

# Mood of cautious optimism in aftermath of occupation

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attention to several reported examples of racist behavior by security officers and alleged assault by a pub bouncer.

A parking lot attendant had reportedly told a black student "This is not the jungle." In

another incident witnessed by a large crowd, two students, also black, were asked for identification by security guards while standing in the crowded student centre. An officer had singled the students out and told them they looked "too young." Security staff are not supposed to ask for identification unless they see an offence being committed.

Black students reacted by wearing "John Doe" and "Jane Doe" name tags for the rest of the week.

Security officials hesitated before choosing Al Mossman — a York Security employee — to investigate the incident. Hearing about this, students started planning the occupation in secret.

"It was just an accumulation of things and then it was 'This is it!' and then everybody decided unanimously that they were going to take action," said Althea Morgan, a fourth year English student who was the object of the "This is not the jungle" comment.

Six months later, most of what students demanded during the occupation has been accomplished.

One security officer implicated by students during the protests was fired; another was suspended without pay and is now back at work.

An additional full-time race and ethnic relations officer, Teferi Adem, was hired this summer. Chet Singh, the centre's other officer, provided

anti-racism training for security officers this summer. Similar training will be required every year.

"The point of the whole matter was for them [the security officers] to understand how racism works and how

demands. Castle said a standard complaints procedure for security incidents at the pub has also been drafted.

Complaints would go to a supervisor first, who has an opportunity to discipline the staff member and inform

students who launched the complaint. Students can then appeal to Castle or the security committee itself, but Castle said management will follow recommendations from a special university office (like Race and Ethnic Relations, or the Sexual Harassment office) at any time, even if that recommendation is harsher than management's.

"If the office of race and ethnic relations says they [the bouncers] should be terminated, we would terminate them," Castle said.

Castle said the new system will be "healthier" than a system which has to be improvised each time.

Singh also said York's campus-wide security advisory committee will be changed so that it is more open to participa-

tion and includes more students and community members.

## Wait-and-see Attitude

Most of the protesters are assuming a 'wait-and-see' attitude before commenting on the changes that resulted from the protest.

"People feel this is just being done on the surface level to show the students they are doing something. As far as the administration is concerned, some people wonder if the same attitudes still exist," Morgan said this week.

"We want to know how much power the [steering committee] is going to have. Will it effectively be able to effect the students? I myself am just waiting to see what is going to happen from this."

In the wake of the rally, conflicts within the steering committee led to division among the protesters. Morgan says such disputes an inevitable

part of organizing large groups of people behind a common cause.

"Everybody has a different idea about how to handle the situation. Everybody has their solution, and everybody



believes their solution is correct. [After the incident] a group of people had to sit down and decide which route they were going to take and that is very hard," she said.

"I'm hoping positive things will come out of this. I hope it'll really do something for York."

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## A Healthier System

All professional bouncers at the Underground were fired immediately after the occupation and a code of conduct for security in the student centre would likely be finished by press time, manager Rob Castle said last week.

He also said a student centre committee dealing with security in the Underground has been expanded and contains a majority of student members, another of the occupation

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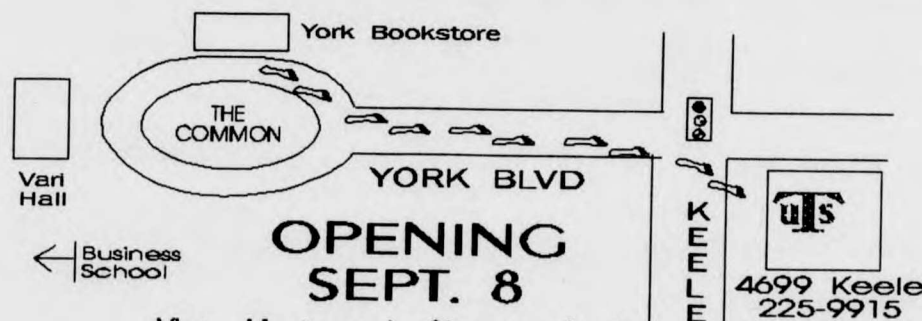
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