

President's committee calls for departmental shake-up

By JULIAN BELTRAME

York university grossly misuses its most "valuable resource" — people — was one of the conclusions of the President's Committee on Staff Compensation and Personnel Policies, after nine months of study.

"Staff morale is low, people are becoming hostile to the system, and as a result a staff union is on the horizon," states the report, released earlier this week.

The report, commissioned by president H. Ian Macdonald, blamed poor planning in personnel services, administrative laxity, and the administration's failure to view support staff as bonifide members of the university community, for the low morale of staff on campus.

The committee found that wages had fallen far behind comparable salary scales in the private and public sector; that staff are mistrustful of personnel services, that staff have been made to feel

they are a low priority in the eyes of the administration; that there exists a proliferation of job titles (724 specific jobs for 964 employees in the plan) "making comparison of jobs difficult"; that women hold a minority of managerial positions although they form a large majority of the staff, and that the university has been negligent in implementing a staff training and development scheme.

These factors, coupled with poor communications, have led to low staff morale and the growing hostility on the part of support staff towards the university administration.

"The university must act quickly and significantly to attack the causes" of these problems, urges the report.

The committee also reported that a majority of staff were dissatisfied with the recognition they received from their superiors, with the lack of publication of

staff personnel policies and promotion possibilities, with food prices, and with day-care facilities.

One of the surprising responses of a questionnaire distributed by the committee to support staff and completed by 443 persons, was that 56 per cent of the respondents found temperature and air circulation at their place of work, inadequate.

The committee recommendations, among others, were that the name support staff be deleted from the university vocabulary in favour of administrative staff, and that personnel services be restructured to make it more responsive to people.

"Most support staff do not trust personnel services," reported the committee, "and a significant change by the university is necessary if there is to be any impact on these perceptions."

The committee, headed by Jack Brown of the psychology department of Atkinson,

recommended that personnel be split into two district functions, each headed by a director, so as to separate the 'people' function from the administrative function, in the department.

The establishment of a staff liaison committee incorporating the university staff association (YUSA), that personnel officers be assigned to various faculties and business offices as "contact personnel", and that a direct link between personnel services and the administration be instituted, including the formation of a new administrative post (vice-president, human resources), were also urged.

Although the committee did not specifically recommend salary scales, it did call upon the administration to implement a "merit bonus system" incorporating a yearly cost-of-living adjustment, and a discretionary yearly increase based on performance, promotion, and experience.

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Refuses to eavesdrop on fellow workers, manageress is fired

By IAN MULGREW

Commercial Caterers' Central Square cafeteria operation came under fire this week, following the firing of Kay Alberco, former manager of the cafeteria.

Alberco, who has worked at the university for the past nine years under Versafood, charged that her firing came about when she refused to eavesdrop on her fellow workers and inform the caterers of union activities taking place at the cafeteria.

Paul Farkas, vice-president of Commercial Caterers, denied the charges levelled at him by the former manageress, giving inefficiency as the reason for Alberco's dismissal.

"Kay was not operating efficiently and was allowing too much wastage," said Farkas. "We have nothing against Kay as a person, but she just could not perform the functions that were required of a manager."

Alberco's separation papers, however, list the reason for her dismissal as a shortage of work and capital losses of the Central Square operation. Farkas told Excalibur that the cafeteria lost \$5,870 in September alone.

Alberco denies that the cafeteria operation was losing money, and points to the hiring of a new manager, Steven Edwards, as proof of her claim. She charges that her replacement is getting paid

more for the same job than she was, and questions his capability to manage the cafeteria more professionally.

"If he is more capable than me, why was the staff going to walk out on him on the first day he started?" asks Alberco.

"The new manager is stronger and more capable than Kay," explained Farkas.

Hoddinott backs up his superior's assessment of Edwards saying that his "new assistant (Edwards) has the experience and the strong hand needed to manage the cafeteria. Kay just could not take the pressure."

Although Farkas has continually asserted that he would not stand in the way of the Commercial workers' attempt to become unionized, Alberco said that the workers fear that any outward sign of favouring unionization might cost their jobs.

"Versa workers are scared of being fired, and that's why they are afraid to come forward and expose Commercial," Alberco said.

Asked about the student boycott of the Central Square cafeteria earlier this month, Alberco said she had access to the sales figures and claimed the boycott cut into the company's sales by 50 per cent.

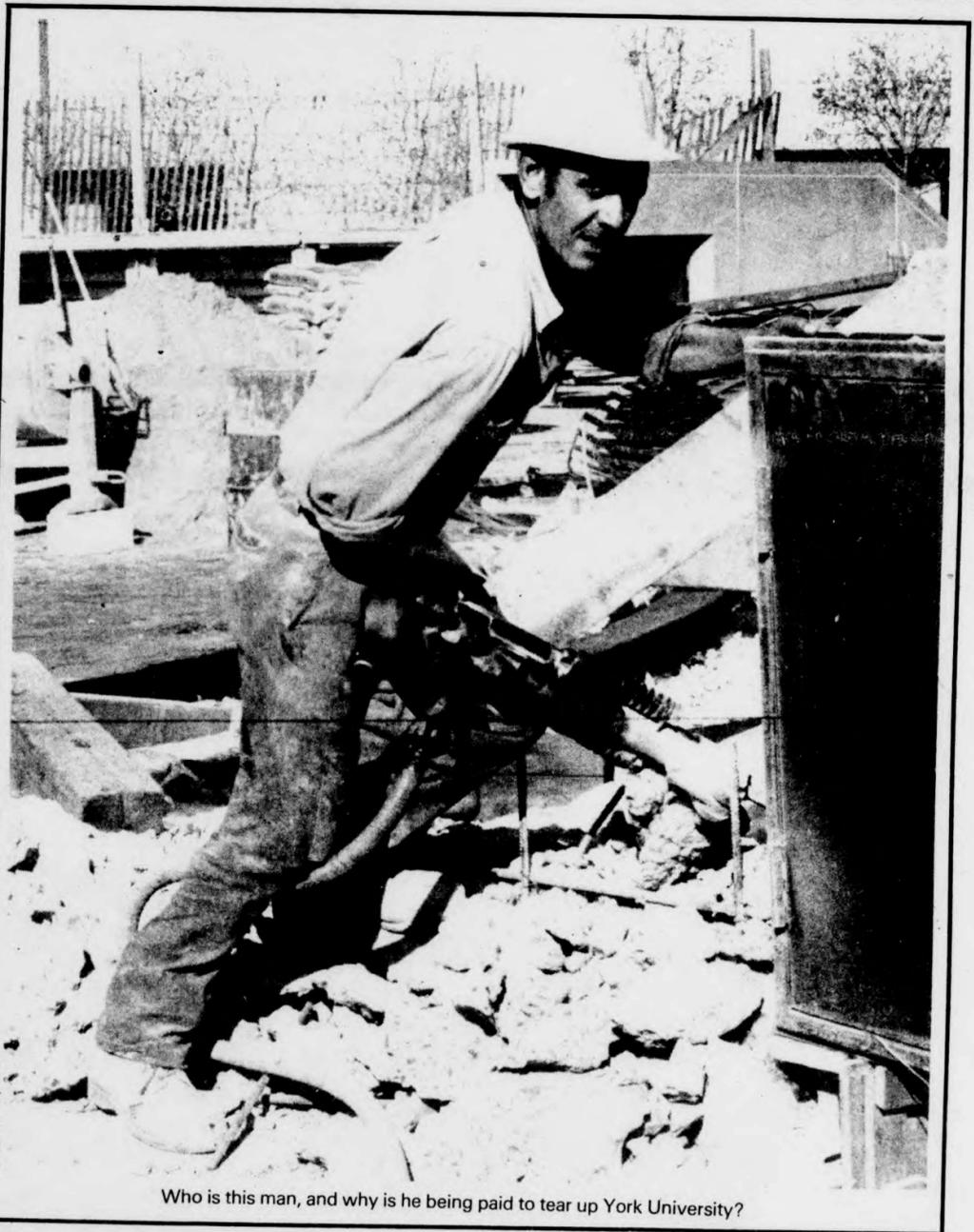
"The company is really scared of the students because the boycott really hurt," she said.

Informed of the events, student president Dale Ritch called Alberco's case a "breakthrough" which showed graphically the need for a referendum on the food issue.

"This vindicates all that the CYSF and the students have been fighting for," said Ritch. "Commercial has been exposed as an inhuman and immoral organization that does not care about the students and staff of the York community."

"It is time for the administration to step in and turn the control of food services over to a joint committee made up of students, faculty and staff," he added.

As for Alberco, there is nothing she can do but find another job. The Labour Relations Board informed her that nothing it could do would reverse what has happened.



Who is this man, and why is he being paid to tear up York University?

Ritch's status remains uncertain

By ANNA VAITIEKUNAS

The committee on the organization and structure of the senate and the university has been asked to review the principal of the senate clause, presently restricting CYSF president Dale Ritch's admission to the senate, said senate chairman John Warkentin, this week.

Warkentin unofficially requested that the committee look at the matter at the senate meeting last Thursday.

The senate executive has the official power, however, to decide

if the matter should be reviewed and what committee will take responsibility for the issue.

Warkentin told Excalibur, Monday, that he reported to the senate that the matter was a statutory one and that "any amendment to the rules of senate would take a long time to implement".

He also said that Ritch's case may not necessarily concern a statutory rule and that the issue should be reviewed by the COOSSU along with the recommendation of

the senate executive.

If the senate executive decides that the COOSSU should examine and evaluate Ritch's case, and the committee decides that the issue is a statutory one, the proceedings are expected to be lengthy.

As outlined in the rules and regulations of the senate, every statute must pass through three stages of examination, and no more than two stages can be passed at the same meeting without the unanimous consent of all senate members.

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