

excalibur

Sasakawa's name removed from scholarship

by David Tompkins

The Political Science Graduate Council (PSGC) has voted in favour of nominating students for a \$1 million (US) donation from a foundation headed by self-proclaimed fascist Ryoichi Sasakawa after the university decided to take his name off the fellowship.

"The university has now succeeded in renegotiating the terms of the grant so as to remove Mr. Sasakawa's name and to make explicit the programme's academic freedom and integrity," states the motion as put forward by Leo Panitch, chairperson of the political science department. "The Graduate Programme will be in a position to nominate students for the awards."

The source of the donation, which York president Harry Arthurs has called the largest in York's history, is not the issue, said Professor Ken McRoberts, director of graduate studies. "More important is that we do not honour [Sasakawa]," he said.

On Monday February 19, Arthurs issued a statement saying that two amendments to the original agreement creating a fellowship fund have been proposed and accepted by the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation (JSIF).

The fellowship fund will no longer contain the names of York and Sasakawa but will be called "The Graduate Fellowships for Academic Distinction." The JSIF has also agreed to state explicitly that it will "respect the academic freedom and integrity of the university" and "in no way interfere with the curriculum of the Graduate Fellowships for Academic Distinction programme."

Starting next September, five masters scholarships worth \$12,000 each and five doctoral scholarships worth \$16,000 each go to students studying in areas of political economy, Canada as a Pacific nation and environmental protection.

"We could not in all conscience have nominated students for an award that bears the name of Mr. Sasakawa," the motion stated. The council passed the motion 16-9 Monday.

However, Phil Jackson of the Graduate Political Science Students Association (GPSSA) said, "Our position remains the same. We are committed to make incoming participants aware of the nature of the scholarship, aimed at deterring people from it."

"It is a progressive step that [Sasakawa's] name is off the fund but it is not enough," he said.

"We are opposed to this donation," said Jackson, "because Sasakawa is using York University as a pawn in his bid to achieve international respectability. The name of York University will be on his list of philanthropy." Jackson also co-sponsored an earlier motion which would have told the university to give the donation back.

"If we had returned the money," said Jackson, "and we explained our dilemma, we would potentially win the respect and dollars of people who would otherwise ignore York."

Arthurs would not comment on the issue but said in a statement that, "[The JSIF] has demonstrated its determination to ensure the reputation and significance of the programme of fellowships it has established at leading universities around the world."

Sasakawa is chairman of the JSIF and has donated over \$3 billion to various organizations around the world. He is the self-proclaimed "world's richest fascist" and believes "the world is one family, and all mankind are brothers and sisters."

Fifty \$1 million donations have been made available to high profile universities around the world by the JSIF. Universities such as Yale, Princeton and the University of Sussex in England have received this donation.

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This photo is just one of the images of women at York in the Status of Women's contest, "The Picture Project." Photos will be displayed in Winters Gallery from March 8 (International Women's Day) to March 16. Submit photos to room 308 Founders by noon on February 28. Call 736-5380 for details.

Princeton accepts \$1 mil from Sasakawa

by Louis Jacobson,
Senior Reporter at The Daily
Princetonian

Princeton University has accepted a \$1 million grant from the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, an organization founded and endowed by a Japanese billionaire who is alleged to have links to Japanese organized crime.

Several journalists have alleged that Ryoichi Sasakawa, 90, has ties with the Yakuza — an alleged Japanese organized crime group — which stem from a three-year period he spent in jail as a "class A," or most serious, war criminal after World War II. The U.S. government released him without filing charges.

Sasakawa's influence over the foundation has stirred controversy at York University in Toronto, which accepted a similar grant, leading to the resignation in protest of its East Asian studies director, and Princeton graduate Bob Wakabayashi.

The programme at Princeton, called the Sasakawa Foundation Leadership Programme, will support the work of five Wilson School graduate students each year, the university announced February 9.

The foundation's Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund has offered similar grants to at least 19 universities worldwide, including the University of California at Berkeley, University of Michigan, Tufts University and Yale University, according to the foundation's literature.

Sasakawa's son Yohei met with Princeton president Howard Shapiro, Centre for International Studies director Henry Bienen, Wilson School professor Kent Clader and Wilson School dean Donald Stokes on February 7.

Princeton administrators said they were aware of the elder Sasakawa's war-criminal charge and had heard allegations of ties to the Yakuza but decided they were certain he would not attempt to influence the university after the donation.

Though the foundation's original contract stipulated that a committee to award the fellowships include a foundation representative, Bienen said the university successfully negotiated to downgrade the foundation's seat to "observer" status.

Stokes said the university would not consider rescinding the grant.

"You're talking about Princeton University and the Woodrow Wilson School," Stokes said. "Those are very well-known and generally respected institutions. A grant of this sort is not going to make a scintilla of difference" in their reputations.

The grant's funds originate from the Japanese Shipbuilding Industry Foundation (JSIF) — a charity headed by Sasakawa and endowed by his monopoly over speedboat racing, which is a form of legalized gambling in Japan.

His ties to the Yakuza date back to Sasakawa's time in jail, when he was a cellmate of Yoshio Kodama, the "godfather" of Japanese organized crime, said freelance researcher Russ Bellant in an interview last week. Sasakawa later became a "close working collaborator" with Kodama, said Bellant, who has investigated Sasakawa in researching a book on the World Anti-Communist League (WACL).

The Japanese press calls him "godfather Sasakawa" and a 1979 U.S. State Department memo alleges his involvement with the Yakuza, said David Kaplan, co-author of the book Yakuza and news editor of the Centre for

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York honours Havel

Staff Story

President Harry Arthurs presented an honorary doctorate of letters to Czechoslovakian president Vaclav Havel on Monday.

Arthurs presented Havel with a cap and gown during the leader's stopover at the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall where he was greeted by about 2,000 members of Toronto's Czech and Slovak community.

Havel was awarded the degree in absentia in 1982 while serving a six-year prison term for alleged subversive political activities under the old Communist regime. The playwright and dissident became Czechoslovakia's interim president last December after the country's Communist party gave up power. He will hold the office until the country's first free elections in 40 years are held in June.

The 53 year-old leader was on his first foreign visit since taking office. He was released from prison only nine months ago.

Havel was one of the founders of the Charter 77 human rights watch group that began monitoring human rights abuses in Czechoslovakia after the signing of the Helsinki Accords in 1977.