

Students protest closed selection of Glendon principal

The new principal of Glendon College is Albert Tucker, presently chairman of its history department. He will succeed Escott Reid, principal since the 1966 birth of Glendon, on Jan. 1 1970.

Tucker became the choice of the college's search committee after it failed to find a suitable Quebecker who would take the position. Tucker was officially endorsed by York President Murray Ross on July 14.

The search for a successor to Reid began last winter when the president's office at York set up a committee made up of four faculty members and three students. It was chaired by Dennis Healy, York's vice-president (academic).

This, however, was not quite the same committee that made the Tucker recommendation. At the beginning of June, two of the three students resigned.

Jim Park, G3, president of the

Glendon student union in 1968-69, and Bob McGaw, G2, present union president at Glendon, protested the select closed committee method of choosing Reid's successor. They felt that the whole question should be thrown open to the Glendon community at large.

In a letter to the committee, Jim Park said: "It is my feeling . . . that a referendum should be held in the fall for all members of the college — both students and faculty, with each having an equal number of votes — to determine whether or not the college wants and needs a principal. If the decision is affirmative, then I think the man or woman should be elected by the students and faculty according to the same procedure."

"The kind of people I would like to see as principal — if we must have one — would accept this kind of screening by the members of the college they would be hired to serve."

Park and McGaw were concerned that the new principal will assume the responsibilities and powers of Glendon's academic dean. This means that Tucker will be the most influential person in academic as well as administrative affairs at the college.

For the past two years, Glendon has had almost a dual monarchy with philosophy chairman H. S. Harris being the top academic administrator.

Park and McGaw felt that "this much power and responsibility in the hands of one man will only compound the problems of trying to democratize life at Glendon."

Park said that the "choice of another benevolent despot as principal and dean, made by a closed committee that is not responsible

to the Glendon community but to the president of the university, will do nothing to further" democratization at Glendon. "It will, in fact, hamper its development."

Others on the committee were: Neil Agnew, director of psychological services at York; Jean Burnet, chairman of sociology at Glendon; Pierre Fortier, then director of French at Glendon; H. S. Harris, then academic dean and chairman of philosophy at Glendon; and Robert Bedard, Glendon's student on the Senate in 1968-69 and now graduated.

Despite this, Tucker's appointment represents a significant change from Escott Reid.

Reid was an administrator who operated in the post of principal much as he had as a civil servant, with rule through proper channels and decision-making with "high-level" senior advisors.

Tucker is a liberal academic first, an administrator second. People who have worked with him, however, find him to be a very smooth operator in the Glendon committee system and in the political and bureaucratic affairs of the college. He has very strong backing in the faculty.

Last year he chaired the Glendon Committee on Undergraduate Instruction. Its purpose was to study the relevancy of the learning process at Glendon with respect to the college's total environment.

The committee reported toward the end of the academic year and its recommendations are still being studied. It discussed such things as the possibility of awarding ungraded degrees to students (a small number) who would take courses of their own choosing and

study at their own pace, a rescheduled school year with a couple of orientation periods and also two study breaks, and the possibility that all members of the faculty no longer be assigned a number of first year students as advisees because many faculty are reluctant to spend time accurately and conscientiously advising freshmen.

A reading of the Tucker Report, as it is referred to, gives one a fairly adequate idea of what to expect under the Tucker regime. Generally speaking, that is an attitude of reform upon demand.

One of Tucker's priorities is to expand the Frost Library from its present inadequate 60,000 volumes to 100,000. He also wants to attract more top-rate professors to the college.

Tucker's background makes him popular with many students. He was born into an east end Toronto working-class family in 1923. After working at odd jobs, he enlisted in the RCAF in 1943 and worked as a mechanic on ground crew.

After the war, he studied on veterans' school grants and got his BA and MA at U of T and his PhD at Harvard (1958). His special field is modern British history.

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