

Excalibur

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

Slater changes his mind but the senate may not

A rally of students and faculty and the threat of a sit-in have apparently pressured president David Slater into asking the senate to release citizenship statistics and related data on faculty and graduate students to the public.

But it may not be enough.

We should not fall into the trap of presuming that the senate will agree with Slater's position. In fact, the exact opposite is likely to be true, for York has had a history of protecting American interests. Let's take this year's events, for instance:

On May 29, at York's convocation ceremonies, a scheduled student speech on U.S. domination of Canada was disrupted by members of the board of governors when these men (also directors of U.S. corporations) prevented the student speaker from finishing his speech.

On Sept. 24, the senate refused to release government requested statistics on the citizenship and educational background of faculty and graduate students, thereby denying the York community and the rest of the Canadian people information with a bearing on the Americanization of this institution and hence, this country.

On Oct. 8, EXCALIBUR discovered statistics revealing that Atkinson College had hired over 60 per cent non-Canadian faculty this year — mostly American.

On Oct. 8, Slater refused to call a special senate meeting which was requested by a rally of York students and faculty.

On Oct. 13, the Canadian Liberation Movement called for a sit-in in Slater's office. Slater decided to have a special senate meeting.

On Oct. 13, Gwen Matheson, a Canadian

lecturer at Atkinson College officially resigned after having been forced to teach American studies despite repeated requests to teach Canadian studies. Over the last few years she has been unable to obtain more than a part-time teaching position at York.

In all, we have seen student speeches suppressed, information withheld, opinions ignored and at least one qualified Canadian institutionally barred from teaching Canadian studies at this campus.

The senate's refusal to give out citizenship data is not a question of privacy of legality as they are trying to claim. It is simply the most recent manifestation of American power at York protecting itself.

What the senate fears is that the community will discover that Canadians no longer control this institution (if they ever did) and that the training of Canadian graduate students to rectify this situation in the future has not been made a priority.

People might also begin to make connections concerning the American methodology applied in many courses — methodology that allows professors to teach courses on international relations, for instance, and not once mention U.S. control of Canada, Latin America and parts of Asia, much less the economic motives behind that control.

The university elite is mistaken, however, if it feels suppression of people and information is the easy way to stop Canadians from understanding the real nature of their institutions.

A refusal by the senate Wednesday to release the statistics will simply force people to begin considering last resort tactics.

Correct line on library

There have been some accusations made that our headline of September 24, Library workers walk out on heat, was inaccurate.

EXCALIBUR owes its readers an apology for not dispelling these unfounded rumors earlier and for allowing uninformed opinion to fill the campus with misperceptions of a campus event.

First let us look at the contradictions among the critics, themselves.

On Oct. 1 one critic wrote EXCALIBUR to complain that it did not matter that Library director Thomas O'Connell was not informed about the walk-out since the assistant director "had been delegated the

authority to handle this particular situation in Mr. O'Connell's absence."

Another critic — one of York's college newspapers — after doing their own "research" on the library, concludes we were in error because "he (O'Connell) left instructions with all the department heads that should the heat become unbearable, the staff was to be sent home. It was, and they were."

Now, who had the authority, the assistant director or the department heads? Our critics are not consistent.

The main contradiction, however, is that O'Connell was not away so no one had to act "in his absence."

O'Connell was in the building that day and was seen by library workers. Yet he was not consulted about the walk-out.

The college newspaper's version of the event — that it got too hot so workers were simply sent home — is a misrepresentation so great that we are surprised a college paper would fall for this hand-fed administration line.

On the morning of September 21 the library became unbearably hot, yet the workers were not sent home.

They held a protest rally that same morning and still they were not sent home. Another rally was called by the angry workers for the afternoon.

At this point the department heads in sympathy with the workers and of their own accord let them go home. The alternative would have been another rally with possible militant action anyway.

The key point is, however, that O'Connell was in the building and not consulted. This situation, we feel, is analogous to foremen and workers deciding on their own — without consulting management — to walk off their jobs.

And, of course, we clearly pointed out in the second paragraph of our account that workers went home "with permission of their department heads."

Our headline was accurate. Of course, we have no doubt that O'Connell upon reading this editorial will get a few of his friends together and think up a new, less contradictory, explanation. But that is to be expected.

Meanwhile, EXCALIBUR readers can rest assured they have received the correct story.



"I'm glad you young people have seen fit to protest non-violently. It shows you're civilized. Now get out."

Letters to the Editor

Tired of Excalibur distortions

I am writing with respect to your article (8 October 1970) headed 'Rally Demands Faculty Data'. I am a first-year student at York, and have been looking to Excalibur for a lead into the way things are here at York; your newspaper is, however, falling into the ways of sensationalist propagandizing.

Take the (leader) article in question: the first few words read 'A mass rally of 300 people Tuesday overwhelmingly demanded...' Considering the number of students at York, 300 is hardly a number which leads to the use of the word 'mass'; further, how can such a number justify the use of the word 'overwhelmingly'?

This sort of reporting is hardly what one

would expect in a university; surely we should state the facts plainly, that they may be judged relatively objectively?

Whereas I had at first intended to accept the CYSF viewpoint, I now feel that I can make no judgment, as I cannot hope to find the uncorrupt facts and arguments.

As a final comment, let me point to the reporting of the supposed dramatic walk out of library staff (headlines) and the correction the following week... which was hardly on as grandiose a setting.

Excalibur should either cease being a publicity handout for the CYSF, or admit itself as such, which would be fair enough.

Justin White, (1st Year Arts)

(Ed. note: Those of us who have been at York three or four years consider a gathering of 300 people to be fairly significant. Most forums and rallies over the years have drawn less.

But what exactly is your problem? We gave you the number, 300, so you could judge for yourself.

If anything we underplayed the crowd number since there was a changeover during classes when some people left the

If anything we underplayed the crowd number since there was a changeover dur-

ing classes when some people left the rally and new people came.

The number of people in all who participated over the two hour period was probably closer to 500-600. We took 300 as an average. Incidentally, the Toronto Star did likewise.

And whether you like it or not, those 300 did vote "overwhelmingly" for release of the statistics.

As for the library walk-out, see the above editorial.)

Independence for alternatives

When we try to think constructively about the faculty-citizenship issue, beyond the Openness-Yeah, Secrecy-Boo confrontation to the question of what to do in the light of the statistics — which we know pretty well already — there seem to be two related but distinct problems. They are, in shorthand, the ideology problem and the employment problem. Do these two problems obscure or illuminate each other? Would a solution to one be, necessarily, a solution to the other?

Take the academic unemployment problem, the fact that Canadian teachers can't find jobs, while more than 50 per cent of the positions are held by non-Canadians. It isn't only the thwarting of a lot of individual careers, it's the demoralization of the graduate schools and the perpetuation of paper qualifications. "We owe it to our students, to the prestige of the university, the maintenance of high standards in Canadian education etc. etc., to hire the best people available." There's a double trap here. By the standards applied, and given the scores of applicants for every job, the 'best person' is frequently not Canadian. (Some hiring procedures, such as setting up shop at the annual convention of the American academic society, make it

unlikely that Canadians will even get to sniff at the job.) Well then, the Canadians will either have to take the lesser jobs (tho' the Americans have found out about Community Colleges), or just try harder to be best. Stimulating competition, just like in the business world.

But a surprising number of those 'best people' turn out to be rather disappointing when they get here. Perhaps the criteria by which they seemed so irresistible — their degrees, articles, books, editions, collections of readings etc., aren't so reliable as we'd hoped. Meanwhile Canadian graduate students are striving to equip themselves to meet those same criteria. In the Humanities, certainly, if not in the other disciplines, the writing of a Ph.D. thesis is almost universally an experience of boredom, futility, anxiety, waste and self-contempt. The 'original contribution to scholarship' is of real interest to nobody — which doesn't prevent it from being published, and thus becoming required reading for the next study of the subject. Hardly anyone bothers to deny that this is the situation, yet it is perpetuated because "you won't even be considered without a Ph.D."

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