

York Unions



The strike is on

The York University Staff Association went on strike legally, Monday September 18. YUSA is a trade union that represents the secretaries, library staff and other support staff of the University. Altogether it has nearly 1,000 members.

YUSA has been in contract negotiations with the University management all summer. They are particularly concerned with the low pay of the support staff and the even lower pay that will result if they accept management's offer.

Because of the AIB salaries have fallen behind the rate of inflation in recent years. Now, with inflation approaching 10%, management is offering only 4%. Given the rate of inflation, the University management is proposing to slash the income of staff by 6%.

YUSA does not want to strike. There are many single parents with children to support and many who have mortgage payments to meet. During a strike they will have no income from the University, so that in many ways they cannot afford

to strike. But, the University, by threatening to cut their incomes by 6% has forced them to consider strike action.

YUSA has exhausted all other avenues of putting pressure on the University to raise their salaries. Now the only way they can pressure management to give them a decent salary is to strike.

It is YUSA's aim to close down the University. The closer they can come to realizing this goal, the more likely the University management will be pressured into making some concessions and the sooner the strike will end.

There are several reasons why students should refuse to cross the picket lines and should help by actually marching on the picket lines in support of YUSA.

1) Last year when the University was hit so hard by the cutbacks, the student body and CYSF took a strong stand against cutbacks. Such a stand should extend to supporting this strike since it is precisely because of the cutbacks that this strike has occurred.

2) It is in the interest of students to fight for quality education against the cutbacks of the administration and provincial government. It is the responsibility of the administration and the provincial government to provide sufficient funds to maintain quality education in Ontario.



The Staff Needs Your Support

The drastic wage cuts being proposed will definitely affect the quality of education at York. The low pay will make it more difficult to attract and keep qualified employees and it is also clear that low paid employees will have lower morale and lower productivity. A qualified and well-paid support staff is essential for running a university.

3) Many students will be in union jobs after graduating. The basic principle of the trade union movement is solidarity, for without it, employees would have to take whatever management wanted to give them.

4) The larger the picket lines, the more likely YUSA can shut down the University and the shorter the strike will be.

It is for these reasons that supporters of the trade union movement refuse to cross picket lines. They know that mutual solidarity is in their interest and that divisiveness destroys the ability of trade unions to protect the standard of living of their members.

Canadian Union of Public - Employees (Cupe) Local 1356, York International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), 796, York University Faculty Association (YUFA) York University Staff Association (YUSA).

Students lose in tax error

TORONTO (CUP)—An error in the distribution of education deduction forms by the tax department has meant thousands of students are missing out on a tax break they are eligible for.

This spring, the federal government was late in mailing out its T22-02 tax forms, which allows students to deduct \$50 for each month spent studying, according to Doug Birney, a Toronto area tax supervisor.

"We should have sent the forms to the universities to complete and then forward to the students, to send on to Ottawa," said Birney.

The forms are supposed to bear the universities' signature or seal, to prove the student was actually enrolled at that particular university.

"But we got them out too late, and the schools didn't have time to complete them, so we just made them available at our offices," he said.

District offices, realizing the error, decided to forgive unsigned deduction forms. However, said Birney, tax department officials in Ottawa still expected forms to be signed and disallowed any claims that were not signed by the university.

The administration's view of the staff strike

There are several issues remaining unresolved in negotiations between the university and YUSA. The major non-monetary items are YUSA's demands for contract clauses which would:

A) prohibit the University from contracting out any work of the kind performed by bargaining unit members;

B) prohibit supervisors and managerial personnel from performing work of the kind performed by bargaining unit members; and,

C) allow YUSA-unit members to honour picket lines of other campus unions without penalty.

The University's position has been, and continues to be, that these clauses would produce far too great a restriction on the University's operating flexibility.

There is a large gap between the union's monetary demands and the University's offer. YUSA negotiators are asking for salary increments costing approximately 10.3%. The University's offer is for a total increment of 4%, concentrated on salaries rather than benefits.

In the preparation of budgets for 1978-79, York faced a serious revenue/expenditures squeeze. The government announced that it would increase per-student grants at a rate far below the rate of cost inflation. Government grants and tuition fees would suffer further from the enrolment decline experienced in 1977-78 and a further decline projected for 1978-79. This further decline of approximately 3% in overall full-time equivalent student enrolment, has in fact occurred, despite encouraging growth in the first year in some Faculties.

York's sober revenue forecasts for 1978-79 are, therefore, turning out to be valid. In order to meet rising costs and maintain the viability of programs and services, the University engaged in a major budget-cutting operation last winter and spring, cutting 1977-78 base budgets back by some \$3.8 million. The main "rising cost" is the University's salary bill; a decision was made to create a pool of funds sufficient to provide increments of 4% to the University's

employees on their various increment dates. Very serious cuts had to be made to create a pool of even that size. A larger pool would have required even more drastic cuts and loss of jobs. Income projections for 1979-80 are no more encouraging.

The University has held to its 1978-79 increments policy in decisions and negotiations this year. York and CUPE agreed upon increments of 4% for 1978-79; final increments of 4% have been im-

plemented for P&M staff; offers of 4% have been made to the Graduate Assistants' Association and to Operating Engineers. The current offer to YUFA is 3% for 1978-79.

In the event of strike action by YUSA the University intends to continue to operate and maintain its services to employees, students and residents although some services may be at a reduced level. Every effort will be made to provide work for members of the

YUSA bargaining unit who elect to cross picket lines. Employees who report for work will be paid at their regular pay; persons not reporting to work will not be paid.

No paid vacation, sick leave or other leaves will be paid for members of the YUSA bargaining unit during the period of a strike, and the University has written to YUSA regarding premium payments for the possible continuation of benefits coverage. Any salary overpayments will be

recovered in subsequent pays.

Employees not in the YUSA bargaining unit are expected to report for work as usual. Campus unions other than YUSA have been informed that the University intends to continue operations if YUSA strikes, and that it is assumed that Collective Agreements will be honoured.

W.D. Farr
Vice-President,
Employee and Student Relations

letters

Excalibur's inaccuracies

I am writing to ask you to correct two incorrect claims made by Excalibur staffers in your 14 September issue.

On page three Kim Llewellyn says that CYSF has approved 'funding for their own bursary program, the first student sponsored program in Canada.'

Calumet College welcomes this initiative on the part of CYSF, and is glad that the central student government has decided to follow the example of Calumet College, whose student sponsored bursary program was established by the General Meeting of the College in the spring of 1974.

Our program yields about \$460 per year in interest, which is then distributed to Calumet students on the basis of need and academic excellence. Applications and information about this bursary are available from the Office of Students Awards, or from Gabriele Hardt, 134 Calumet College.

The second incorrect claim is on page one. There Laura Brown says flatly that 'only the Council of York Student Federation has taken some steps to aid the students. The council has posted two makeshift bulletin boards in Central Square, in an attempt to help arrange car pools.'

Laura Brown (who has done excellent reporting on Calumet in

the past) apparently did not know that as early as 8 September Calumet students were not only posting ride-boards, but actively organizing car pools for our commuting students.

I will appreciate your seeing to the accuracy of your articles in the future, and ensuring that your writers are thoroughly acquainted with what the colleges are doing for students before they praise CYSF for doing things first. The Colleges remain the spearheads of service at York, and this fact should be stated, not falsified, by the main campus newspaper.

John Bentley Mays
Student Liaison Assistant
Calumet College

Excalibur wrong again

It seems that when John Becker moved from the ninth floor to the ground floor of the Ross Building he did not move close enough to the Excalibur office to enable your staff to check the "facts" being presented in your reports.

I refer specifically to Kim Llewellyn's article "Students set up first ever bursary." Mr. Becker administers the monies of student governments at York. A simple check with his office would have supplied you with the information that Atkinson College students provide one dollar per course for a bursary fund. In some years this

fund has topped \$20,000. within the one year — all of which was disbursed in bursaries that year.

Some York day students have benefited from this fund provided by Atkinson students I might add. I do not know precisely how long this particular bursary fund has been in place, but it has been there for at least six years.

In addition to this the ACSA created a \$10,000 scholarship fund in 1976/77 which provides five \$200 scholarships every year.

Perhaps CYSF's President David Chodikoff is sincere when he says "A student council could never provide a significant bursary fund," but I must have a different sense of values and I think \$21,000 per year is indeed "significant."

Val Hudson
Atkinson College

"Reactionary mouthpiece"

In your September 14 news article concerning my case you continue the campaign of malicious political, social and academic persecution initiated by the reactionary York University administration headed by President Macdonald.

You state in your first sentence that the charges against me "were dismissed because, of lack of evidence". This is not true. The charges were dismissed because

there was irrefutable evidence presented which stated that the Zionists attacked me first.

Your second sentence is a deliberate attempt to create a split between the York Student Movement and the students at York University. You state that fighting broke out "between students and members of the York Student Movement". In actual fact it was some Zionist thugs who attacked the YSM literature table and to suggest that these thugs represent the student body at York is to grossly slander the students. The vast majority of students have no sympathy for the likes of these thugs.

Thirdly, you provide a platform for the arch-reactionary Becker to continue the administration's campaign of malicious political, social and academic persecution of me. Mr. Becker continues to proclaim that I am guilty even though the charge was dismissed.

This campaign of malicious persecution is being carried out against me because I am a Marxist-Leninist professor. Your deliberate lies and distortions just further reveal that Excalibur is nothing more than a mouthpiece for the reactionary administration.

Jeffrey Goodman Forest, Ed.D.

Note: Due to the strike we expect a large number of letters next week. This may create space problems. Please remember to limit letters to 300 words and type them, if possible.