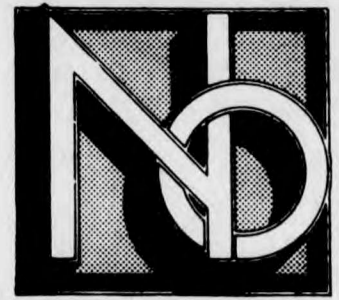




# March 9 and 10 Referendum on OFS, NUS



## YES to membership in the Ontario Federation of Students



Prepared by the OFS

In its four - and - a - half years of existence, the Ontario Federation of Students has established itself as the official representative of Ontario's post - secondary student population. By far the majority of this province's university students are members of OFS. Apparently the students of Ontario see much of value in their only province - wide organization.

Education is, after all, a provincial responsibility. Decisions regarding tuition fees, student aid, and the quality of our education are made every day at Queen's Park. Students need a voice that will be heard when these decisions are made. One student council alone doesn't have the resources or political clout needed to have a significant impact on provincial policies. Only a strong province - wide federation of all campuses can protect student interests.

Fighting for students is a full-time job requiring a full-time staff. The OFS staff, under the direction of an elected executive, has performed this task diligently. OFS keeps in constant touch with politicians, senior civil students, the media, and groups in the community. This is done in a number of ways: regular contact with the Minister of Colleges and Universities and the post - secondary education critics of the two opposition parties; thoroughly-researched briefs presented to various government bodies (the OFS brief to the Minister's Advisory Committee on Financial Assistance for Students was described by the Committee's chairman as the best-prepared presentation to come before the Committee); press conferences and press releases; meetings with the editorial boards of the major daily newspapers; and provincially - co - ordinated actions by students.

OFS has served the students at York and all other Ontario campuses on the issues that students said were important to them.

### STUDENT AID

In 1974, when OFS launched a

major campaign to fight for changes in the student aid programme, the weekly OSAP living allotment was only \$40 a week and had been at that level for three years. Now it is \$61 a week and is adjusted annually. This change represents the first two points in a 7-point programme that OFS has for student aid. It is clear that OFS has had an impact in this area. This winter, the provincial government requested the federal Secretary of State to eliminate the arbitrary summer savings requirement for student loans. Moreover, there is support from both opposition parties for these changes.

### TUITION FEES

OFS was formed to fight a tuition fee increase, and fighting further increases has always been a major priority. The Federation has produced countless briefs detailing the need for a freeze on tuition. In 1975, when the McKeough-Henderson Report recommended tuition fees increases of 65% over three to four years and the discontinuation of student aid grants, members of the organization knew that something

more visible than a brief was needed. The Ontario Federation of Students called for a provincial rally at Queen's Park. When 4,000 students gathered at the Legislative Building, the Minister of Colleges and Universities promised not to raise tuition fees for the 1976-77 year.

The Ontario Federation of Students has worked hard to keep tuition fees frozen for five years. It will continue to fight the recently - announced increase and to seek assurances from the government that no further increases will be instituted.

### EMPLOYMENT

Because Statistics Canada did not survey student employment this past summer, the Ontario Federation of Students conducted its own survey. The results are now being computed. More intensive surveys were conducted on some campuses (Carleton, e.g.) The results obtained from these local surveys have been widely quoted. In conjunction with the National Union of Students, OFS used this data to fight for summer job programmes.

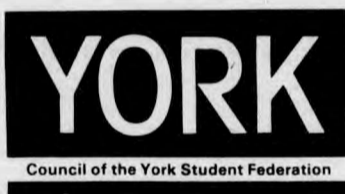
The result: the federal government announced Young Canada Works (5,000 summer jobs in Ontario) and the provincial government expanded its summer employment programme by 17%.

### SERVING YORK STUDENTS

One of the major tasks of OFS is to supply expertise to student councils on request. OFS has helped the York Student Federation on such matters as residence rent hikes, cafeteria food prices, public transportation (rates and routes), and the collection of student council fees from the university administration. OFS has helped student councils all over Ontario to solve many problems - from organizing course unions to managing pubs.

The maintenance of a unified provincial student organization is important. It is always important for students to share information and ideas, to debate issues of common concern, and to stand together in dealing with the government. It is vital to the post - secondary education system that students have a strong and united voice.

## NO to membership in NUS and OFS



Prepared by CYSF

The finance committee of the CYSF composed of the president, finance vice-president, two other members of the council and the presidents of three college councils recommended that CYSF hold a referendum on the question of continued membership in these external organizations. After carefully analyzing this request the CYSF executive unanimously decided to ask the council to hold such a referendum and to urge our membership to reject membership in both of these organizations. CYSF at its meeting of Jan. 27th overwhelmingly concurred with this request, hence this campaign. Why did the CYSF commission such a referendum?

Let us provide you with a few facts.

Fact#1. Did you know that over \$23,000 of your money is being diverted to these external organizations?

Fact#2. Did you know that this represents 24% of the total

operating budget of your student council?

Fact#3. Did you know that the OFS received \$187,950.00 in student fees this year?

Fact#4. Did you know that the staff of the OFS which have suddenly become visible on the campus are paid including fringe benefits 14,000.00 per year? The total budget expended on full time staff totals over \$125,000.00. This does not include the healthy expense account of the employees.

Fact#5. Did you know that the students at the University of Western Ontario recently terminated their membership in the Ontario Federation of Students?

Fact#6. Did you know that the NUS expends over \$70,000.00 of its \$154,000.00 budget on salaries and that its staff earn \$212.00 per week including fringe benefits?

Fact#7. Did you know that the students at the University of Guelph recently rejected membership in the National Union of Students?

Fact#8. Did you know that Radio York is now seeking an FM broadcasting license and that your student council cannot afford this venture given its present financial resources?

Fact 9. Did you know that the

OFS-NUS told us that if we wanted a radio station for our members we would ask you for more money instead of reducing their budget? CYSF doesn't believe that you are getting your money's worth from OFS-NUS to warrant such a move.

CYSF believes that the OFS-NUS are ineffective because of the large amount of money that is expended on staff. Large staff costs prohibit any meaningful political action by the members and the type of campaigns launched by OFS-NUS necessitate the maintenance of a large staff.

The OFS-NUS is still unwilling to accept the fact that the days of the mass mobilization of the student body are over. Students are now too sophisticated and too enraptured in academic endeavours to become active in the labour intensive actions of the OFS-NUS. Witness the failure of such OFS-NUS co-ordinated actions as National Students Day and the recent moratorium on classes organized by the OFS. These failures were widely covered in the media and damaged the political credibility of students thus hampering lobbying efforts with elected representatives. True, OFS does carry out intensive lobbying with political parties and the government. Alan Golombek, information officer of

OFS is one of the few staff members worth his salt. Unfortunately his efforts often fall on deaf ears because OFS lacks the political muscle to be taken seriously by the Government.

CYSF has consistently argued through its representatives on OFS-NUS that they must become serious professional public relations bodies willing to expend large sums of money on effective media campaigns which can successfully present the arguments of students to the taxpayers in a well organized, non-abrasive, effective manner. Unwillingly to reduce their large staff budgets, the OFS-NUS have consistently argued that they cannot afford such a campaign.

If the OFS alone would be willing to reduce its staff budget by only 50% it would be able to set aside \$50,000.00 per year for a media campaign. Given that the provincial parliament sits a full five years, OFS would have a war chest of a quarter million dollars to use on behalf of students during a provincial election. This amount is roughly equal to the amount that is spent by the Liberal Party and the NDP on media during a provincial campaign. Such a concentrated effort would ensure students of the fact that they are taken seriously by Queen's Park.

Presently the OFS-NUS is soliciting the support of labour councils and other active political organizations in communities. Unfortunately this is ineffective in large urban centres. OFS-NUS must reach out to the silent majority who are the true power brokers in our society.

Representatives of other university student councils have been on the campus telling you that the OFS-NUS is not perfect but still deserves your support and that it should be altered from within.

CYSF would like to agree with these individuals but unfortunately it does not have the large budget of these other councils. Other councils can give the OFS-NUS \$25,000 or \$30,000.00 without beating an eyelash and without feeling a pang of fiscal hunger. If the U of T, McMaster of Queen's student councils were giving 25% of their operating budgets to these organizations they would also reject membership.

Given the small budget of the CYSF and the inherent inadequacies of the OFS - NUS and the fiscal pressures placed upon our resources, CYSF believes that you should terminate your membership in the OFS-NUS and vote YORK FIRST!

## YES to membership in the National Union of Students



Prepared by the NUS

Just as one student cannot achieve the tasks of CYSF or those of the college council, one campus cannot achieve the tasks of the National Union of Students. York students should stay in the

National Union of Students (NUS) for the same reason they have college councils and CYSF.

An individual student can only accomplish so much especially in areas controlled by a higher authority. Students can work on goals like improved residence conditions through a college council. They can deal effectively with university authorities through CYSF.

NUS is the way that York students can monitor federal and interprovincial developments. They can make national representations, and work with new ways of dealing

with off-campus problems.

Individual students who could not find work last summer could do little to change federal policy, but through NUS, students' 'involuntary joblessness' was made into an issue that Ottawa had to deal with. Federal officials now check with student opinion before dealing with summer work programmes.

Students on many campuses want worthwhile student radio stations, and through NUS it's possible for CYSF and other councils to find out why campuses got or did not get FM stations.

Students interested in radio have

found out that unless they work together to change federal policies, there is little chance of getting FM. NUS is one way for those students to co-operate and learn from each other.

NUS works for OFS and other provincial student organizations so students help share ideas and thus increasing the effectiveness all student efforts into the provincial governments. NUS is still a young and growing organization but already student co-operation at the national level has had an impact on fields such as student aid, course evaluation, the role of women and

education and government funding policy.

York was a founding member of NUS helping the organization develop.

Current questioning of policies for post - secondary education the deteriorating job market for students and graduates the greater federal provincial co-ordinated plans for York and other campuses, all this makes it more urgent today for York than it has ever been for York students to work with the rest of Canada.

It is not time to quit, but rather a time to stay in NUS.