

Youth upset over talks to raise age of majority

By KEVIN BRAY

As part of an initiative to liberalize what many feel is an archaic Liquor Licence Act, the provincial government will consider public pressure to raise the drinking age from 19 to 21—a development that has already isolated Ontario's youth, according to student leaders.

Raising the drinking age has become a prominent issue as the Liquor Act review begins its hearings. Student leaders are bitter that the debate is even occurring. They argue that an effort to change the legal age is already alienating youth by questioning their maturity.

"It's a travesty to raise the drinking age," said Gerard Blink, President of the Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF). "It denies our right to be adult. We are allowed to drive at 16, vote and be conscripted at 18, and to disallow drinking until 21 is inconsistent," he said.

These sentiments are echoed by Matt Certosimo, President of the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS), a group representing 200,000 university students. "The government maintains that at 18 we are considered adults," Certosimo said. "According to our laws and the Charter of Rights, we can then enjoy certain rights and responsibilities. It is patronizing to tell us that as adults we have rights and responsibilities, but then tell us that we are not mature enough to have all of them [drinking]. To increase the drinking age is unfair in terms of freedom," Certosimo added.

A parliamentary advisory commission, chaired by Mississauga Liberal MPP Stephen Offer, began conducting an extensive review of the Liquor Act September 2. The commission's terms of reference include hours of operation, lifestyle advertising, location of liquor sales and the drinking age. After accepting submissions at a special hearing in Toronto this week, the commission will travel through 18 cities during the next two months and give final recommendations to the Government by the end of this year.

Bar and restaurant owners have repeatedly asked for a review of the Act, which they consider an antiquated document suited only for the 19th century. At the same time, however, temperance oriented groups, such as People for the Reduction of Impaired Driving Everywhere (PRIDE), have lobbied for changes to the Act that would restrict the availability of alcohol. As a consequence attention is focusing on the drinking age.

"There are two readings of this [the attention on the drinking age]," Certosimo remarked. "The first is that it is an attempt to appease public desires and the second is that it is being pursued as a high media issue. I believe it's a politicizing of the highest profile issue [in the commissions review]," Certosimo said.

Concern over drinking and driving and the occurrence of auto fatalities among those under 25 is the chief reason for calls to raise the drinking age. The Insurance Board of Canada cites statistics showing those involved in 40 percent of driver fatalities are between the ages 15 and 24. Studies done in the United States,

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GARY HERSHORN

BORIS BECKER: The West German teenage heart-throb raises his fist in triumph after defeating Stefan Edberg in the finals of the Players International Tennis Championships, held last month at York.

Former prof receives \$95,000 in compensation from York Holmes settles tenure grievance

By LORNE MANLY

Chris Holmes, a former York professor who has battled the university for the past three years over his controversial tenure denial, has received \$95,000 in compensation as part of his grievance settlement.

Holmes filed the grievance in 1983 after his application for tenure was turned down, believing he was denied tenure "because of the intolerance of certain people (at York) . . . There was bias against my work," he said. Yet with his grievance still at least another year away from being resolved by an arbitration board, Holmes and the university came to terms last month, after Holmes agreed to drop his tenure grievance.

As part of the settlement, Holmes has also been appointed course director of eight 3000 level "special topics" half courses on mystical studies, to be offered by the Department of Psychology over the next two years.

Mystical studies is Holmes' spe-

cialty; it is a branch of psychological thought which believes "it is possible for people to experience higher states of consciousness," according to Holmes. He says it is unlike modern psychology, which "thinks that human consciousness can't happen independent of the material body after death."

While Holmes believes that the university was biased against his teaching, "The decision to deny tenure was properly taken," said Paula O'Reilly, the legal and employee relations officer at York. "The central issue as far as the University was concerned was that Holmes was denied tenure . . . and he had indeed received fair consideration of his application."

The University, as a result of this view, refused to accept the recommendations of the Joint Grievance Committee at York which said that Holmes' teaching assessment warranted reconsideration. The York University Faculty Association (YUFA), which was representing

Holmes, then asked the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) to back the case. CAUT accepted and the grievance went to binding arbitration in the fall of 1984.

But since that time, for one reason or another, the three person arbitration board and the parties involved have been unable to begin the hearing. Preliminary questions regarding access to confidential letters of assessment from the tenure application (Holmes' request for access was denied) as well as finding times when all concerned could meet, have kept the arbitration board from hearing evidence.

With no speedy end to the case likely, both Holmes and the University attempted to reach some kind of settlement; one finally agreed upon August 13.

"The arbitration board could never seem to find time together," Holmes said, "and it (the hearing) was going to take another two years

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