

**Two-year struggle not ended**

**Artistic woodworkers continue battle for justice**

By TED MUMFORD

The problems surrounding the 1973 CTCU strike at the Densley Avenue factory of the Artistic Woodwork Company have yet to be solved, said Canadian Textile and Chemical Union President Kent Rowley.

At a press conference Tuesday Rowley said that Artistic fired nine workers because of their participation in the strike, a violation of the Ontario Labour Board Act. "Furthermore, the

Ontario Labour Relations Board refuses to over-rule the firing," he said.

Artistic Woodwork is Canada's largest mass producer of custom made picture frames. At the time of the strike Artistic was paying their employees (mostly Italians and Greeks) between \$2.00 and \$2.95 an hour. On August 21, 1973 the 115 CTCU members employed by the company walked out, hoping to obtain better wages and job security.

The strike soon became a popular cause, symbolising the plight of poorly organized immigrant workers who are often exploited by small "sweatshop" factories. Strikers were joined on the picket line by students, teachers, aldermen and clergymen. The factory continued to operate by using non-union workers who were escorted daily by police officers.

Over the next three and a half months the picket line was often the scene of clashes between picketers and police. A total of 119 including nine York students were arrested on various charges during the strike. There were many accusations of police brutality and bullying.

Attempts by some individuals to press charges against police officers proved futile.

At the end of negotiations Artistic granted the workers a 65 cent raise over two years, but refused to yield on management rights. Some factions viewed the pay hike as a bribe to the workers to give up their job security and bargaining rights.

According to Rowley, the provincial government is trying to keep the small factories supplied with cheap labour, and that their stand is clearly anti-union. He says this is why the Conservatives lost



Artistic Woodwork worker on strike for better wages, two years ago.

**What we have here is a failure to communicate**

By BRENDA WEEKS

"Considering Dale Ritch's frequently expressed concern for the welfare of the campus workers, I am amazed that he did not even bother to contact this office to see if something could be worked out before setting our employee, Omar Abdulhaq, adrift," said director Stan Fisher on Tuesday in a statement from Department of Information and Publications.

Assistant-manager in the department, Dawn Ansdell told Excalibur of the invaluable services provided by Abdulhaq in the last three years distributing their bulletin sheets, published five days a week, around the campus.

"Omar provides a great service for the York community, but it would appear that the CYSF feels that this is not an effective service after all."

Abdulhaq later told Excalibur, that when he approached Ritch in his office, it seemed that Ritch had been unaware of the policy of the CYSF to pay half his wage along with I & P.

"Then Ritch announced that they wouldn't pay because the news for the bulletin does not originate from their office. I was stunned at the loss of my job security, and frankly, I was pissed off," said Abdulhaq.

Ritch told Excalibur he had never been approached by the administration or the Information Bureau on the issue of Abdulhaq's rehiring for the upcoming school year.

"I was not even aware that the CYSF had provided a portion of this man's wage in former years," Ritch said. "But personally, I don't think we should have to pay for an administrative bulletin used only by the faculty."

"I have been making plans for the CYSF to publish their own calendar, which would be of greater benefit to the students. Abdulhaq has more work than he can handle anyway — we have him posting sheets around the campus down here as well," said Ritch.

Ritch did concede to bring the matter up at the next meeting of CYSF.

**Food boycott up to students**

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would be difficult to determine the percentage increase.

Ritch indicated that the university was capable of administering a non-profit food service in the college dining halls and Central Square and provide lower food prices for the average student, while still allowing the more expensive caterers (A&G and Marky's) to remain on campus fulfilling their present specialized function.

"The fact that both the university and the caterers are making a profit out of food services, means that food could be a lot cheaper," said Ritch.

Crandles claimed that although the university had considered running food services, it was not yet ready for such a move.

"An undertaking of that magnitude will require a great deal of study and planning," said Crandles. "We've just brought in these new caterers on two-year contracts, and we're not going to get rid of them now just because Ritch wants us to."

**Excalibur Staff meeting**  
Thurs. 1 p.m.  
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**GAs denied certification**

According to the Ontario Labour Relations Board's final certification report, graduate assistants are still to remain unrepresented by the Graduate Assistant Association as a legal bargaining unit at York.


The Board, however, verified that teaching assistants are employees under the Labour Act and will have full bargaining rights at York. The decision came after seven months of dispute between the GAA and the York administration as to whether teaching and graduate assistants should have the right to negotiate and bargain with the university over wage and job security.

Graduate assistants were not granted bargaining rights because the university felt that their research work was not contributing to the university. Mark Golden, president of GAA said that York regarded their work as 'makework'.

the Labour Board consisted entirely of persons "solely interested in destroying the union". Further negotiations between CTCU and Artistic are blocked by this petition. Rowley claims many union members were strong-armed into signing the petition.

Rowley says two "provocateurs" hired by Artistic to antagonize the police have been confirmed by the OPP as registered private investigators, however the police have not taken any further action.

At the conclusion of the press conference Rowley called upon the government to institute changes to stop exploitation of immigrant workers and to "clean up the Ontario Labour Relations Board from top to bottom".

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