

# Venomous students take on Clark

Neil Wiberg

"I've got my lead," Mark Phillips announced minutes before Joe Clark appeared at Osgoode Hall's Moot Court. Phillips, the CBC television reporter who has been covering the Clark tour, was about to tell the assembled press corps the opening lines of his report on the National News. "My lead will be: Joe Clark comes back to law school—for the third time."

Phillips' joke accurately reflected the mood of the students that afternoon. Many of the students were itching to publicly carve up the Prime

Minister. Phillips' reference to Clark's failures at Dalhousie and University of British Columbia law schools is a common joke among the Osgoode students.

Under the hostile circumstances, Clark performed fairly well. He retained his cheerful disposition and never lost his temper. He was able to handle the numerous hecklers with no major problems.

Clark handled the criticism of the Israeli embassy move expertly. His concession that he made a mistake diffused the issue for the remainder of the hour. It constituted a great gamble

on the part of Tory organizers to allow Clark to attend a question

## Analysis

and answer session with the York students. In the last election campaign, with Clark leading the polls, the Tories ran a controlled campaign. Clark's public meetings were restricted to those with party workers or with a local Board of Trade. One of the Tory Commandments was: Clark shall not face a university audience.

Prior to Clark's trip to York, he was trailing in the polls by up to 21 percentage points. Tory organizers privately confessed to *Excalibur* that they are in deep trouble in Metro. Risks have to be taken.

Clark's keyword in his opening and closing remarks was "change." He used the word in at least every second sentence. The audience wanted a change all right, but a change away from a Tory government.

When a student questioner provided a list of broken promises, and asked, "How can anyone believe anything you say during this campaign?", the audience exploded into sustained applause lasting over 35 seconds. Clark appeared rattled by the audience reaction, and glumly listed some promises that he had kept.

However, Clark's defence was not impressive. Arts student Cindy Wasser told *Excalibur*, "Anyone who breaks as many promises as he has, has ruined

and made a mockery of democracy in this country, because we vote on promises."

Clark realized that his major audience was not the York students, but rather the television news viewers and newspaper readers. When Clark was talking in French about the Ryan constitutional proposals, he moved a few feet to this right so that he was directly looking at the Radio-Canada television camera. The media concentrated mainly on the reception Clark received rather than what Clark said. Questioner after questioner went up to the microphones trying to dig the knife into Clark. In fact, there was only one Tory plant question and even it was ineffective. The questioner was bothered by constant hissing, and turned into a stuttering, inarticulate Tory shill.

Clark performed respectably under trying conditions. If he had lost his temper or faltered under the barrage of insults, the media coverage would have been far worse.

## Last ditch effort

from page one

Currently, there is some question about the proposed week-long return to work. In the event of a strike, a GAA meeting will be held on this coming Monday. At the meeting, the membership may vote to drop it, and begin a walkout of indefinite length immediately.

This week (Jan. 14-21) has been designated 'Information Week' by the GAA. According to Bill Johnston, GAA Vice-president, members have been instructed to spend ten minutes of their classes explaining the GAA's position. In addition, an information table has been set up in York's Central Square.

Key issues separating the two sides are:

- Job Security. Currently, Ph.D. candidates past their third year of study and MA candidates past their second year, are given lowest priority for opening Teaching Assistantships. As well, administration proposals would make it difficult for such TA's to

keep their posts. The GAA is demanding that these students be given an equal opportunity to get and keep these jobs.

- A contract clause on academic freedom. Although the academic freedom of Teaching Assistants has not been infringed on in the past, the union seeks to have this right guaranteed in their contract.

- Maternity leave. The current GAA contract does not touch on the issue of maternity leave. The university has refused to negotiate on this issue, prompting GAA treasurer Janice Newton to call their position "a slap in the face to women at York."

- Wages. The university and the GAA have still not agreed on a final wage settlement, although GAA Vice-President Bill Johnston is optimistic that one is close. In his opinion, the university's offer is "a ball-park figure."

The York University Faculty Association has passed a motion

of support for the GAA, according to YUFA Chairman Al Stauffer. Declared Stauffer, "We're giving them moral support." But he indicated that a sympathy strike is out of the question, since the union is not in a legal position to strike. Asked whether YUFA members will cross GAA picket lines, Stauffer said "that will be an individual decision on the part of our members."

In a meeting Tuesday night, the Council of the York Student Federation passed a number of motions regarding the possible strike. Among them is one which indicates that the CYSF "reiterates its support of the Graduate Assistants' Association." As well, the CYSF moved to call on the Senate and faculty councils to postpone all "academic activities... for the duration of any job action or strike by either York University Faculty Association or the Graduate Assistants' Association..."

## Strike two

Barb Mainguy

The York University Faculty Association will make a final attempt to settle with the university at a conciliation meeting to be held this Friday, January 18th. YUFA has so far been unable to reach agreement with the administration over three main bargaining points which cover salary increases. A demand for clearly outlined tenure and promotion procedures is to be included in the contract, along with increased powers for arbitrators to settle contract disputes concerning appointments to the university. Because of the upcoming

contract talks, the YUFA general membership meeting has been postponed for a week until next Wednesday, January 23rd, with a deciding vote scheduled for Thursday 24th and Friday 25th. Pending the outcome of Friday's talks, YUFA has called a media blackout, but Union chairperson Allen Stauffer did say the negotiating committee will recommend a strike vote if no acceptable agreement is reached.

A strike by YUFA would be unlikely to coincide with the GAA's, as the union would be legally unable to take action until 16 days after conciliation ends.

STUDENT  
VOTERS'  
GUIDE



Published by the  
Chief Electoral Officer  
of Canada

PICK UP  
YOUR COPY  
TODAY!

# NOW AVAILABLE AT~

Council of the York Student Federation  
office, Room 105 Central Square.

This brochure  
tells you all you  
need to know  
to vote in the  
Federal General  
Election.



Elections Canada is Parliament's non-partisan Agency  
responsible for holding Federal Elections,  
under the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada,  
Mr. Jean-Marc Hamel.

Published by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada.