

# Letters To The Editor

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, c/o Excalibur, room 111 central Square. They must be double-spaced, typed and limited to 250 words. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for length and grammar. Name and address must be included for legal purposes but the name will be withheld upon request. Deadline: Mon. 5 p.m.

## Unionization vital, argues YUFA chairman

I recognize the futility of trying to correct the press and I know that truth never quite catches up to misinformation. Nonetheless, I think your readers should be set straight about the York university faculty association and its efforts to become a collective bargaining agent for York faculty. This was, you will recall, the subject of a story and an editorial in your issue of December 4.

The story creates an artificial debate between professor James Goodale and myself. I call it artificial because, to the best of my knowledge, I have never met or spoken to professor Goodale. He did write a piece advising caution

on unionization in the York Gazette, a piece to which YUFA made no reply because his arguments had been adequately dealt with in the newsletters sent to faculty this term. By putting your story in the form of a verbal confrontation, you mislead your readers. And if your reporter has dealt with professor Goodale as he has dealt with me, he has misrepresented what was said, invented parts of it, and confused the issue.

Faculty unionization is a complex issue. Your reporter did not seem well informed, I regret to say, and I did not have the impression that he had read any of the material YUFA has produced

— or anything its opponents have prepared, beyond professor Goodale's letter.

But I would like to correct one point in particular, a point that both Goodale and your reporter should be clear on. Merit pay is by no means ruled out under a collective agreement. Indeed in the Special Issue YUFA Newsletter a summary salary brief appears, and included in it are references to merit pay and to percentage figures. This brief was unanimously approved by YUFA general meetings at Glendon and at York, meetings that neither your reporter nor Mr. Goodale seem to have attended.

The editorial is, in my view, similarly misinformed. As have many members of the general public, your writer has an inflated idea of faculty salaries. Some professors at York do command \$20,000 salaries — but most do not. If you had investigated this matter in even a cursory fashion, you would have discovered that the salary mode here is closer to \$17,500. You would have discovered that York ranks at or very near the bottom in salaries in every rank, notwithstanding the obvious fact that Toronto is the highest cost part of the province.

You would have discovered that floor for an associate professor — a Ph.D. with at least six years teaching experience — is well below the pay a Toronto high school teacher with inferior qualifications receives at present, let alone the pay being asked by the OSSTF or offered by the Metro board. If you are concerned with quality you should ponder the implications of this data. President Macdonald, with whom professor Goodale worries that we will have an adversarial relationship, has already spoken out correctly and forcefully in indicating that York faculty are underpaid. Surely one might expect that Excalibur could and should do the same.

Finally, and most seriously, your editorial neglects one entire area in YUFA's rationale for collective bargaining, an area that is, in my view, at least as important as salary questions. Unionization carries with it the

protection of the Labour Relations Act. This entitles everyone here to grievance and arbitration procedures, something totally lacking at present. This entitles the association and the university administration to conciliation and mediation processes, again something hitherto absent.

In other words, the act of unionization will win faculty certain rights that we have not been able to secure. In other words, the type of arbitrary injustice that frequently exists in large institutions will no longer be allowed to go unchecked at York.

We think these matters are important. They have all been covered at length in the YUFA newsletters, copies of which are faithfully sent to Excalibur. Read them, please, before you next write on the subject. The faculty have, and that is why far more than the 55 percent required for automatic certification at the Labour Relations Board have joined the union.

J. L. Granatstein,  
Chairman, YUFA

### Editor's note

According to figures provided by York vice-president Bill Farr, York's 1,053 full-time professors earn an average \$21,347 per year. The median salary is \$19,652. Both these figures are well above the \$17,500 suggested by Mr. Granatstein.

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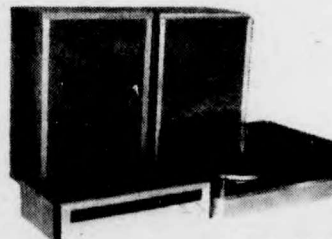
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