

# EDITORIAL

## Security's need for Special Constables

Last November a woman spotted two men leaving her office. They had apparently broken in. When the woman called Security with a description of the men, the suspects were apprehended within 15 minutes.

The men admitted to the security officers that they were not York students, and then failed to produce identification. Security found that the suspects were carrying walkie-talkies and gloves, and that one man had a crowbar under his jacket. They were arrested for trespassing and held for Metro police.

A two-week rash of break-ins had occurred and the two York security officers believed they had finally caught the suspects. But when Metro police arrived, they refused to charge the men with possession of burglary tools, saying that Security's search was illegal. Police did lay trespassing charges, but the suspects were free to go.

The above series of events epitomizes York security officers' need for more power, specifically Special Constable status.

Presently, a York security officer's authority is limited to that of an ordinary citizen. In the above scenario, for instance, the suspected burglars had to be caught in the act in order for Security to legally search them, and ultimately make a citizen's arrest.

But the chances of a security officer witnessing a crime on York's 650-acre campus are slim. And even if there are witnesses and full accounts of an incident, York Security can legally conduct only a limited investigation, even of the most minor offenses. Furthermore, to follow up on a case, the heavily-taxed Metro Police 31 Division has to be contacted which has led to strained relations between York and the police.

Special Constable status — the power to arrest, without warrant, anyone that the officer believes within reasonable and probably grounds, has committed a criminal offence — would aid York Security's quest to become an effective force.

Arrests, such as the ones that should have taken place with the two suspected burglars, would be much easier to perform. But there are additional benefits, as well. Like their counterparts at U of T and Guelph, York Security officers, with Special Constable status, would be empowered to enforce federal and provincial laws, and municipal by-laws. York's officers would then have the authority to issue provincial offence tickets, do follow-up investigations that could lead to arrests, escort prisoners off-campus, and use Metro Police forms for reports — all of which, advocates of the status argue, are imperative for an effective security force on campus.

Moreover, the status would ease relations with Metro Police 31 Division, and ultimately raise the morale of campus security by giving officers a great sense of authority and purpose.

The costs associated with obtaining the status are minimal. In fact, there are no costs for obtaining the power itself. But if Special Constable status was obtained, explained Eric Pond, Assistant Director of Security Services, who has just completed a detailed report on the issue, Security would immediately improve its training programme so officers could effectively use the power.

Pond said that as part of a new training package over half of Security's 30 full-time officers would eventually have to be sent to Ontario's Police College, in Aylmer, for its nine-week, \$2,700 per person course. He added that because of the increased training, wages might also rise to roughly \$15/hour, from the present ceiling of about \$13/hour.

But as Pond and other security officers have pointed out, training costs would be easily offset by a more effective security force acting as a deterrent against the increasing amount of campus theft and, more significantly, vandalism — a problem that has cost York over \$1 million in the last five years.

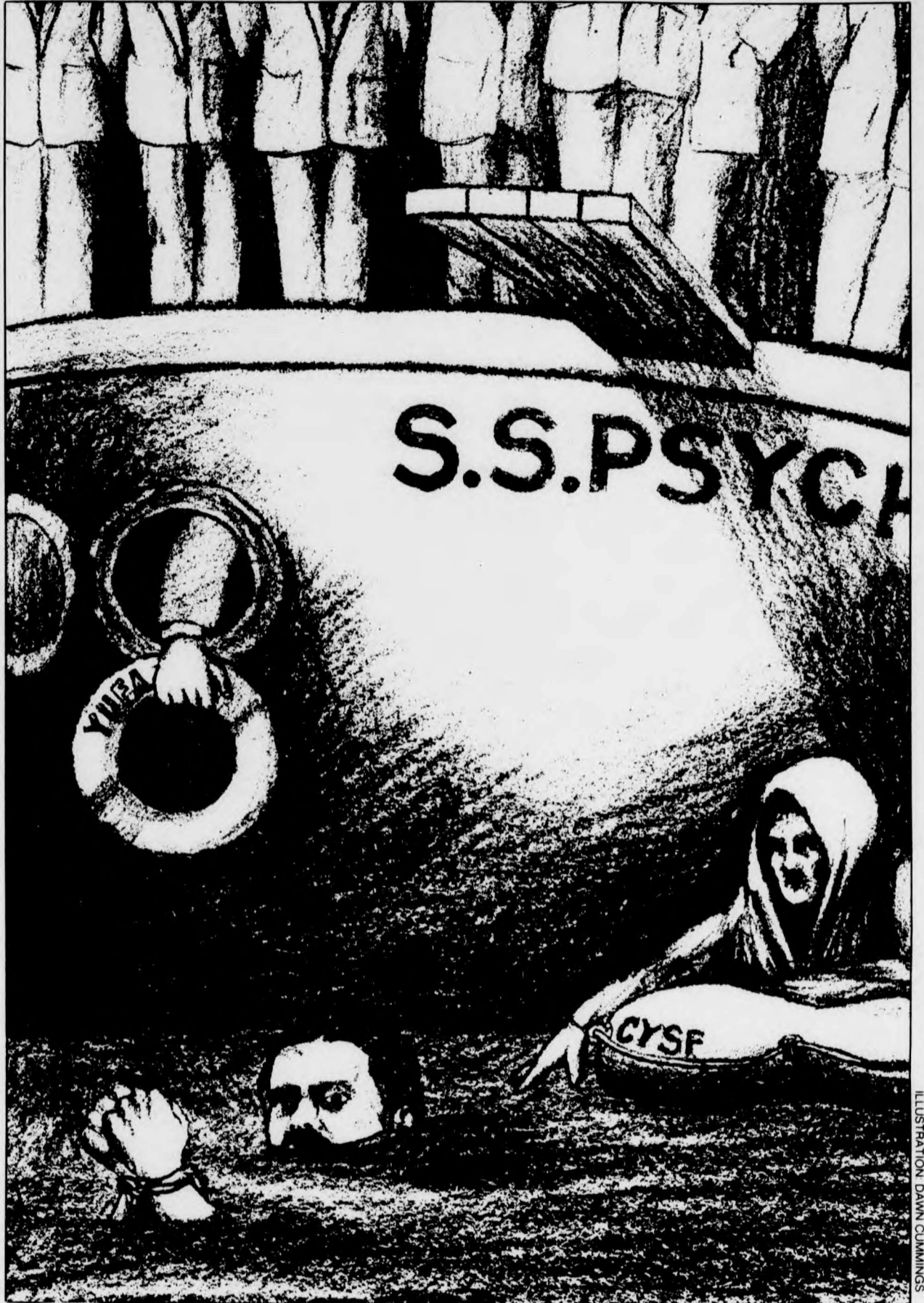
There is some concern, however, that a security force comprised of Special Constables would create a police-like atmosphere on campus and that some officers might abuse their increased authority.

But use of these powers would be the exception, not the rule. Pond explained that the York community would not be confronted with a drastic change in security operations. As John McKergow, Deputy Chief of U of T police, said, "[Special Constable status] greatly increases our effectiveness, although we really only use it the odd time."

And if the status were obtained, guidelines and policies would be implemented by the Ontario Police Commission (OPC) and York, thus creating rules for everyday working procedures. If a Special Constable went beyond the guidelines, that officer would risk disciplinary action by the OPC and the University in the form of suspension, demotion, or dismissal.

Pond presented his Special Constable status report to the Security Advisory committee on Monday. A sub-committee has been established to further examine its legal, operational, and implementation concerns, and in about a month the Security Advisory Committee will make a recommendation to Bill Farr, Vice-President of Finance and Administration.

Hopefully, they will recommend that Special Constable status be implemented.



Professor Holmes' last attempt to stay afloat

ILLUSTRATION: DAWN CUMMINGS

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## LETTERS

### If Aesop ran CHRY...

It is a matter of ancient wisdom, Aesop's in fact, not to count your chickens before they are hatched, and I do hope CHRY's fundraisers did not count on their pledges before they were cashed. With \$19,916 pledged and only \$9,333 collected, it would seem that CHRY's fundraising drive has borne out the truth of the old saying that cash in the hand is worth two cheques in the mail.

No doubt there was great disappointment in the final tallying of the numbers, and I appreciate Mr. Zaretsky's frankness in publishing the figures in *Excalibur*, though his figures still leave me with a few questions. One of these, quite simply, is whether the campaign expenses have been deducted from the total of donations collected (\$9,333). As I remember, T-shirts, buttons and programme guides were offered for pledges, and with any fundraising drive, there are always postal, telephone and computer expenses.

Another question of special interest to those of us in the York community is how much of the money collected came from campus donations and how much from what Mr. Zaretsky calls the "outerlying" area.

With these questions yet remaining, it is to be hoped that CHRY's fundraising figures do not, like Oscar Wilde's chickens, "run about so absurdly that it is impossible to count them accurately."

Yours,  
N. Sperling-Rosen

### Why pay for CHRY?

Are York students aware that CHRY, the university radio station, received about \$100,000 of their money for the 1988-89 fiscal year. According to a letter in the January 19, 1989 issue of *Excalibur* by Daniel Zaretsky, station manager and president, "CHRY currently receives \$4.50 per full-time equivalent student at York University, approximately \$100,000 this

year. \$100,000 is definitely not an insignificant amount.

My question is this: Why should every student, through a levy imposed by York, contribute to a radio station that plays music most of them don't give a damn about? In fact, many students do not even listen to CHRY due to dislike, indifference, or inability to receive broadcasts. CHRY is an alternative music station. It is probably safe to say that York's population has more mainstream tastes and just isn't into the alternative scene. Alternative music has always appealed to a minority so therefore it shouldn't be financially supported by an unknowing and uninterested majority.

CHRY's eccentric tastes can be seen in the station's list of 10 favourites for 1988, also published in the same issue of *Excalibur*. These titles, taken from programmer's playlists throughout the year, include "Hold Your Nose" by Pigfarm, "Nobody Likes The Dik Van Dykes" by The Dik Van Dykes, "Trinity Sessions" by Cowboy Junkies and "Live —

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