

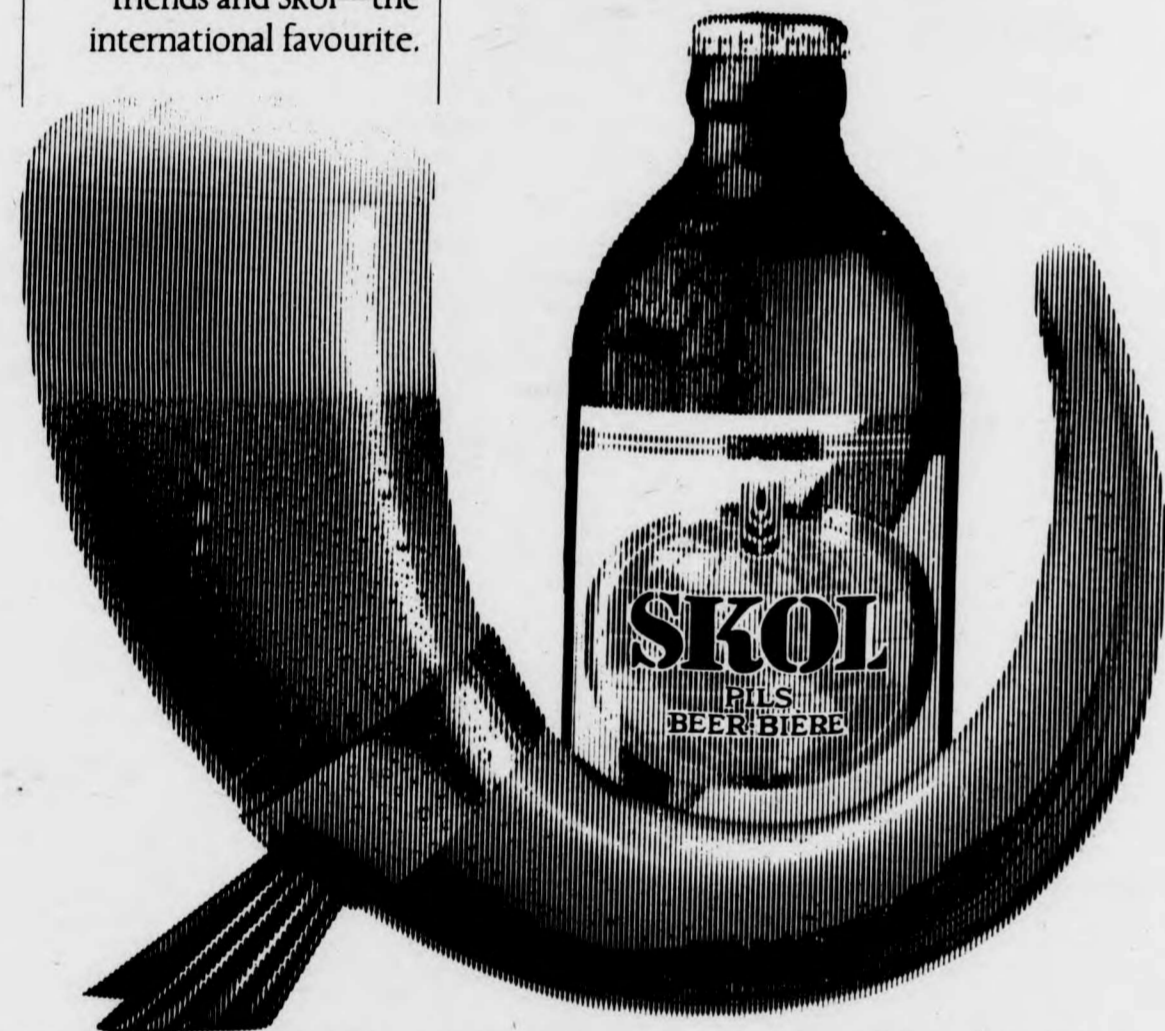
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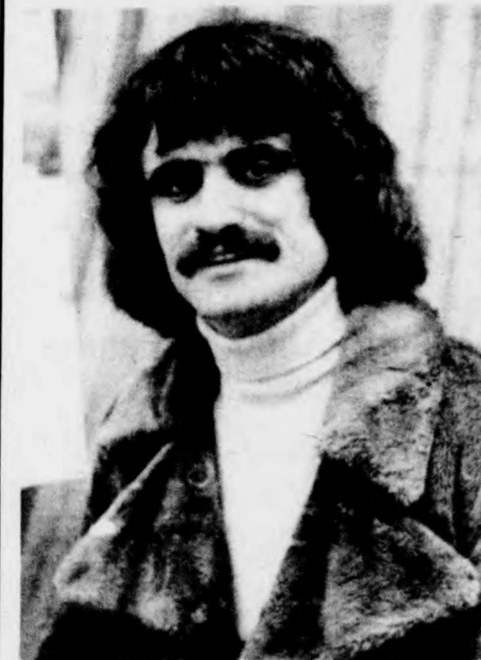
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Decision '76: Edson? Musallam? Silzer?

FORUM: three candidates in search of a mandate

IZIDORE MUSALLAM



GAEL SILZER



BARRY EDSON



Izidore Musallam was born 23 years ago in Haifa, Israel, the son of a Lutheran pastor. Until three years ago he attended school in Haifa studying in Arabic, Hebrew, and English.

He came to York to receive film training because of the limited possibilities in this field in his country. Whenever he gets a chance he goes home to visit with his parents and his brother.

A third year student in Fine Arts, he has been involved in student administration. He has been an international students' representative and is presently the president of the Founders College Students' Council.

Aside from film and student government he enjoys swimming, tennis, and playing his guitar.

I have been an active NDPer for the past five years and have represented my riding on the provincial council and at the federal NDP leadership convention. I am the past president of Wilson Heights NDP riding association and was the campaign manager for Howard Moscoe, the NDP provincial candidate in Wilson Heights.

I am a member of the York NDP club, involved in the York anti-cutbacks committee and a member of the ULC steering committee.

I have been a member of council as McLaughlin College representative and am currently the financial vice-president of CYSF.

Barry Edson is Toronto born. He attended Newtonbrook S.S. in North York, was an Ontario scholar, and received a York Entrance Scholarship.

He is presently a History major in his second year. Barry is a member of the Political Science Undergraduate Student Union and of the Faculty of Arts Student Council, a member of the N.D.P. since 1971, and was a full-time staff member of the York Centre NDP for eight months in 1974.

Barry has also been an active member of the B'nai Brith Youth Organization and the Labour Zionist Alliance.

In addition to this, he has been active working for the United Farmworkers Grape Boycott.

In keeping with Excalibur's practice of interviewing the candidates for the presidency of CYSF, the following are responses by the three presidential candidates, Barry Edson, Izidore Musallam and Gael Silzer (ULS), to a series of written questions.

What do you consider to be York's priorities during the next decade?

Musallam: To provide a good education for as many people as possible at as little cost as possible. To maintain a balance between education and the ever-changing needs of society.

Edson: Although I have personal views on the social and educational priorities York should have, I feel that students, faculty, staff and the outside community should set them. To facilitate this, I intend to organize a conference on university objectives. The administration has indicated it will listen — now it's up to us.

Silzer: Accessibility of university education; maintenance of the university as a benefit to society as a whole; high quality of university education; increased participation of students in the community.

How do you envision the role of the CYSF?

Musallam: The CYSF should remain non-partisan with respect to all off-campus political factions. It should centre its activities around student interests only.

Edson: The CYSF must play a social, cultural and political role in school life. There are certain roles which the colleges themselves cannot play. The colleges cannot deal with the administration or the government. As the voice of all students, the CYSF must undertake this responsibility. Only a strong council can effectively deal with the problems facing all students.

Silzer: Represent students in negotiations with administration and government to ensure that student interests are protected; support for student services, Harbinger, Daycare, Radio York, Women's centre, Ex-

calibur, cross-campus events and clubs; support to student organizations including establishment, maintenance and preservation of course unions as well as active participation in the Ontario Federation of Students and the National Union of Students.

Do you favour a centralized student government or a dispersal of monies to various levels (e.g., the college system)?



Musallam: The CYSF should be modelled in such a way that there is an increased input from the college level. The CYSF will then become a council of the colleges responsive to the York Community at the grassroots level.

Edson: A strong CYSF cannot exist without strong college councils. Presently college councils serve residence constituents well, but find it difficult to serve

commuters. CYSF must help them solve this problem. We are college and course-union oriented, but we also recognize that a healthy, central government is still indispensable.

Silzer: I favour a centralized student government which can represent students' interests on a cross campus level. This does not imply a total centralization of student funds. We call for the creation of course unions with guaranteed independent funding (50 cents from both CYSF and college councils) and an additional level of funding for students.

What sort of relationship should exist between the student government and the university administration?

Musallam: The various levels of students government should work with, not against, the university administration. The solutions to problems that develop between the student governments and the university administration cannot be solved by confrontation tactics.

Edson: It has become a habit in the past year of CYSF to oppose the administration whenever possible. The Edson Team has decided to do away with this practice and try to negotiate with the people responsible for our food, fees, and quality of life. We will relate and respond rather than confront.

Silzer: Work together for the benefit of the York Student body; impress upon the administration the student needs; use referrals to question students about major issues and insist the administration take these results as the student voice.

What do you consider to be the single most important issue in this election and why?

Musallam: The nature of the CYSF. It is time for the students to elect a governing body which represents a cross-section of the university community. By its very nature a political party, or group, alienates a certain segment of the university population.

Edson: The most important issue in this campaign is cutbacks in university funding which could result in increasing tuition fees to \$1,000 by 1977-78 and a phasing out of student grants. We need a positive, rational approach to this problem. We cannot afford the militant confrontation politics of the 60s proposed by the ULS. The only way to stop the Henderson Report is to gain the support of the general public. This can only be done through effective public relations in co-operation with other student governments, not through negative politics.

Silzer: The cutbacks in education and how to fight them. The ULS creates a strong student government which is effective in negotiating on behalf of students. Course unions lobby within departments and faculties regarding course cuts — course evaluations to find which courses receive greatest student response. Support OFS and NUS and participate in moratoriums and join groups such as the Coalition Against Cutbacks.

What changes, if any, in York's social activities programmes do you propose?

Musallam: There should be greater co-operation between the various colleges and associations to avoid unnecessary competition (two dances being held on the same night). The CYSF should co-ordinate these activities. Given its considerable financial resources the CYSF should organize several social events that are beyond the reach of other groups on campus.

Edson: We propose greater support for the York Social Co-op to allow big name popular entertainers to come onto campus. This has been lacking this year. The Co-op must become an effective body co-ordinating college social events to avoid conflicts and must play an aggressive role in promotion.

Silzer: The social co-op has done a good job this year as well as events put on by campus clubs. With more financial and organizational support next year from both CYSF and the college councils, we should be able to expand the social co-op and cultural programmes.



faculty and administration to work for a better university. It is to be hoped that students will gain a louder voice through greater representation on this body.

Edson: York should be run by students working with faculty, support staff, and the community at large. York has to serve everyone and we should all have a say in what happens. Currently, Edson Team members Bell and Rabinovitch are working to change the York Act where it concerns the Board of Governors in order to accomplish this.

Silzer: The board of governors is composed mainly of people who have no direct participation in this university and are not affected by the decisions they make. Student-staff-faculty control of the university is necessary in order to ensure that we all have a voice in the quality and direction of our university.

Summing up briefly, why do you consider yourself the best candidate for president?

Musallam: I am the only candidate with no political affiliations or obligations. Therefore I am confident that I can satisfy the majority of students who are apolitical. Secondly, my experience in student government has provided me with much of the basic background that is required of a CYSF president.

Edson: I consider myself the most qualified candidate because college activists have told me that I'm the only one running who can get everyone to work together without compromising principle. However, it's not what I, or student leaders, think that's important; it's what the voters think. I hope they'll agree with the Edson Team and myself.

Silzer: I feel that I am the most competent candidate for the presidency because I have a coherent, comprehensive programme to offer the students and a slate of candidates with expertise and leadership students need at this time of cutbacks and inflation.

What mad impulses drive one to seek political office, anyway?

Musallam: Ambition, a desire for change, and a belief in student government.

Edson: I made the decision to run along with many others this time because I was fed up with the way student government has been mis-managed. Our money has been flushed down the pipe by the ULC, and I realized (as have many voters) that if I didn't do something, now, I would still be angry next year — with myself.

Silzer: I carefully considered the requirements of the position and my willingness to take only partial courses this year in order to do an effective job. I felt it was time for NDPers on this campus to become more actively involved. I believe I am the person most qualified for the position.



What role should political ideology play in university student politics?

Musallam: The CYSF should remain non-partisan with respect to all off-campus political factions. It should centre its activities around student interests only.

Edson: As representatives of the student body we must be concerned and involved with the outside political process; we can't afford not to be. However, a student council should not force ideology down anybody's throat, nor should it let ideology interfere with the resolution of problems important to students, as the ULC has done.

Silzer: Political ideology is important in university student politics because it focuses student politics in a particular direction. Equal access to quality education a student-staff-faculty control are necessary in order to maintain the diversity of students and their power within our learning institution.

What have been the central strengths, if any, and weaknesses, if any, of this year's CYSF administration?

Musallam: The strength of the current CYSF is that it shouted loudly, attracting much attention. The weakness of the CYSF now in office is that while it shouted often it seldom said anything.

Edson: The ULC government must be credited for its idealism. However, it has tried to impose its views on others, thus alienating the student body, and destroying communication between student and administration. In addition, ULC tactics have turned public sentiment against those of us who are opposing the cutbacks. Finally, the ULC has wasted time and thousands of student dollars on several quasi-political activities and publications such as Take-It, which don't concern most of us.

Silzer: Central strengths of the CYSF this year have been the high degree of co-operation and participation of council members, particularly ULC council members. The CYSF has fought for non-profit, quality food service, administrative funding for Harbinger; it has supported daycare, Harbinger and Radio York. The ULS provides effective student leadership.

Who do you think should run York University? Do you favour dismantling the Board of Governors?

Musallam: The Board of Governors provides a unique opportunity for students,