

Landslide victory for Student Centre

By JEFF SHINDER

In a landslide victory, York university students have endorsed the student centre project. The final tally was 2366 (81 percent) in favor of the proposal and 554 (19 percent) against the proposition.

CYSF President Gerard Blink was elated by the results. "The students of this university have shown that the time has come for change: 81 percent proves that 10 months of work has paid off," Blink said.

Executive assistant Rob Castle echoed Blink's sentiments. Castle emphasized that "York students have spoken as with one voice. We are now prepared to move forward and build the community we have deserved for 25 years. I applaud the vision of the York community."

NO campaign member Dougall Grange was optimistic about the results, despite the resounding defeat. He remarked that "as for the results, I'm pleased. A bunch of guys got together with what I consider quite legitimate concerns on logistical questions regarding the Student Centre and with \$39 and a little elbow grease we got the University talking."

Grange added "the purchasing and running of the building is a very serious matter. It's my view that the most important issues concerning the Student Centre are still to come. It's time everybody in the University got together to obtain the best possible deal we can get from the Administration—if we cannot work together this thing can still fail."

Conciliation was also the theme of NO campaign member Ken McCrimmon's statement. "I'm pleased that the student centre referendum was approved," McCrimmon said. "I hope that the Student Centre people take into account everybody's opinion (when the final deal is arrived at). I congratulate the YES campaign for their excellent efforts, especially Rob Castle for his input into the referendum."

The Student Centre plan approved by the students yesterday included provisions that the Administration will make an up front capital commitment of three million dollars and provide the land, valued at one million dollars.

The students will also receive majority control of the Student Centre's management board. The University has guaranteed that the levy, approved by the referendum, will not be activated until an agreement, satisfactory to both student representatives and the Administration, has been concluded. In addition, the levy will not be collected until the building is operational.

The referendum campaign was tarnished by the conviction of CYSF representative Glen Wells for removing NO campaign posters from the walls. Wells, from Stong, was identified by a janitor who noticed him removing signs at approximately 7:00 a.m. on the morning of March 11.

According to Ken McCrimmon, the action created a "general pall over the whole referendum. In fact it is our feeling that this was not an isolated incident, but a general policy of a group of individuals." McCrimmon estimated that 85 percent of his campaign signs were removed during the campaign.

Castle categorically denied McCrimmon's allegations. He emphasized that "we welcomed the NO campaign because it elicited debate and made us work harder.

This was just an individual incident."

When queried, Wells, also a member of York student security, said that his actions were not sanctioned by his organization. He cited his lack of sleep and surly mood as underlying causes for his transgressions. He added that he was frustrated by the misleading nature of the NO campaign slogans. (The posters in question were the ones bearing the slogan—would you entrust CYSF with eight million of your dollars?).

The tribunal, consisting of Chief Returning Officer Bryson Stokes and his assistants, declared that the mistakes made by Wells were not part of a larger effort to undermine the NO campaign. Most importantly, they determined that the referendum results were not disturbed by the offence.

The punishment levied against Wells included a 12 month ban preventing him from any involvement in central government, effective March 11, 1987. In addition, Wells must table a written apology to both sides of the referendum campaign and pending further investigation, the tribunal will issue a letter to York Security outlining the offences committed by Wells.

Two years ago a similar referendum was rejected by the students. Complaints levelled against the proposal were lack of student input, lack of concrete Administration support, not enough research put into the effort and a poorly orchestrated campaign. Blink and Castle, since the beginning of the initiative 10 months ago, have repeatedly stated that they wanted to learn from previous mistakes. They succeeded.



BABAK AMIRFEIZ

THE ECSTASY OF VICTORY: The jubilant and chummy Student Centre co-ordinators (Rob Castle, with glasses and Gerard Blink, with the glazed eyes) celebrate last night after hearing of their overwhelming referendum victory.

Osgoode students stage protest as stalemate continues over who will fund asbestos removal

By PAULETTE PEIROL

Osgoode students will hold a walk-out today in protest of York's refusal to commit itself to an asbestos removal program in the law school building.

"It's no longer a debate over whether removal is the solution, but rather what priority (the University) will give it," said Eric Tucker, Chair of the Osgoode Asbestos Removal Committee (OARC).

Over 800 students, faculty and staff members have signed a petition demanding that the University and "appropriate Government Ministries" release funds to continue the "complete and immediate removal" of the asbestos (used to maintain the steel structural beams during a fire) within Osgoode Hall Law School.

Delegates from the newly formed Students Committee for Asbestos Removal (SCAR), the group responsible for staging the walkout, will deliver the petition to President Harry Arthurs today (March 12). Gregory Sorbara, Minister of Colleges and Universities (MCU), will meet with SCAR representatives when he returns to Toronto next week.

Those participating in the walkout will not attend classes or use the Osgoode library for the entire day. Today's "Day of Protest" follows an open meeting regarding asbestos conducted by the OARC February 18.

Four years ago, following much pressure from the OARC, York appointed an external consultant

(D.J. Pinchin Associates) to study the Osgoode asbestos situation. After an extensive review, the company recommended that regular air testing be conducted, and that the asbestos be removed. The consultant proposed various methods by which this last measure could be implemented. The cost figures for the removal plan were above two million dollars, according to Vice President of Finance and Administration Bill Farr.

In December 1983, York applied to MCU for asbestos removal funding. The University was then granted a \$210,000 budget for the project. In January 1986, phase one of the plan—the removal of about 20 percent of the building's asbestos—was completed, at a cost of \$177,000, according to Peter Struk, Assistant Vice President of Physical Plant.

To date, the remaining 80 percent of the building's asbestos, installed during the law school's construction in 1967, is "in excellent condition," David Kurosky, Director of Occupational Health and Safety, said. In addition, Kurosky noted that in every air sample taken from the building, the level of asbestos fibres per unit was well below the measurable amount permitted in the Ministry of the Environment's guidelines.

Yet according to Tucker, the problem is not in the validity of York's air testing, but rather in its approach as a controlling, rather than preventative measure. "You can spend hun-

dreds of thousands of dollars controlling the asbestos . . . or you can have a planned removal," he said, adding that control programs inevitably break down through human or mechanical error.

Also, asbestos fibres themselves may become dislodged by disturbances such as contact with water, vibrations, and the removal of ceiling tiles. "If damage were to occur in Osgoode, there is the possibility that asbestos fibres may become dislodged," Kurosky confirmed. "We know it's a toxic material, and given the circumstances, is potentially hazardous."

Farr agreed with Kurosky, but qualified that although he believes the asbestos is a potential danger, it is "not an imminent one."

"From a safety standpoint, we support the removal of asbestos wholeheartedly . . . (and) are prepared to facilitate any effort to remove it from Osgoode," Kurosky said.

Yet the problem, according to Farr, is lack of funding from the MCU. "The Ministry hasn't been particularly responsive (since funding the project in 1985), due to the safety of the asbestos as shown through the air tests," he said.

Last week Arthurs wrote to Sorbara, asking for "special ministry funding or other ministry intervention" to expedite the asbestos removal in Osgoode, Farr said. He added that "other universities, such as

Western, are in the same situation. Therefore, we're trying to set up a special fund for asbestos removal."

SCAR, however, is accusing York of relegating asbestos removal to a low budgetary priority.

"We can't make it a priority," Farr countered, "since we're already about a million square feet short of

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ARTS

YORK MOVES DOWNTOWN: Students from York's Dance Department got to show off their talents last week at the Premiere Dance Theatre. Page 14

SPORTS

TWO'S COMPANY: When Track and Field coach Sue Summers transferred from the University of Saskatchewan to York, she brought with her an outstanding athlete. Lesa Mayes and Summers discuss their experiences together with Sports Editor David Bundas. Page 20