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Sit-in for Missing President

One of Toronto's hottest frontiers, nicknamed the "Main Gate" by locals, has become the centre of attention again. Located at the intersection of Keele Street and York University Boulevard, and demarcated by private property signs separating the university from the city, the Main Gate was at the centre of renewed tensions on Monday, when striking CUPE 3903 workers and some undergraduate students staged a rally in support of their missing leader, Dr. Mamdouh Shoukri, amidst heightening public curiosity and concern about the whereabouts and safety of York U's beloved president and vice-chancellor.

Shoukri's public appearances have been noticeably less frequent since November 6th, but concerns about his safety rose when he failed to show up at a town hall meeting hosted by the York Federation of Students on November 25th. In the past 2 weeks, in fact, students reported seeing him only once during a teach-in at Vari Hall. His behavior was described "elusive" and "hard-pressed." Later that week his office released a vague communiqué stating his concern about "uncertain economic climate" as his administration's reason for its non-negotiable position in the current labour unrest. He was last seen on December 11th at a York University Senate meeting where he is said to have made

surprisingly uninformed comments about CUPE collective agreement and bargaining process in response to questions by some opposition senators.

Unconfirmed intelligence reports have suggested that York U's supreme leader may have been drugged and kidnapped by a renegade member of the Bargaining Team headed by Chief Negotiator Barry Miller. Rumors have also been circulating that at the start of the strike Dr Shoukri was quietly replaced by a dummy animated by Alex Bilyk, head of Media Relations and a famed ventriloquist.

On Monday, a group of concerned undergraduate students and CUPE3903 members decided to visit Dr. Shoukri's office on the ninth floor of Ross Citadel. After a long wait, they were approached by York Security Forces (YSF) and York Media Spinners (YMS) who reassured them that the president was simply "out of the office" and "very busy" attending more urgent duties in downtown. The students and workers reportedly became more suspicious and decided to sit in front of his office until he came to address them directly. "We are really worried about our president. We want to see him for real confirming his commitment to us and to the well-being of our great university," said one of the protestors. "We will continue sitting here until we see him safe and

sound leading us toward our great future."

Shortly after, Alex Bilyk was seen personally escorting a journalist outside of the York borders, and media representatives are now banned from entering York Territory. In a move seemingly designed to avert suspicions of foul play by Bilyk and his squad, YMS released a missing-person public appeal today. The workers and students continue their sit-in at Ross Citadel, from where they remain in contact with the media by cell-phones.

Tenuous Track professors storm media headquarters

Special to the XFiles - In what

appears to be a coordinated attack the newsrooms of the CBC, CITYTV and the Toronto Star were taken by storm yesterday by bands of Tenuous Track Professors (TTPs), currently on a legal strike at York University. Wielding laptop computers, they demanded large screens and the ability to broadcast PowerPoint presentations on a variety of topics, including 20th



Century Canadian labour relations, ethics and epistemology, Habermas and the public sphere and the relationship between blogging and journalism. They demanded that journalists and reporters sit through their presentations, and then harangued them when they didn't ask questions of a critical enough nature.



Sent back to their desks, journalists were accosted by Tenuous Track Professors armed with red pens who insisted on commenting on the soundness of their arguments, their

lack of critical analysis, and the trustworthiness of their sources. "This is directly from the York website!" one TTP was heard to cry, "You must interrogate their continued subterfuge, they claim that I want a 20% pay increase when I only want 8%!" Another abstracted TTP, pulling wildly at her hair and waving her faculty library card was seen to be berating a news reporter, saying "I am not a student! I am not staff! I am CONTRACT FACULTY!" Interestingly, journalists and reporters met the demands of the TTPs docilely, obviously cowed by years of being taught to respect unquestioningly the authority of anyone in a teaching position. Journalists met the demands of the TTPs docilely, obviously cowed by years of being taught to respect unquestioningly the authority of anyone in a position of apparent advantage, and simply to copy uncritically any carefully crafted public relations statements. Media studies experts believe this compliance is a direct result of long periods of critical inactivity, embeddedness and professionally acquired unwillingness to touch controversial subjects.

A mediator specializing in hostage crisis situations who was brought in to negotiate with the attackers reported that they seemed to have cracked under the stress of not receiving their normal ration of pre-holiday exams and papers to grade, and had taken their frustrations out on the media, whom they felt were ignoring them in favour of the "sexy young graduate students" who are also on legal strike as TAs and GAs. "Why don't WE get any attention?" complained one of their spokespeople, "we are PROFESSORS after all, and if our egos aren't stroked by a lecture hall full of synchophantic undergraduates on a weekly basis our very existence is put into question. We can't stand this kind of existential angst much longer."

The special negotiator was confident that she could convince the TTPs to vacate the newsrooms by the end of the day if journalists would agree to check facts, use appropriate resources, get all sides of the issues and to run more segments and stories on TTPs. The Toronto Star has agreed to publish a special colour supplement to the Saturday Star featuring the lives and work of York TTPs, with a special emphasis on TTPs on the picket lines.

**Holly Striking Stuffers!
York's 50th Special
Introducing York Is Us new
YIU50 licensed merchandise just
in time for the holiday shopping
season!**

Are you looking for a special holiday present for a shut out undergraduate student, or a strikebreaking faculty member from Osgoode Law School, the Schulich School of Business or Nursing? Perhaps you have a current graduate student in mind whose research or teaching support funding has been cut, or perhaps,

you are thinking of special something to say thank you to your unit 2 colleagues?

Featured product:
Lucite Block Frame
4" x 6" Frame comes with choice of 4 portrait photographs and 3 pairs of shoes and instructions for throwing shoes at portrait.
Assembled in Toronto. Price: \$TBA

Portrait options are: President Mamdouh Shoukri; Peter Sadler-Brown, Special Advisor to the President; Alex Bilyk, Director Media Relations and Hicks Morley.



Shoe options are:
Classic men's "gravity" shoes
9" Platforms
Rat slippers
All are shoes are GLBTI and come in a full range of sizes.

More products will be added in January in preparation for our university's official birthday on March 26, 2009. So, stay tuned!

York Is Us endeavours to redefine York University's identity for the university community and the outside world. We are calling for your modest submissions for "York's 50th: A Rumpus." Send us your small creative reflections that ransack the last 50 years at York. Submissions should not be larger than a hairless Chihuahua and be digitally transportable. Submissions will be selectively showcased in upcoming XFiles.



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