

## York takes strong stance in reply to Bovey Commission

By GRAHAM THOMPSON

A select group of York administrators responded forcefully to a Bovey Commission discussion paper and questionnaire on August 20. The group challenges the very purpose of the Commission on the Future Development of Universities in Ontario.

"With great respect, we believe that no Commission working within a year's time period can assimilate the necessary information or interact sufficiently with the universities to restructure the system," reads the introduction to York's brief to the commission.

In response to the commission's question asking York "which areas might be contracted or eliminated over the next decade or so?" the York group refused to concede that any program cuts were necessary. On the contrary they argued that "pressures from outside York suggest that we should be adding, rather than subtracting, activities."

The York group went on to protest the commission's suggestion that some faculty members at Ontario universities be "retired" to make way for younger faculty who would specialize in new areas of "academic priority."

"The suggestion behind the paper is that tenured faculty members would be dismissed," said Bill Found, York's Acting President and administrative leader of the group replying to the commission. "There's never been an intervention like that (by the provincial government), at least not in this century... To tinker with that would be a phenomenal change," continued Found.

Found also rejected the commission's assertions that the university system can be improved simply by reorganizing it. "There was statement in the commissions report that somehow or other you're not going to improve funding and you can have a system that's just as good as it is now. We just don't see that that's possible," said Found.



One particularly interesting section of the university's brief outlined the academic areas in which York would like to expand.

"Further on into the future we anticipate that York will be the locus for additional investments which the province may find it necessary to make in engineering or medicine... Further expansion in the Sciences would also be appropriate for us institutionally, given the relative smallness of the current Faculty," read the report. Yet, Found cautioned that such plans are not concrete. "There are no immediate plans for the next few years."

The commission is planning hearings in university centres around the province during September. The *York Gazette* reported that York's hearings will take place on Friday, September 21 at 3:00 p.m. in the Senate Chambers on the ninth floor of the Ross building.

## Bookstore health dispute

By ELLIOT SCHIFF

Saying that she was fired because she complained about allegedly hazardous working conditions, former York bookstore part-timer Annie Booth has taken the dispute to the Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Labor.

Bookstore Operations Manager Mary Lucas says she fired Booth because she was an "unhappy" worker. Booth claims she was fired for repeatedly protesting to Lucas after becoming ill from placing magnetic strips in books. Booth was placing the strips in the books as part of a new shoplifting prevention campaign.

Manufacturers of the strips, 3M of Canada, confirmed that the fumes given off by the strips' packaging seals could make handlers feel sick if used for a long time in a unventilated area, admitted Lucas.

"After working with the strips for over an hour," explained Booth, "I began to feel ill, very dizzy and faint, nauseated, and a bad headache began. When I stopped doing the strips for an hour, I began to feel better. I spoke with other people also working with the strips and two other people mentioned similar feelings of illness," continued Booth.

Booth said she then requested reassignment and was told by Lucas that there was no other work to be done. After asking that a report be filed with the Workman's Compensation Board, Booth said she was offered work in the bookstore's computer department beginning Tuesday, August 7.

When she reported to work on Tuesday, Booth was laid off. At this point Lucas said she thought Booth was unhappy working at the book-store.

In addition, both Lucas and John Becker, Vice President of Business Operations at York, claim Booth never committed herself to the computer job. "When you left Ms. Lucas' office at the conclusion of that conversation," wrote Becker in a letter to Booth on August 24, "you made no effort to clearly accept or decline that offer. Within a half an hour (on Thursday) you left the premises of the Bookstore without informing your direct supervisor Ms. Lucas."

Booth claimed she had accepted the job and was coached by Bob Whitman, head of the computer department, on the work she was to begin on Tuesday, August 7. Booth also produced a memorandum distributed by Whitman that has her scheduled for work every day that week, from 1:30 p.m. till 4:30 p.m.

Booth did admit however that she "felt ill in the afternoon (Thursday, August 2—the day she claims she accepted the computer job) and after informing the receptionist, left early." Booth said she left word with the receptionist because Lucas was in a meeting.

At this point in time Booth said she is waiting to hear from Becker concerning a further investigation of the matter. Becker, however, has stated that the investigation is complete and that he has been in touch with his boss, Bill Farr (Vice President—Finance and Employee Relations) concerning Booth's dissatisfaction with the way in which the investigation was carried out.

## Faculty dispute

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our wage considerations. Would you spend all your money before you'd taken care of your major bills?"

Rinehart also charged the university is "taking refuge behind the 5 percent guideline. And since then some other universities have gone beyond those guidelines."

Farr said the surplus money YUFA describes "does not exist," and that the surplus YUFA refers to was not allocated in the March 5 Board of Governors (BOG) budgetary support, but that other university allocations continued after that time.

Farr said YUFA is asking "far too much. What they're asking is far and away above provincial guidelines," he said.

"Other universities have gone beyond the guidelines by small amounts, yes, by .1 or .2 percent, and I think York could do so," Farr added. Farr also said going substantially beyond the guidelines could be "dangerous for the institution."

"The administration and the BOG have been advised informally by (provincial) cabinet ministers that if they go beyond the guidelines it will be read as evidence that the universities are not in the sort of bad financial position they've said they are," he said. "It's not a threat, as such, but a subtle warning perhaps. That's why I think it could be dangerous."

Professor of Social Sciences Ellen Barr disagreed with Farr's evaluation of York's financial situation, however, saying, "They've got the money, there's no question about that, it's just a question of whether they want to give it to us or not. It appears they don't."

Another of YUFA's major demands is for greater financial support for York's library system. A YUFA report called York's allocation of funds for library purchases "one of the lowest in the province."

YUFA has also made a comprehensive list of demands concerning benefits (retirement, medical and long-term disability benefits) as well as a proposal to increase sabbatical pay.

Whether the two sides will reconcile their differences at today's mediation meeting is uncertain. According to Rinehart, YUFA has already retreated from their original position several times, and will have no new proposals "if they have no new offers." If this is the case "then I predict it will be a short meeting," added Rinehart.

When first contacted by *Excalibur*, Farr had said the administration also would not have any new offers to make, but in a later interview he said, "We are going to mediation with the intention of settlement."

Farr did not say, however, whether he had any new proposals. "When you're in mediation that's when you make new offers," he said. "I mean, I'm not going to go to the roof of the Ross building and scream, 'I've got a new offer.' You make those moves in mediation."

Alex Nobile, chairperson of the CGM.

Speaking personally, Nobile said he was encouraged by such promises but wanted to see concrete plans before he will line up behind CYSF in support of the building proposal.

CGM struck a building committee in June to look into the possibility of obtaining more space for their college. One idea involves getting a portable for the college. "If we get a portable, they wouldn't get it," said Nobile, referring to money that might go to CYSF to support the proposal for a student centre.

At a meeting in June it was agreed by leaders of the various councils and senior York administrators and policy makers that there would be little point in taxing Glendon students for a student centre that would be building at the Keele campus.

## Student building elicits college council rebukes

By GRAHAM THOMPSON

Recent student council reactions to the proposal to build a student centre covered the spectrum; ranging from outright rejection of the proposal to cautious optimism.

"In principle we would like to see a student centre built," says Bill Mantin, a senator in the Graduate Student Association. Yet, "our suspicion is that they might be solving their space problems on the backs of the students," continued Mantin, who fears that student enterprises, such as the graduate pub on the seventh floor of the Ross Building, may be moved to a student centre to provide prime office space for faculty and administrative use.

For Mantin, asking students to pay anywhere between \$20 and \$50 per year only adds insult to injury. "It seems to be just another way to get money off students," said Mantin last Friday.

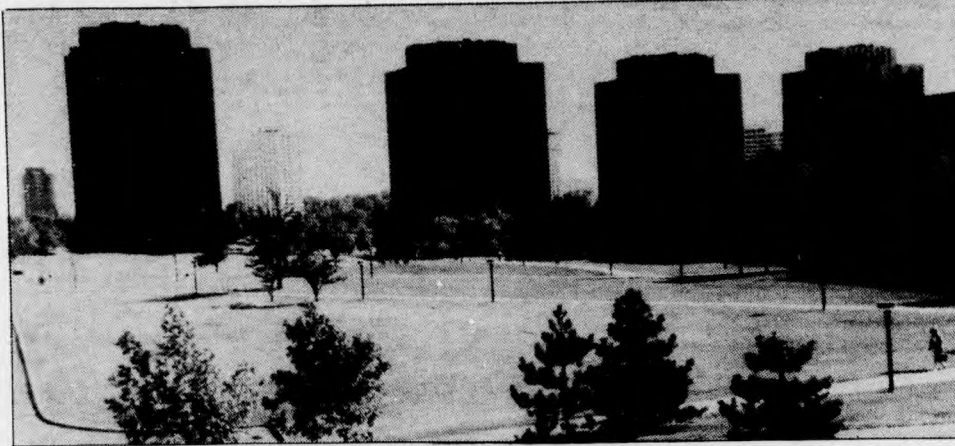
"I think it's fair to say that the administration is out to get students at certain times but I also think they have a paternal interest in developing a student union building. You know, sort of 'give the students something that they want,' sort of placate them for awhile," conceded Chris Summerhayes, president of the Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF), in early August.

"We don't want to lose anything," said Mantin, who would want a "profit sharing" agreement to compensate their pub "if there were any losses" if and when a pub were built in the proposed centre.

Representing the Bethune College Council, Chairperson Cindy Crysdale said the university should pay for a centre, not the students.

"There are other things that are more important," said Crysdale in early August, noting that Bethune's dining hall was closed four years ago when a space shortage forced York's theatre students to begin conducting classes there.

"The colleges will suffer," continued Crysdale. "They are already becoming more academic," she said, referring to the fact that departments, such as English, have been moved from the Ross Building to Stong College, while part of the Anthropology department has been relocated at Bethune.



CYSF's preferred site for a student centre between Atkinson College to the right and Osgoode Law School on the left.



University's favored site for a student centre. Steacie Science Library is to the left, while Farquharson Life Sciences Building is on the right.

While he acknowledges that some councils are hesitant about committing themselves to the proposal for a student centre, Summerhayes minimizes the problem. "So far the support has been really good. A couple of the councils are really concerned about the centre taking away from their particular colleges, which I don't see as a major problem."

Summerhayes is not overly concerned about negative reaction from student leaders because final approval of a student building proposal would probably be decided by a student referendum. "I'm not of the opinion that student leaders always speak for the students. I mean, I know I don't always speak for the students."

Calumet college's council, the Calumet General Meeting (CGM), has a major gripe it wants settled before CYSF can count on its support.

Since Calumet is the only college without a building to house its inhabitants (they presently use space lent by Atkinson College) they want their own college before they discuss the building of a student centre.

"Calumet is an interesting problem," said Summerhayes in early August. "That's a problem between Calumet and the university. It's a different issue. That's an apple and this is an orange. It's nice to build a building for the Calumet students but I don't think all students at York want to build a building just for Calumet students," continued Summerhayes.

More recently, Summerhayes and CYSF representative Chris Costello of the Student Science Caucus pledged to find a place for Calumet students in a new student building, said