

Editorial

Ali's compromise a welcome move

Despite a minor uproar emanating from CYSF, Reya Ali's new "compromise" plan to pull the organization out of the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS), then let all York students decide membership in a referendum, is a welcome relief from the wishy washy CYSF leadership students have grown accustomed to.

OFS is not giving York members their money's worth. In fact, it lobbied against York's interests in its response to the Bovey Commission last spring by supporting the present government funding formula. For York the formula means that to have a decent operating budget it must enrol more students than it can physically accommodate.

As well, OFS is internally disorganized. It has lost a proper sense of priorities by spreading itself thin over broad social issues such as nuclear disarmament and abortion.

The OFS is a good idea that isn't working for York right now. Since it isn't working, Ali wants to put the \$30,000 in OFS fees that goes out of his budget to better use. Namely, to hire one or two research assistants to strengthen CYSF.

The way Ali is going about getting the OFS money is what has caused the uproar. First he tried to get his council to pull out of OFS without holding a student referendum, which was how membership was decided in the first place in 1972. Ali didn't want a referendum because he knows that York students are usually so politically uninformed that they would probably vote yes after a couple of weeks of persuasion by the OFS propaganda machine, apparently one of the noteworthy strengths of the organization.

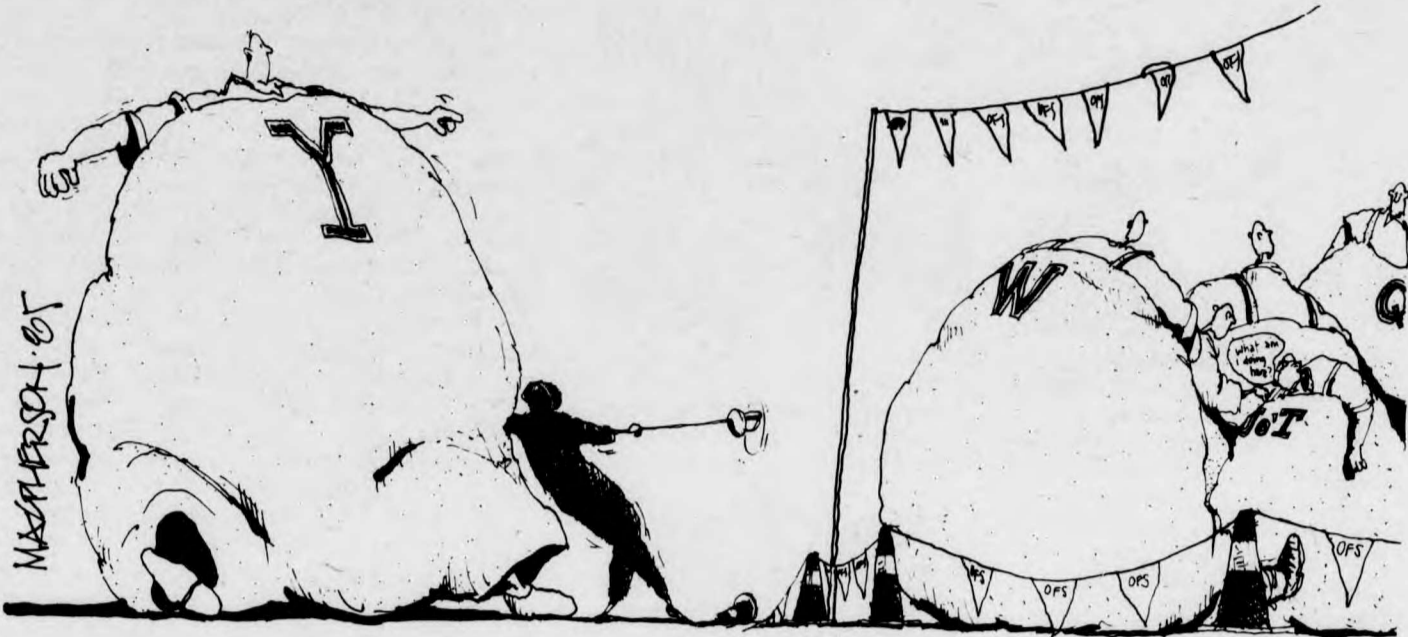
Then, when that plan was derailed by GSA president Terry Conlin and CCOY chair Pam Fruitman, who were saying that democracy was not being well served, Ali tried the compromise route.

Despite what his critics say about his "dictatorial" style of leadership, Ali's position on OFS is right. CYSF has been so internally disorganized in the past that it has been inefficient. The current squabble over the OFS issue is a case in point. CYSF needs the \$30,000.

Ali's suggestion that OFS membership be decided by the entire student body, not just the 54% that are members of CYSF, obviously makes sense. If they won the referendum, OFS would benefit by doubling both its membership and income from York.

In turn, York students would have more voting power in the provincial organization which should ensure that, unlike this year, the particular needs of York students be part of any platform the OFS presents in the future.

The CYSF should annul their membership in OFS, and a referendum should be held among the entire student body to decide whether to pay \$3.00 each to make a good idea work for them.



Letters

Arbitration on academic freedom a must for all

Editor:

I hope that the *Excalibur* will be covering the upcoming arbitration hearing at York University over the issue of academic freedom. This open public hearing will begin on November 7 and 8, and will continue over several weeks or months as 40 to 50 witnesses may be called. This is a most important and interesting case as it deals with essential questions of academic freedom and the rights of individual professors to explore areas contrary to the main dogmas and paradigms of his/her colleagues. In some ways, this is reminiscent of the historic Scopes trial where the issue was whether or not evolutionary theory could be taught within the educational system. However, in my case, the issue concerns the right for a professor to explore the areas of mystical, spiritual and occult teachings, as well as para-psychology and the psychic sciences. Generally, these most interesting subjects are totally ignored within modern psychology and within our so-called institutes of 'higher learning.' In my view, this is a major disservice to students and to the public, and the major failure of our educational system.

I initially filed a grievance against York in the fall of 1983 after being denied tenure, based upon what I saw as a clearly close-minded and intolerant assessment of my work by the psychology department committee. My case was then heard by an arbitration board in the winter of 1984, and the majority report of that committee decided that "there is a reasonable probability that bias existed in the evaluation of Professor Holmes' tenure application," and they recommended to the administration of the University that my application be re-evaluated. Unfortunately, the administration, being more concerned with politics than with academic freedom, refused to accept this recommendation and dismissed me in the summer of 1984. Subsequently, YUFA has received the support of the Canadian Association of University Teachers to carry my case on to binding arbitration. This hearing has since been postponed for over a year, but we are now about to begin with evidences and testimony.

During earlier struggles to defend my work, I enjoyed considerable support among students who realized how unfairly my work had been assessed. Perhaps most outstanding was this student's comment on a class evaluation:

I don't know who is reading this but whoever it is, know this. To get rid of this professor through blind ignorance and tunnel vision, and hence this subject matter, is a crime against higher education.

If you at the *Excalibur* would like some real insights into the failure of our educational system, the intolerances of supposedly intelligent people, the nature of university politics, and the dangers of the tenure system, then please consider giving this most important hearing some coverage. The issues to be addressed are really most vital to those students who are sincerely interested in receiving a broad minded education, and to those who feel that academic freedoms should apply even to people who hold views different from his colleagues.

Chris Holmes, Ph. D.

Withdrawal without harassment

Editor:

I certainly agree with Professor Kaiser's idea ("There has to be a better way") of focussing on *administrative and managerial services* performed by faculty and librarians rather than on teaching and/or research-supervisory functions, which hurt (and alienate) third parties in no way responsible for particular bargaining impasses. Indeed this is precisely what *librarians* withdraw in the event of a strike.

My one objection is the way he intends to implement his proposal. Faculty and librarians should simply *withdraw* these services, not harass and bother members of bargaining units like YUSA by setting up imaginary appointments and jamming switchboards. This is childish in the extreme, and foolish inasmuch as it alienates members of other unions.

By *withdrawing* these services, which amount to well over 75% of all *academic* administration, and a fair amount of non-academic administration as well, YUFA could achieve all its objectives (Imagine all faculty run and/or staffed committees and their work coming to a complete halt!), and not alienate third parties not responsible for the problem. It might also allow YUFA to reconsider reliance on pickets while it drew attention to how underpaid faculty and librarians may be *because* they carry out the large majority of academic administrative functions along with teaching, research, and research supervision, and get very little if any credit for it.

—H.T. Wilson

'Biased opinion' outdated, ludicrous

Editor:

The word opinion above the title of Naomi Pascoe's article, "Calendar Regressive" unfortunately omits the adjective "biased" preceding it. Ms. Pascoe definitely has taken an unmitigated negative view of the Women of York Calendar. The question is "What's the beef?"

This article which purports to bring the

reader's attention to all the glaring weaknesses in the quality of the calendar lacks any clear direction aside from personal objection to the concept of a calendar that revolves around the physical attributes of female students. Ms. Pascoe has unleashed a barrage of criticism at the calendar, some of which is contradictory. At one point in her attack she condescendingly describes the photographs as having the look of those "a boyfriend would take of his girlfriend at the family picnic." How then can she possibly state subsequently in the article that the models have set the feminist movement back 80 years when she previously implicitly criticized the pictures for being innocuous and perhaps boring. Ms. Pascoe wants to have her cake and eat it. Not having interviewed the models, it is not surprising that she has ignored the fact that these students take pride in their appearance and did not find the pictures demeaning. Ms. Pascoe holds outdated views when she implies that intelligence and physical beauty are incompatible.

Finally, the last paragraph is simply ludicrous. With a few strokes of a pen a writer with a chip on her shoulder tries to undo many months of hard work with her ridiculous suggestions of alternatives to the calendar.

It is not so much the criticisms directed at the calendar that I find difficult to swallow but the fact they were written with a view towards discrediting a product that the writer narrow minded disliked from the outset. (sic)

—Mark Rosenblatt

Beefcake as well as cheesecake next year

Editor:

Although one writer suggests that "if you must buy a calendar with pictures of women, go for the Playboy version" we will not be influenced or intimidated. Playboy or cheesecake is not our style nor our objective. We will, however, consider her other criticism that "not all the faculties of York are represented," and we will rectify that in future editions of the calendar.

It is our opinion that women in 1985 no longer have to continue to prove their important and major role in all aspects of society. We do not think this calendar has "taken the feminist movement back 80 years." The calendar was not intended to be, not was it in any way disrespectful to either the women whose pictures were in the calendar, nor to the other women of York University.

To answer, however, to the most frequent student complaint, next year we will also print a Men of York Calendar.

Thank you.

—Adam Cooper
David Rosenblatt
(The Publishers)

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