

## Burzotta resigns from academic affairs post

# Council officer quits, cites "lack of cohesion"

By WARREN CLEMENTS

Complaining of dissatisfaction with "council's inability to function as a cohesive representative body", Antoni Burzotta resigned effective last week as vice-president for academic affairs on the Council of the York Student Federation.

In his letter of resignation, he said that CYSF's method of operations left him "saddened and disheartened", and that the council's problems were "not merely a question of leadership but of solidarity."

His departure did not create any great shock waves within the CYSF ranks; Burzotta had announced his intention to resign in mid-October, and certain members of the executive freely admitted that there had been personality clashes which might have precipitated the action.

"I'm sorry Tony felt he couldn't work with us," said CYSF finance vice-president J.J. Koorstra. "The rest of the council could work together, but Tony was an individual spirit."

"For instance, I was totally against his course evaluation, which was his pet doctrine, but I was willing to meet him halfway. He wanted us to meet him all the way. He couldn't compromise as we were trying to do."

### HANDS TIED

In an interview this week, Burzotta said he had found his hands were tied on the council since "there's a whole bloody protocol thing you have to go through, because the rules are not defined."

The main bone of contention was the issue of a course evaluation programme Burzotta wanted to pursue, involving the rating of courses and teachers in all York departments as a guide to students during future enrolment.

At an executive meeting in early September, Burzotta received approval in principle for a rough description of the evaluation concept; since then the idea has stagnated.

"Although I had the support of the council, I didn't feel they would

commit themselves to the evaluation," Burzotta stated. "Their attitude seemed to be, if it costs over a certain figure, we don't want it."

CYSF president Anne Scotton commented that it was difficult to pass the evaluation proposal without concrete figures.

"Tony said he talked it over with a few deans, but I've never seen what they proposed and neither had the council," she said. "I wanted to hear what it would cost us in computer time and whether we would have to hire people to do keypunching. Glendon screwed up the keypunching on their own course evaluation this year to the tune of several thousand dollars."

Burzotta maintained that the council restricted its spending to items which had traditionally been funded, without taking a close look at its priorities.

"I wanted to do something big, and there's no reason it couldn't have been done. Money's no excuse; if you want something enough, you'll find the money."

### DIFFERENT STROKES

"That may be his philosophy," countered Scotton, "But it's not the philosophy of the rest of the members of the executive."

She revealed that Burzotta had asked the executive for \$1,500 "to investigate the course evaluation proposal and bring it to fruition."

"He said he needed a guarantee or he couldn't go ahead," said Scotton, "which was ridiculous. I can't say he gave us an ultimatum, but he made it clear he would be highly dissatisfied if we didn't accept the course evaluation, which isn't the right attitude."

"We're not prima donnas. He has to roll with the tide."

Burzotta argued that the vice-presidents had to roll so much that they became "pencil-pushers" and "red herrings", mere titles that looked good on a budget sheet.

"The vice-presidents have no effective control over their own money," he explained. "If they want to spend their part of the budget, it

has to go through the finance committee. If they want to start anything, it has to go through the council for approval. All you can do is offer advice."

The council has six vice-presidents, for external affairs, academic affairs, social-cultural affairs, university services, finance and communication. Burzotta commented that while the council system does little to ensure that council members represent their constituencies — he himself was acclaimed from Vanier, and wasn't from the Vanier council — the system helps even less in choosing members for the executive.

### TOP DRESS

"Who do you elect?" he asked. "The one who speaks the best, the one wearing the best clothes that particular day? Then you put them together and expect them to work together. It just doesn't work."

"We need a representative government. Right now you have a bunch of independents on council. If you want to get bills across, you have to have some kind of cohesive party. And a party it is not."

University services vice-president David Walker disagreed with Burzotta's feeling that the executive lacked

cohesion.

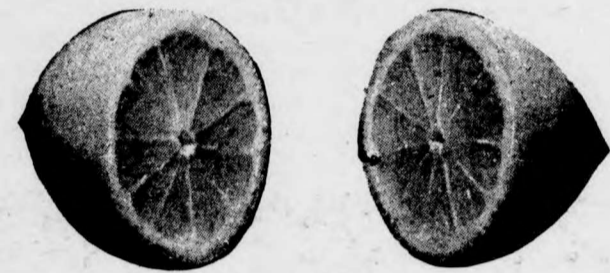
"I told him what I was doing and I made it a point to find out what he was doing," Walker said. "I'm not saying anything against him, but I don't think he made the same effort. The information was all here, if he wanted to look for it."

"It's too bad," said social-cultural affairs vice-president Angus Watt. "Tony was a person who liked to wheel and deal and wanted to see everyone act quickly and spend a lot of money. He found that's difficult to do when a number of students are trying to run council and keep up their schooling at the same time."

Scotton suggested Burzotta may not have made sufficient effort to voice his opposition to "ad hoc" measures when he was on council.

"The only time he complained about the finance committee's procedures," she said "was when he showed up at one meeting to argue the case of the faculty education students' association, of which he was a member."

Burzotta resigned from both the executive and CYSF itself, and is currently on two committees of the faculty of arts. The vacant academic affairs post will be filled following the November 14 CYSF by-elections.




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