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Students protest at Western

by Andy Marshall

"Rushton, out! Out! Out! Rushton, out! Out! Out!" This was one of the many chants shouted by students March 21 at the University of Western Ontario (UWO).

Approximately 300 students gathered at UWO to acknowledge International Day For the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and to protest the presence of Professor Phillippe Rushton on the university's campus. Rushton presented a paper which claimed that Orientals are superior to whites, who are superior to blacks. The paper tried to substantiate racial inequality, and therefore promotes racism.

Since presenting his paper about one year ago, Rushton has been on sabbatical, but is slated to start teaching again in September 1990. Three hundred students felt it was necessary to tell the administration this was unacceptable.

Western's Academic Coalition for Equality (ACE) planned this demonstration and was joined by members of York Against Apartheid, the Caribbean Students Association of York University, UofT's African Caribbean Stu-

dents Association (St. George and Scarborough) and representatives from Ryerson, Guelph and Waterloo.

Geraldine Stephenson, president of ACE, was quite happy with the level of support received from the other universities. However, she is concerned with the apathy of students of Western's campus, and the direction of Western's psychology department. If a poll of all students on campus was conducted, Stephenson said, "Approximately half would say that Rushton must go, and half would say he could stay. There is a club being formed on campus to defend Rushton's principles — the Academic Freedom Club."

Ah, academic freedom. This is the argument used most often to defend Rushton's theory. But, as black lawyer and activist Charles Roach said, "You cannot use one freedom to undermine another — racial freedom."

What Rushton is really being allowed to do is promote academic racism. By his theory, all black students who end up in university are anomalies. This is preposterous. He seeks to explain

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humankind based on a theory of racial hierarchy. That is nazism and racism in 1990.

The scary thing is that Rushton is a highly visible person in London, and many of his views are being accepted not only by some university staff, but also by people in the city of London.

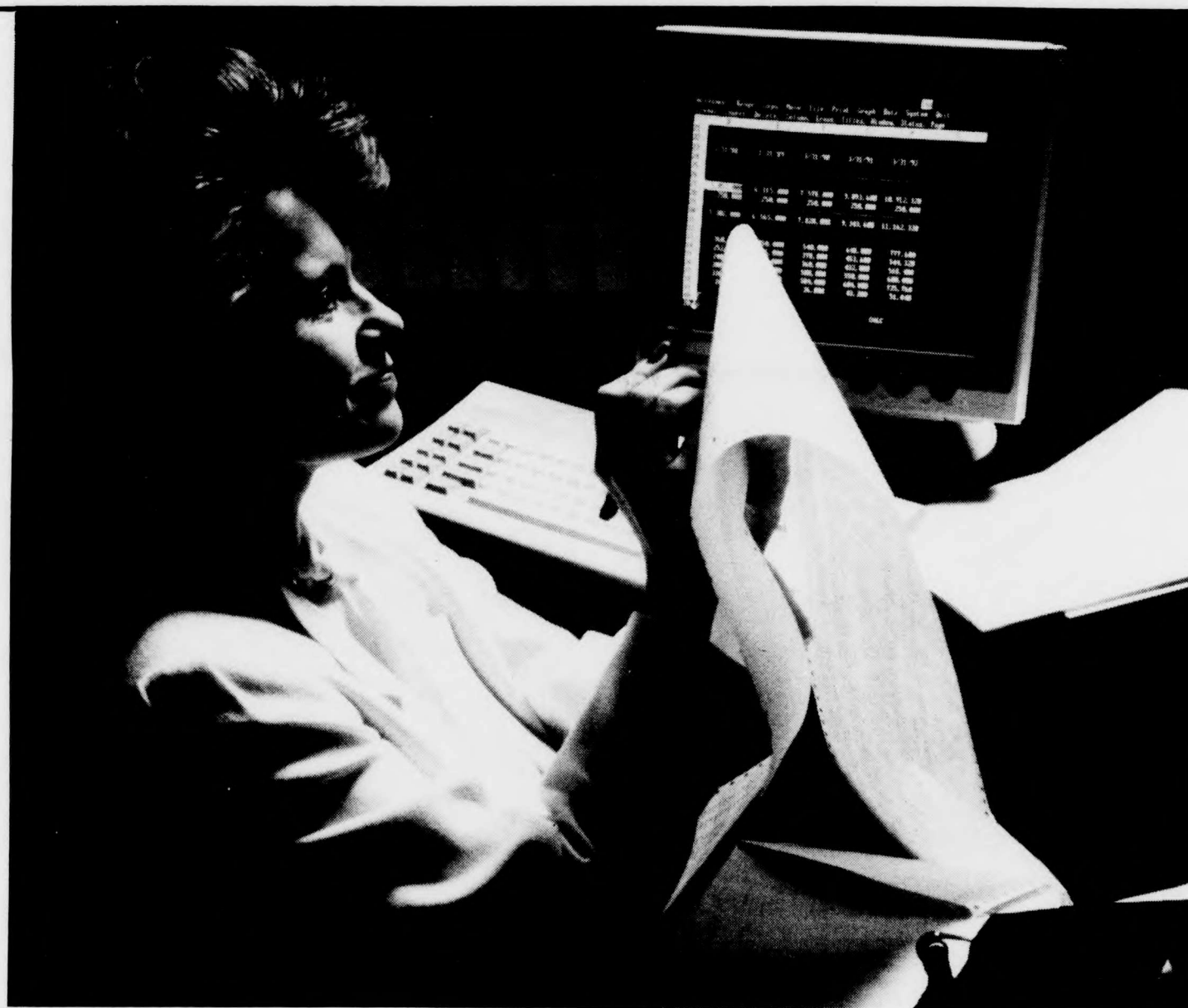
Amanda Sserumaga, chief organizer of York Against Apartheid and a resident of London, says that racism is on the rise in London — in fact, London has always been a close-minded and conservative city. "We organized a rally to protest Rushton's debate with David Suzuki last year. A neo-Nazi organization contacted us and told us they would be at the demonstration. They came and handed out flyers promoting white supremacy to protestors of racism."

In some quarters, support of Rushton is not secretive. Obviously, in my opinion, the university supports him by merely letting him teach. Not only that, they let him teach required courses and introductory courses. Fresh-faced students will be subjected to his teachings. Other students *must* take his courses. It is shameful that the administration allows him to continue.

Furthermore, the psychology professors support him. There are approximately four other professors currently doing research to prove racial inequality, and thereby substantiate Rushton's work. This greatly concerns ACE. Stephenson said, "Professor Vernon is doing research on twinning, with the ultimate aim to prove racial inequality. When his paper comes out, we'll probably have a tougher battle to fight."

Fortunately not all psychology professors endorse Rushton. Four professors at York, (Frederic Weizmann, N. Wiener, David Wiesenthal and M. Ziegler) have written rebuttals to Rushton's paper. Hopefully their colleagues at Western will wake up. In fact, all of Western and London needs to wake up and get on with life in a unified manner. All of these racist theories do not help in achieving any kind of greater unity. The world should become a more habitable place to live, not less habitable. As part of this process, Rushton should be silenced.

Note: Copies of the rebuttal are available from Prof. Frederick Weizmann in the psychology department. Also, copies of the rebuttal and Rushton's paper are available for viewing in the CSA office (001B DIAR)



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