

ANI MAAMIN

A FAITH LOST AND FOUND

A PLAY BY

ELIE WIESEL

"HOW IS ONE TO BELIEVE?
HOW IS ONE NOT TO BELIEVE?"

FEBRUARY 20-23, 8:30 P.M.

TICKETS \$2.50

McLaughlin Jr. Common Room,
McLaughlin College, York University

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10-1 against reinstatement, chevron says vote a fraud

WATERLOO (CUP) — The fight between the University of Waterloo students council and the staff of the student newspaper it closed last September continues despite the removal from office of council president Shan Roberts and a recent referendum which saw a 10-to-1 vote against reinstating the paper.

Staff members of the free chevron, the weekly they have published since the UW Federation of Students closed the chevron Sept. 24, have called the referendum a fraud.

They charge that it was improperly administered and is not binding on the federation, and had urged to students to boycott the referendum.

Interim federation president Dave McLellan said the federation considers the results of the eight-question Jan. 13 referendum binding.

The federation is now seeking a court order to evict the free chevron staff from chevron offices. If the staff refuses to leave they will be arrested, according to student councillor Doug Thompson.

In the referendum results, students voted "yes" for a campus newspaper, approved its membership in CUP, and decided the federation, rather than a body appointed by it or a separately-elected body, should publish the paper and decide on the hiring and firing of staff, the administration of the paper's finances, and the rules by which the staff operates.

A majority felt editorial policy should be set by a body elected directly by students, and that students whose student union fees contribute to the chevron's finances (as opposed to others who make up the campus community) should be eligible to become voting staff on the newspaper.

A question asking if students preferred to fund the paper directly through either compulsory or refundable fees was rendered irrelevant by the vote establishing students' council as the publisher, reaffirming council's right to budget the paper with council revenues as it sees fit.

Students voted, 2276 to 224 against "reinstating" the chevron to its

position before the Sept. 24 closure, as well as news editor Henry Hess and production manager Neil Docherty to their positions which were terminated by the federation when the paper was closed.

According to Docherty, who is production manager of the free chevron, the referendum was a fraud because it did not include as a choice the demand of the free chevron staff — that the paper be reinstated and that an investigation of the closure take place.

Free chevron editor and federation councillor Larry Hannant said the referendum could not produce an informed decision since the federation did not consult other student newspapers on their organization, Canadian University Press, on by-laws governing the relations between other student newspapers and student councils.

He also attacked the referendum's reinstatement question, because "it does not present our position accurately. It focuses attention on 'outstanding bills' and 'back pay' rather than on the real issues."

The free chevron staff also charge there were several irregularities with the administration of the referendum, and quote former federation president and Toronto lawyer Brian Iler as terming the referendum a "straw vote" on the grounds that it violates several sections of the Corporations Act.

Staff members also charge a federation referendum by-law was violated when Roberts mailed ballots out to UW co-op (off-campus) students Dec. 24 without prior notification in the campus newspaper. They also say acting-chief returning officer Gary Prudence admitted the ballots were not initialed or numbered, and that no method was employed to ensure their return by the persons to whom they were sent.

Free chevron staffer Tom Cody said he is investigating the possibility the ballot boxes were stuffed on the grounds that the turnout for co-op students was up 20 per cent from last year's presidential election. In contrast, on-campus turnout was only 14.5 per cent, compared with a 25.7 per cent turnout for the presidential elections, he said.

Interim president McLellan said the approximately 2700 students who voted in the referendum comprised 18.3 per cent of the UW student population.

McLellan denied free chevron accusations that the questions were confusing and contradictory, saying there had been adequate public discussion of the issue since the Chevron's closure. He said the issue of who has the right to hire and fire newspaper staff, which according to the referendum resides with the federation, and which has been the prerogative of the chevron staff for several years was something that was open to discussion when news by-laws governing the paper's operations are worked out.

The free chevron also reported harassment of its staff occupying "information tables" on the day of the referendum. They say McLellan ripped down a free chevron banner, while council speaker Bob White led engineering students in an attack on one of the tables.

The closure of the chevron Sept. 24 came after former federation president Shan Roberts and other federation executive charged the paper was being taken over by member of the Anti-Imperialist Alliance (AIA), a campus political group, following the resignation of editor-in-chief Adrian Rodway for what he called "political pressure" from other chevron staff.

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