

# Forty acres and a mule ain't enough, Jack

African Canadians & African Americans say its payback time • page 12

## excalibur

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## Strike averted as T.A.s reach settlement

by Doug Saunders

On the eve of a strike vote, part-time York professors and teaching assistants reached an eleventh hour tentative settlement with the administration.

However the agreement signed last Tuesday was only a one-year agreement instead of the usual two-year settlement.

"Normally they (the administration) make it a two-year agreement and they make it sweet enough that we agree," said Doug Allen, a Canadian

Union of Education Workers researcher. "This was not very sweet."

The agreement still has to be ratified by CUEW members at a November 12 meeting.

The union won a 6.6 per cent pay increase for its members — an improvement on the 5.8 per cent originally offered by the administration but still short of the 7.5 per cent average increase won by full-time professors in June.

Scott Forsythe, a member of the CUEW strike support committee, said the increase is still unsatisfactory to some union members.

"While it's an adequate wage increase it's currently just barely keeping with inflation, if that. We want to emphasize that this is still under discussion."

Campus safety was a major issue in this year's negotiations after a CUEW study released last month revealed that 75 per cent of women employees are unwilling to work at night for safety reasons. The union was able to negotiate a \$50,000 grant for emergency phones and clauses which guarantee workplace safety.

The administration refused all CUEW demands on employment

equity and affirmative action hiring, promising only to follow existing guidelines. Allen said he is suspicious of this.

"The administration says they'll ensure equity. We're going to watch them very closely."

The biggest sticking point in the three-month talks was resolved after the administration agreed to maintain the full-time conversion program, which offers full-time job openings to qualified part-time professors.

But Paula O'Reilly, the administration's chief negotiator, said the program's continuation does not mean full-time positions will necessarily become available.

"We've agreed not to end the program. We hadn't even tabled its termination. But it's certainly an understanding that there are no guarantees that appointments will be available."

Allen said the university was unwilling to expand the conversion

program, and speculated that they may be planning to eliminate it.

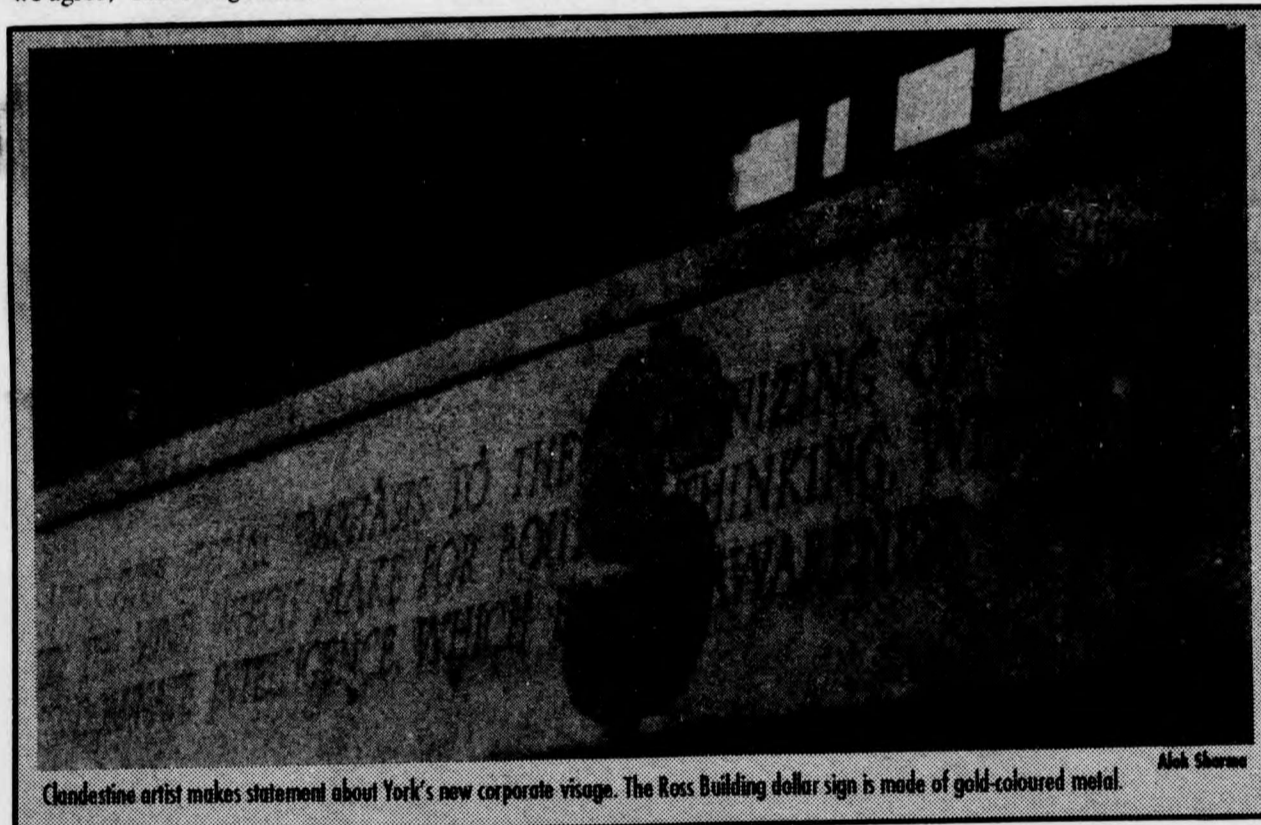
"That may be a program that perhaps the university is trying to slow down and end without as drastic a move as cutting it," he said.

Both parties expect next year's talks to be more difficult in the wake of almost \$1 million in cuts to York's budget announced last month by the Ontario government, as well as further cutbacks expected in the near future.

This year's agreement was possible only because of internal savings obtained in the negotiations, O'Reilly claimed. The university agreed to stop hiring lecturer excludées — temporary professors from off campus — and the savings from this helped finance the improved wage increase.

Such savings will not be possible next year, Forsythe said.

"While there is a sense that this year's agreement is satisfactory, no one's lowering their guard."



Clandestine artist makes statement about York's new corporate visage. The Ross Building dollar sign is made of gold-coloured metal.

Alak Sharma

## Osgoode Group demands changes

by Trevor Burnett

An Osgoode Hall student group demanding an end to systemic racism has presented a wide-ranging list of demands to the York administration.

The Pan Afrikan Law Society (PALS) outlined five different demands for "substantive equality" in an October 15 letter addressed to York President Harry Arthurs, the university senate, York student organizations and Toronto community groups.

The demands ranged from democratization of the administrative process to stronger affirmative action measures directed at students and faculty.

PALS member Miguna Miguna said some of PALS' key concerns include lack of student involvement in the decision-making process, Osgoode's Eurocentric curriculum and the lack of faculty or students of African descent at Osgoode.

PALS is also demanding a change in the grading system at Osgoode. Currently the school grades students with a letter grade. In their letter, PALS calls this system "useless in measuring a student's ability or intelligence."

"Pass/fail will minimize bias and acknowledge the fact that objectivity in grading is a fallacy intended to perpetrate political, gender and cultural prejudices," the letter concludes.

Osgoode professor Kent Mcneil said he does not believe the grading system is culturally biased. He also said a pass/fail system would be undesirable.

"The job market for (recent graduates) is very competitive. Employers would be apprehensive because they wouldn't know if it's a high pass or a low pass and they might not want to take the chance."

According to PALS member Livingston Wedderburn, "the pass/fail concept is not new, Yale Law school practices it. It can work at Osgoode, but there needs to be some changes in attitude."

Currently at Osgoode there is only one Black professor, no courses which deal directly with African issues and

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## University boards come under fire from students, province

by Wayne Morrow

The Ontario government is investigating the way universities govern themselves, but student representatives say they are looking in the wrong place.

Last month the Ministry of Colleges and Universities set up a task force to check the accountability universities have to the public on spending public money.

The task force's inception results from audits done on universities by the Public Accounts Committee and the Provincial Auditors.

According to Jane Hope-Roney, a university affairs officer for the ministry, "they identified the general issue and they both concluded that there was not sufficient accountability."

The audit revealed that the University of Toronto had hidden a surplus of approximately \$100 million that was taken from the university's operating budget over a span of 4

years and had reported \$127 million worth of furniture and equipment that could not be accounted for.

But student groups say that the problem of accountability stems from the deeper issue of representation.

"We would like to see more representation of students and community members on the Board of Governors because they make very big decisions that affect the community and the students when these members are not in touch with the university," said Asha Baht, director of communications for the Ontario Federation of Students.

Currently, most boards of governors have little representation of student or community members. York's board is comprised mainly of corporate presidents and high-level lawyers, with only two students and no labour, community or municipal government representatives.

But according to Bruce Bryden, chair of York University's Board of Governors, boards are set up to look after the financial matters of the uni-

versity and choose their members to accomplish this.

"I think York's Board of Governors has accomplished a great deal and has helped York move forward a great deal," said Bryden. "York's board is representative of the community. If the university had to hire the expertise that is presently on the board it would be very expensive."

"That's bullshit," said Nikki Gershbnain, internal vice president of the York Federation of Students. "A representative board and a financially knowledgeable board are not mutually exclusive."

"Bryden's argument buys into the myth that only rich businessmen can make financially sound decisions," she added.

A letter sent out by Richard Allen, Minister of Colleges and Universities indicates that although the task force is not looking at representation, the ministry is not ignoring the issue.

"Although the Ministry of Colleges and Universities is already involved in a number of initiatives

dealing with (representation) issues in universities, I am concerned that such measures are too few and are seen as being of only marginal importance within the broad mission of each institution. Equity issues must move from the periphery to the core, within both the ministry and the university sector," Allen wrote.

Representation deserves immediate attention, Gershbnain said. "If what is in the works is not to look at fair representation then it should be next."

The task force will continue to fulfill its mandate and report back to the MCU this fall, with their final report due in 2 years.

But Gershbnain said she is wary of the task force's ability to accomplish anything. "If it (the task force) is going to be anything like the task force set up to examine OSAP (the Ontario Student Assistance Program), and if they are going to do with the recommendation of this task force as they did with the OSAP task force recommendations, then I am sceptical," said Gershbnain.