

# Election '76: 'Radical Leftist' is optimistic about future of ULC at York

By TONY CARTY

Robert Kasher is a lanky, long-haired student whose appearance is not too unlike that of a peripatetic hippie of the late sixties. But perhaps that is where the comparison ends. Kasher, described by a friend as "fascinatingly intelligent," is a graduate student in history who is contemplating whether or not to seek the presidential nomination of the United Left Coalition which dominates this year's council, in order to have a go at succeeding Dale Ritch as CYSF's president in next month's fast approaching elections.

When told that in seeking the nomination he is likely to encounter keen competition from Gail Silzer or Paul Kellogg (ULC presidential aspirants), Kasher replies with characteristic soft-spoken magnanimity. "I think they are both excellent candidates, either of them will make a very good president." As current "chairperson" of the United Left Coalition, Kasher feels that among Silzer, Kellogg and himself, none enjoys an appreciable measure of support within the ULC, beyond that of the other two. "It will just be up to the members to decide." He does allow, however, that if he fails to gain the ULC presidential nomination, he "will probably run for candidacy as graduate student representative."

Not exactly a newcomer to elections, Kasher ran as one of two ULC candidates in last December's election for two student representatives on the York Board of Governors. He garnered a mere 300 and odd votes and was easily defeated along with his running mate, by candidates Jay Bell and Shelley Rabinovitch.

The dismal performance by the ULC led some people to read in it a beginning of the decline of the

United Left Coalition. One is almost naturally led to wonder whether this might not be the reason for Robert Kasher's hesitation this time around. To either suggestion Kasher lends no credence whatsoever. To begin with, he believes that December was a bad month to hold an election, and at any rate, many more students took part in December's election than will participate in the upcoming one. "I think that the foreseers of doom for the ULC are slightly premature." Adds Susan Grant, CYSF's vice president of communications and student services, "that was a badly run campaign — nevertheless — he'd make a good president because he's a very committed person. Abie Weisfeld, a longtime ULC stalwart offers yet another, perhaps a less plausible reason for Kasher's defeat: "Many more conservative students from Osgoode Hall and Administrative Studies voted in December."

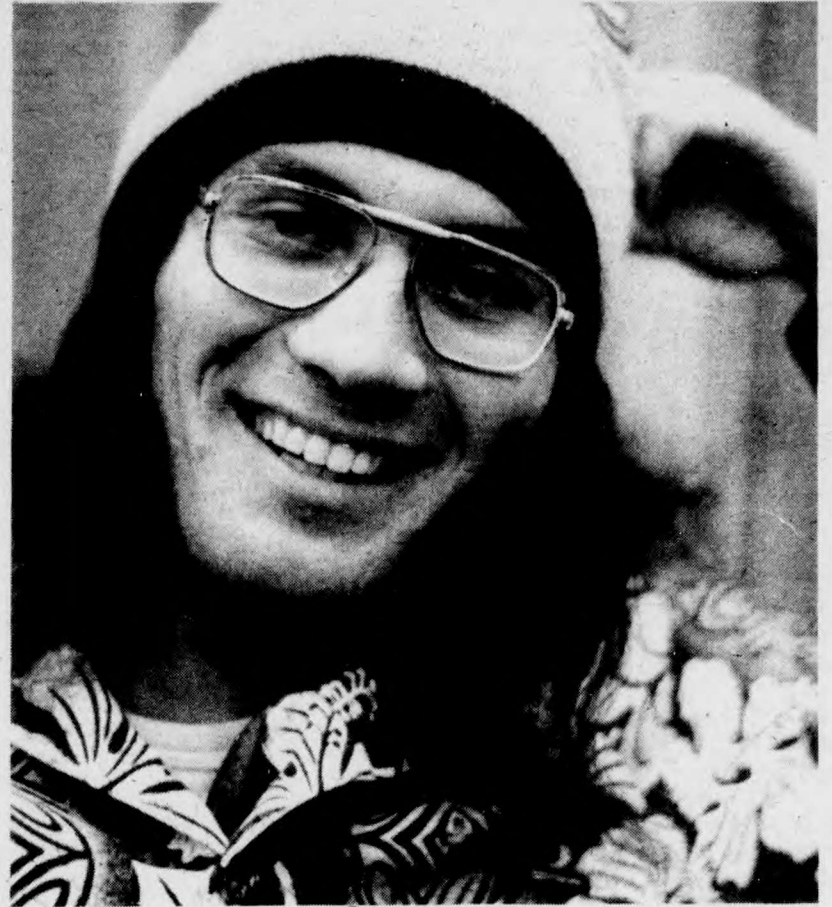
Kasher emphasizes that it is difficult to try to draw some type of parallel between December's election and that due to be held on March 17. He points out with justification, that the main issues supported by the ULC in December's election, including the issue of the "food referendum," and affiliation with the National Union of Students, were all voted for by a majority of students. "I think the very fact that you'll see that every single candidate who is running against us right now claims that they agree with our programme... There's been no disagreements with our programmes either in terms of the Board of Governors campaign or the upcoming presidential campaign." The bulk of the ULC support, he thinks, "will come from the students who will judge us on the basis on how effective we've been within the context of that

programme." The articulate Kasher, considers himself "a radical leftist." This year it is the intention of the United Left Slate, Kasher reveals, to promote candidates from independent organizations throughout the campus. Such groups include the Graduate Assistants Association, the Third World Students' Union, Harbinger and others. Many of these candidates, however, will not necessarily rally themselves officially with the United Left Coalition.

Kasher indicated that "my own feelings on running for the presidential candidacy and why I feel that I would want to run doesn't necessarily deal with my success or failure as a Board of Board of Governors candidate. It deals with my feelings that I could provide a good potential candidate for the presidency, particularly running from the United Left Slate's point of view... attempting to deal with the programme. I have been involved in a number of the Slate's activities concerning cutbacks, the food issue and things of this sort, things which relate directly to students' needs on campus."

Once nominated, Kasher would raise these issues in next month's election: (a) the "cutbacks campaign and the effects on students in all sorts of realms"; (b) the cost "and the quality of the food" on campus; (c) "the cost of housing" both on and off campus "and the quality of the housing"; (d) "the problems of the struggles concerning racism in education"; (e) "women's struggle in education"; and (f) "the struggle for gay rights and its relationship to the university".

Apart from the affairs of the ULC, Kasher does a weekly programme on CKRY, Radio York. He has been involved in the anti-cutbacks committee; as well



Robert Kasher

as having played a part in helping to make preparations for and organizing the student demonstration at Queen's Park on 21 January. Occasionally he con-

tributes an article to Excalibur, and at present is the publicity director for the Canadian Association for the Repeal of the Abortion Law.

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## York professor in jail

By FRANK LENTO

A former member of the Atkinson teaching staff has been imprisoned in Zambia for his compliance in the MPLA movement in Angola.


Lionel Cliffe, an Zambian citizen was teaching at the University of Lusaka in Zambia at the time of his incarceration.

His imprisonment comes in the wake of Zambian President Kuanda's order of martial law including the imprisonment of hundreds of political prisoners. The

order resulted from the diminishing military position of the UNITA and FNLA forces and the possible invasion threat of MPLA forces in Angola.

Cliffe taught Social Science 191 at Atkinson College two years ago.

Abie Wiesfeld, CYSF external affairs secretary has sent a telegram of protest to President Kuanda and Vice Chancellor goma of Lusaka University stating that, "we protest the imprisonment of Lionel Cliffe, former visiting lecturer at York University and we demand he get amnesty."



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