4 Excalibur, November 10, 1977



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# Ninety percent vote yes Grads may go on strike

### **By David Saltmarsh**

At a series of meetings Tuesday night, the Graduate Assistant's Association voted 90 percent in favour of strike action to put pressure on the university administration to meet their demands.

There has been no progress since concilliation between the GAA and the administration broke down a month ago. Paul Axelrod, outgoing GAA Chairman, said the university is still offering 6.5 percent while "we've come down twice". GAA is waiting for the results of mediation with the Ontario Labour Relations Board on November 16 before deciding what kind of action to take.

Axelrod said the strike could be "any of a number of activites which constitute a withdrawal of services". This includes day boycotts of class, or a full strike. The decision as to what kind of action will be made at a general meeting of the GAA. "The vote demonstrated the solid backing of the Association" he said, "and we will act on that mandate".

Axelrod defended the small turnout (150 out of a membership of 850) by saying it was the largest turnout ever at a GAA meeting and that it was difficult for many members to attend because of teaching classes or not having any classes on campus that day, especially with the Atkinson members. He said he was gratified by the turnout, saying "we take it as a sign of pretty strong backing".

Axelrod expects if a strike is called that while it may not result in the cancellation of classes, it will disrupt a lot of classes. The GAA is bargaining for wages, working conditions, fringe benefits and job security.

At the same meeting the GAA voted in a new executive and to increase the union dues. Dues were raised from \$2 per month for all members, to a sliding scale of from \$3 per month for members earning less than \$3,000 per year, to \$5 per month for members earning over \$6,000 per year.

The new executive of the GAA consists of: Tony Woolfson, Chairman; Rainer Baehre, Recording Secretary; Robert Roseburgh, Financial Secretary; Leslie Sanders, Chief Steward; Bob Creasy, Science Representative; and Philip Hebert, Chairman of the Education Committee.

### New contract includes lump sum increase

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YUSA had been bargaining for a 10 percent or \$1,000 increase, whichever was greater, and for the university to pay for 75 per cent of the dental plan. The university had been offering 50 per cent of the dental plan, 6.5 percent wage increase but no minimum lump sum payments to supplement the per cent increase.

Having YUSA salaries by a percentage and a lump sum whichever is higher, was an important point for the association. An agreement that included only a percentage increase would have widened the disparity in income levels between the lowest and highest paid members of the union. Including a lump sum increase allows the lower-paid YUSA members to narrow the gap.

With the new contract, two-thirds of YUSA members will be making between \$8,250 and \$10,650. About 85 percent of YUSA's members are women.

Because of the huge turnout, Firday's two-hour ratification meeting was 20 minutes late in starting. At 12:15, staff members were still streaming into the lecture hall, looking for seats in the aisles, the steps, the final score or so having to settle for standing-room-only spots by the exits.

"I would like to make it very clear that these benefits would not have been won, if YUSA had not been organized and had not threatened the university with a withdrawal of labor," Association President Lauma Avens said at the meeting's opening.

"A lot of the things we bargained for and won were things we bargained for last year and didn't



Young YUSA supporter expresses enthusiastic approval of new YUSA contract. A clause of the contract allows YUSA members to take sick leave when their children are sick.

itself," she said to a scattering of applause.

Andy Ranachan, a member of the negotiating committee responded to Dance saying that while he too opposed the AIB, he "wasn't going to get involved in some kamikaze crusade against it.

"The Rolling Stones were right," he said, "You can't always get what you want."

"Then we should vote out the Trudeau government", a voice in the crowd shouted back to laughter and applause.

John Lang, executive assistant for YUSA and a member of the bargaining committee seconded Ranachan's statement. "I'm against the AIB" he said, "but if we went on strike and got a settlement above the guidelines, and had the settlement rolled back, that could have a really demoralizing effect on people in YUSA and really weaken athe organization."

Lang said that the really important thing was to build the association, that the union should go on strike only when it was in a position to win.

Should a strike be a possibility when this contract expires next year, "we want the strike vote to be 90 percent in favour of striking, with everybody voting," said Lang.

"Then we can really put the screws to the administration, and the way they run this place. We can make them put us higher on their priorities than right at the bottom like we are now."

## Caught in red tape

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Thursday, November 17 - Faculty Administrative Studies Building, Marketing Presentation Rooms 038, 039, 12 am to 1:30 pm

Drop-In Session - Marketing, Finance, Buying and Sales Room 402, 9 am to 4 pm.



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"And the things we dropped this year are not being forgotten. We will be going for them next year," she continued.

One of the key points dropped by the union was one concerning technological change. The association wanted guarantees written into the contract specifying that the introduction of new technology by the university would not mean layoffs of YUSA members.

The contract they finally agreed on includes only a vague assurance that the university would *attempt* to find other staff positions in the university for workers made "redundant" by new technology.

Two union members stood up and spoke against acceptance of the agreement. Teri Dance said she opposed it and was in favour of going ahead with the strike "because I do not think we can continue to accept wage increases that are below inflation."

Dance said she "supports the resolution passed by the Confederation of Canadian Unions, to which YUSA belongs, a resolution which rejects the Anti-Inflation Board and calls for a general strike from coast to coast to do away with it.

"I don't think YUSA can win by

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Since 1972, all immigrants have been required to apply for landed immigrant status from outside Canada. Since his job prevents him from leaving Canada for the minimum six months it takes to acquire landed immigrant status, lawyers are presently checking to see if he can apply from within the country.

A student is exempt if he is "admitted to Canada under section 7(1) (a) of the Canada Immigration Act; or "a dependent of a person admitted to Canada under section 7(1) (h)" of the act and is a full time student, 18 years or older," according to the Registration fee bulletin.

Heim is classified as 7(1)(f) which means she has a student visa. Her father is a 7(1)(e) which is reserved for the clergy.

Cummins explained the clergy classification cannot be changed to the others or allowed to be exempt because "anyone could come and say he was a part of a religious organization. It is very broad.

"You could have a loophole through religion."

The only way Sharon can become exempt without her father obtaining landed immigrant status, says Immigration, is to "marry a Canadian." Cummins told *Excalibur* that "our rules govern the flow of money to the university. The university decides what the fees are.

"The ministry rules don't count a person as having to successfully complete the term. If a student has completed a term until January 1977, without being required to withdraw, he is exempt.

"We've made an anormous number of exemptions."

Bider expressed a different opinion.

"The student has to have a standing in the session and faculty she was with. There are no half-year courses in the arts faculty for 1st year students.

If she was a science student, she could have taken a half- year course and been exempt.

"On her transcript there is no standing, and there's nothing we can do."

"The whole thing came down to technicalities. I can't get any loans. There's no out. If I went back to the States, I could get residency if I lived there for one year and pay the normal state fees (ranging from \$0-900), " says Heim.

"I realize the government is trying to keep the burden down for the taxpayers, but I live here."