



Anthony Marco
President

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Comrade,

A labour dispute is never easy, but when the employer is a union, it is regrettable and often nasty. It is sad for such an internecine battle to occur at York University, whose unions have been stalwarts in our collective fight for rights, dignity, and fairness in workplaces and beyond.

As a labour council, it is not our role or place to interfere in the internal workings or structures of the York University Faculty Association. However, as workers, delegates at the November meeting of the Hamilton and District Labour Council, without reservation, expressed support for the members of CUPE Local 1281 in their strike against YUFA. Workers must stand with workers.

Delegates were most exercised by two issues. First, YUFA's intention to post job openings/descriptions for two new "non-union" positions— executive director and staff lawyer—n that apparently incorporate some functions that are currently bargaining unit work prior to concluding bargaining, and allegedly requiring the union to agree to this prior to addressing other concerns, is problematic, especially when issues identified by CUPE include job security and "scope" of the agreement. Workers must protect the potential erosion of their jobs. Secondly, our delegates find it incongruous that a union would hire a law firm to represent it in bargaining that allegedly is committed to decreasing, or avoiding altogether, the influence of unions in the workplace. We certainly hope that, as an employer, YUFA is not adopting anti-union strategies and tactics that will continue to poison labour relations and sully the reputation of your union.

We fully understand YUFA's desire to serve its members effectively. Surely, this too is the objective of your staff. The best way to achieve this, in the opinion of our delegates, is by engaging your workers and their union in productive talks leading to a renewed collective agreement in a timely manner.

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Finally, during this time when post-secondary education in Ontario is being attacked, it is incumbent on all of us in the labour movement to focus on fighting the institutions and their political masters that pose the real threat to the sector.

Regards,



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