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excalibur

YORK UNIVERSITY'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

OFS elects Ghomeshi, opposes war and fee hikes

by Peter Stathis

The Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) voted to support an anti-war stance for the student movement and to categorically reject a controversial university proposal that would raise tuition by \$550.

The two significant resolutions came at the semi-annual meeting of the OFS held at the University of Waterloo earlier this month.

The OFS campaigns committee suggested that Canada should re-examine its role as peace-keeper rather than war-fighter in the Persian Gulf. Along with calling for the removal of Canadian troops from the Gulf, OFS will be investigating military spending and research on Ontario campuses, including schools known for such activity such as University of Waterloo and McMaster.

There was a strong majority motion to reject outright a proposal by the Council of Ontario Universities (COU). The plan would raise the tuition of new students \$550 as part of an ambitious \$410-million scheme to bail

out the poorly-underfunded Ontario university system.

Jean Ghomeshi, president of the York Federation of Students (YFS), said there had been misinformation about some schools supporting the plan because key administrators were perceived as representing their entire schools, when in fact their views were diametrically opposed to those of the student population.

"There was even a softening of schools like Queen's that used to support 1989s [Queen's] Blueprint over the week," said Ghomeshi, responding to the strong stance that developed against the fee-sharing plan which would see students pay one dollar for every two dollars of government funding.

According to OFS researcher Greg Elmer, with 40 participants, the workshop on anti-racism was the best attended, but also became the most dispersed and unfocused as members were not able to agree even on a suitable definition for racism. However, considering it was OFS' first workshop on the subject and was originally scheduled for only

one hour, Elmer said the expectations for concrete proposals were too high. Future workshops will concentrate on identifying inequities in the OFS infrastructure itself as well as planning anti-racism events for the student population.

At one point in the conference, Queen's suggested there were no longer issues which were not student issues, responding to strong criticism that OFS had no place proclaiming a student position on matters such as the Gulf war.

A contentious motion was also passed to penalize university delegations \$100 per person if their delegations (of more than one) did not have gender parity.

Although concerned about women's equal representation at OFS, Mitch Blass, YFS vp (external), was worried that legislating such a policy could erode the notion of democracy as far back as student elections.

"This sort of [policy] should not be enforced because it may force students to elect people based on their sex, rather than their capability," Blass said.

York's student council sent four voting representatives to the conference. Along with male reps Ghomeshi and Blass, the York contingent included female members Mary Tsilka and Bonnie Waterhouse as part of YFS' recently-passed gender parity.

At the closing plenary, OFS chose three of its executive members for 1991-1992. Laurie Kingston was elected chair, the single full-time position, and Nicole Seguin was elected as the liaison to the national student group, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS).

Ghomeshi was chosen as campaigns coordinator, the deputy chair position. Ghomeshi said that as Kingston's assistant, he would continue the focus on freezing tuition and retaining accessibility, but noted that anti-racism on campus would also be one of his priorities.

"The coordinator's personality and background are very important in how we run the campaigns and I am from an activist background," Ghomeshi said.

The new executives officially begin their terms in June 1991.

Marriott and food services need a student rep

by John A. Vink

The University Food Services Committee (UFSC) is trying to find student representatives from complex one and complex two.

Committee members are concerned that the voice of the students will go unheard if representatives cannot be found.

"It's crucial that we get more student involvement. There are two vacant spaces on this committee from complex one and complex two, and those are where the majority of students eat," said Caroline Winship, who serves on the UFSC as a representative from York Federation of Students (YFS).

The Food Services Committee (UFSC) is an organization that decides on the future of food services on campus such as prices and caterers.

Winship recalls that it was student involvement that was responsible for last year's cancellation of the proposed \$2,100 meal plan. Students had insisted that they could not afford the meal plan, and if the university could not provide an alternative, they would find one themselves.

The administration decided that since the students came up with a proposal that they were willing to accept, the university should implement it. The students were crucial in making this happen, Winship said.

The administration's solution to most problems would be to raise prices. Without student representation,

there would be no one to resist moves like this or to come up with new and better ideas, Winship said.

According to Albert Ng, director of Food & Beverage Services, the committee has been trying to get students involved for two or three months. "Maybe this year the students will find that the food is very good, the quality is great, the prices are low, and everything is perfect," Ng said.

Marriott's contract expires this April, and the committee would like to see more student representation for deciding what to do about this situation. Students are the prime users of Marriott on campus.

The UFSC is also concerned about competition from eating facilities in the soon-to-be new student centre. The UFSC will have no control over these facilities. Members feel that much of the business from the Central Square's cafeteria, which is the main money maker for the UFSC and which also helps cover the losses from some of the other campus eating facilities, will be lost to the student centre.

Ng, however, does not necessarily see this extra competition as a problem. "People will have choices and also the students can force the caterers to do something better in terms of variety of food, better quality, and maybe even lower pricing. Competition is always good for the consumer," Ng said.



Israel week celebrated

A. CLIVE COHEN

Spirits were high at the rally supporting Israel on Monday in the West Bear Pit. The singing of Am Israel Chai — the people of Israel live — swept through the student group as a kick-off to Israel week at York. The rally ended with Ma-law-ach, a band covering Israeli rock songs.

Weather Swami's four-day forecast

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
sun and clouds	sunny	variable clouds scattered flurries	mostly cloudy chance of flurries
High - 3 Low - 9	High - 4 Low - 12	High - 8 Low - 19	High - 2 Low - 14

