urging of their constituencies, some representatives had asked the DSC to break its silence on the issue. On the other hand, other DSC members cautioned against such a move, arguing that the student community seemed divided in its views on the proposed war. They referred to the results of an informal poll among students conducted by the DSC via email in which a sizeable minority of students registered their opposition to the issuance of such a statement.

The impasse was broken only when the Council reviewed its mandate. The discussion paid special attention to two items in the DSC Constitution. Specifically, Item B of article three states that it is the purpose of the DSC to "promote the democratization" of CUNY in order to enable students "to participate in the important social, political, and

economic decisions that affect the quality of their lives and of their community." This item suggests that the DSC does in fact have the right to take a stand on political issues, particularly when federal money which could be used to revitalize New York State's public services and economy could be diverted to the war effort—a decision which a majority of DSC members saw as potentially affecting the lives of students.

The discussion then proceeded to examine how this related to article three, item D, which states that the DSC must strive to represent "all students." Some representatives pointed out that because the DSC adheres to the model of representative democracy, the plenary members may take a position, as long as it represents the interests of the majority.

The DSC's informal poll showed that the ratio of students in favor of the DSC issuing an anti-war statement in relation to those opposed, was about two to one. This ratio was more evident among students in some social science and humanities departments, but less so among those in the natural sciences and in Criminal Justice.

Based on this majority, the DSC promptly drafted and issued the statement, printed on page 15 of this issue.