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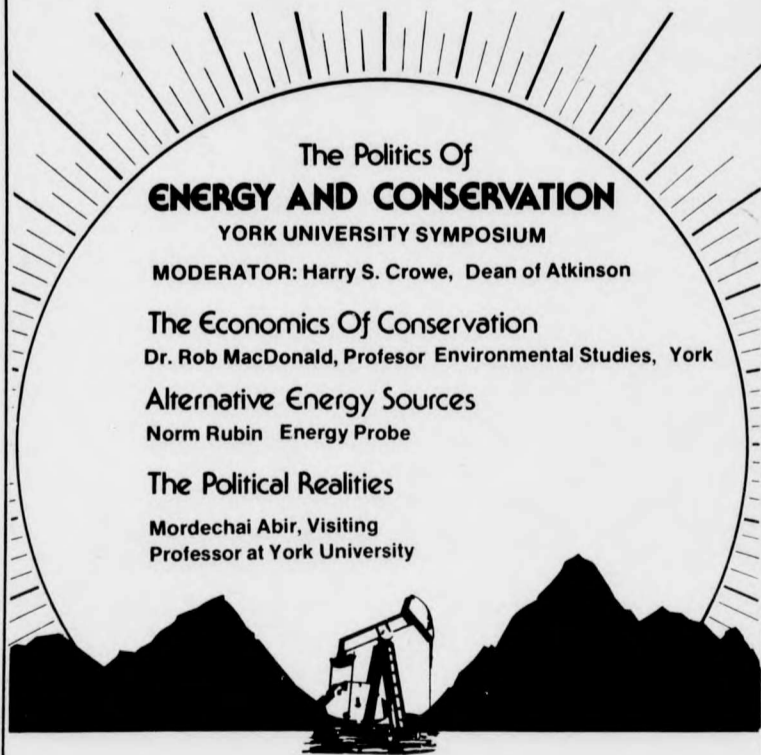
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Does York have a future?

"Canada has been consuming its future, rather than investing in it."

Carl Beigie, President of the C.D. Howe Research Institute of Montreal, October, 1979
As we did last year, the York University Faculty Association (YUFA) has contributed a submission to York University's Brief to the Ontario Council for University Affairs (**Ontario's Future and York University: Saving the System from the Brink**), YUFA's Contribution to the OCUA Brief, by Brigitte Kitchen and Tillo E. Kuhn, February 1980, 10 pp.).

Here, in the first of two articles, we present a summary of the Introduction and Scenario for the Future. Next week, we will report to you on Opportunities for York University, Future Roles of OCUA, and on Conclusions and Recommendations.

The York University Faculty Association (YUFA) is greatly concerned with the academic, intellectual and collegial climate of the York University community. There can be little doubt that the universities in Ontario have arrived at a crossroad, where they will have to decide what role they must play within the future development of the Province of Ontario. Already we are faced with the bleak perspective "of a university system on the brink of major difficulty" (OCUA, **System on the Brink**, September 1979, p. 4). This means that in order to survive, the universities, and York is no exception, will have to discard their policy of "muddling through" and engage in some serious social and academic planning looking ahead to the year 2000. So far there seems to have been little long-range planning at York about what the university should and can become in the decades ahead. Weaknesses of the provincial post-secondary financing ap-

paratus, especially the lack of developmental funding, are a major cause. The YUFA brief addresses this important aspect.

Looking into the future, we will see an aging Canadian population (3.4 million over 65 years by 2001), higher ratios of dependents (young and old) to the productive, and hence greater burdens on society and the economy. For many decades Canada has lived off the human resources and educational systems of other nations through selective immigration rules based on skills and material assets. This era is over.

We have every reason to believe that Canada faces very serious challenges in the international arena during the next decades: aggressive international trade and technology surges by hosts of dynamic nations in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America; replacing the previously dominant USA, with its subsidiary Canadian economic system; continuing influence and sophistication of the European Community; further disruptions of the international finance and trade institutions, which used to serve Canada rather well; growing isolation of Canada from all the world's big common markets and free trade areas. In summary, the era of the affluent and wasteful North American society, including the Canadian branch, based on cheap natural resources, technological and managerial leads developed after the war within a benign international environment, is definitely over.

Ontario will obviously have to find and struggle for new, creative roles within Canada. In a way, what Canada must accomplish within a tough, competitive world environment, Ontario must achieve within an increasingly centrifugal Canadian system, where "Canada's industrial heartland," as it was describ-

ed in the past, has no longer any automatic advantages. A strong, innovative, highly-sophisticated economic and industrial system for Ontario, which can serve Canada and international markets effectively, will be required. We need "knowledge workers" for the future. It does not take much intelligence to conclude that human resources, and hence a very good educational system, are essential for Ontario's survival.

Ironically, the Ontario universities now do not only see their revenue base eroded by inflation year after year, but they are also trapped in needlessly unstable academic manpower supply-demand cycles. As President Ham of the University of Toronto pointed out recently, today's neglect of postgraduate education in Ontario, especially at the Ph.D. level, means that in a decade or two, university recruiters will again scurry around everywhere, as they did in the 1960's, to find new professors and replacements for those retiring. These future needs for teaching, research and the professions, especially management, have been well documented by Dr. von Zur-Muehlen of Statistics Canada. Ontario should invest now, not disinvest, in human resources.

The first part of YUFA's report concludes that the survival of Canada and Ontario as democratic, reasonably prosperous and progressive entities in the year 2000 and beyond, will depend primarily on the human resource base in future, and less on material assets, as in the past. The university system in Canada and Ontario must build and develop that human resource base. Who else can? Yet, as last year's OCUA Brief shows, the system is "on the brink."

Tillo E. Kuhn,
YUFA Executive.
Mel Zimmerman,
YUFA Information Officer.

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