

EXCALIBUR

Everything secret degenerates: nothing is safe that does not show it can bear. discussion and publicity — Lord Acton

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Council must be pushed to action

This year's student elections were a tussle between the right and the left. The man in the middle trailed far behind.

That was the only surprise element in a contest that has otherwise degenerated into a tired hollow exercise.

The vote was predictably marked by the absence of the silent majority — only 1,137 students voted. Mike Mouritsen, the candidate of the right, squeaked in 20 votes ahead of United Left Slate candidate Dale Ritch.

There's no pat explanation for this yearly phenomenon of the non-vote. Although apathy is a general term that says nothing in particular, one hard fact remains, students pay \$80,000 to \$100,000 annually out of their pockets to support "their" student government.

In the past, non-interest in this government left the student politicians to their inefficient bunglings — to the tune of a \$40,000 debt that is now pinching all the student services.

One reason for low voter turn-outs may lie in the low-key campaigning by the candidates. The low profile these candidates maintain once they get into office, also affects student interest.

How many students know their college representatives on the federation? These people must make themselves known and accessible to their constituents. How about council meetings during the day in a place known and frequented by students? This year's council meets at supper time in the senate chamber up on the ninth floor of Ross, hardly conducive to a town hall gathering.

The CYSF constitution guarantees any student the right to stand up in meetings and give their views. Students should attend council meetings and exercise that right.

This may be the only recourse for students next year. If Mouritsen is acceptable as an administrator, he's still totally unacceptable for his policies. These seem narrow and exclusive and threaten to move the federation closer to a position of passive acceptance of policies defined by the government and the university administration.

Student protest at York won the release of the OSAP cheques. At Brock, it led to the re-hiring of fired professors. Mouritsen has said "the issue is not that teachers will be dismissed, but which ones." He opposes protest of government cutbacks in education saying most students "by now are resigned" to the \$100 fee increase.

Education is the only reason students

are here, Mouritsen says. Daycare, workers' struggles, loan and fee hikes and community issues are "peripheral".

What Mouritsen fails to realize is that all these issues are the guts of the questions about education. These questions all revolve around education — for whom, how and why. Without

daycare, it's education for the young, the unmarried and for men. If York workers are denied the free tuition staff and faculty receive, then it's a continuation of education for the elite.

With rising loans and fees and fewer chances of summer employment, the criteria for an education becomes

money not ability. Any real concern for education and its quality cannot exclude these issues, they are part and parcel of the same thing. It's up to students to use their options and pressure the council to utilize its structure in developing progressive educational policies in this institution.



Students must help if workers strike

Strikes are a drag. If the 238 people who help run this place aren't given a better deal by Sunday, York will have a strike on its hands. The university will start piling high with garbage. There may be breakdowns in heat, water and electrical service. The washrooms will no longer be clean. In short things will be a mess.

We'll all be affected — students, teachers, secretaries, administration — everyone. The greatest effect will be felt by the CUPE workers and their families who will no longer have a paycheque to depend on. But unfortunately workers are sometimes left with very little choice.

Times are tough. Budget cuts are hurting everyone. The faculty refused wage freezes. The administration says it has no money to pay wage increases. But the CUPE workers need more than the overall six per cent (wages and benefits)

that management is offering. The cost of living itself has risen by seven per cent.

The union wants a wage increase of \$1 across-the-board. This would give them a rate comparable with North York school board workers doing the same jobs. Other things are equally important. They are asking for 100 per cent university paid benefits. They want a pension scheme, and tuition for themselves and their families — a privilege now enjoyed by faculty and staff.

There are loopholes in last year's contract allowing management to contract out work in the new buildings and a seniority system that gives management the right to lay-off junior people according to job category and not length of employment.

Last month nine workers were laid off during a crucial stage of contract talks. No reason was given to the workers.

Then three more jobs were made redundant causing internal reshuffling. The amount of work goes up and the number of workers goes down. Last week five men were suspended precipitating a two day work stoppage.

Since April 1972, building space increased by 16 per cent while the number of inside and outside workers has gone from 261 down to 238. As workloads increase, preventative maintenance suffers and York's facilities deteriorate.

In a letter to its members, the local executive explained their case; "Let us make it clear that we have no pretensions or even economic equality with the faculty but are none the less very essentially part of the whole picture and wish this fact to be acknowledged... in the future as in the past, we continue to proffer our efforts and skills to assist the

university in the present economic crisis and hope for a little recognition."

If a strike is the only recourse left then students must support it and make it as short and successful as possible. The union does not want students to sacrifice their education but there are concrete positive ways we can help.

- Find out as much as you can about the issues and explain the strike to friends and people here and in the community.

- Take shifts on the 24-hour picket lines.

- Complain often about dirty washrooms and badly heated rooms. You can and should demand service from the management.

- Explain to other students that cleaning up yourself is not a favour — it is strike-breaking.

- Above all DO NOT SCAB.