

Excalibur

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

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More than enough, it may be too much

A ULC debacle.

Just a couple of months ago, we would have said it was inevitable. But as this year's election crept closer and as the United Left Coalition whipped its campaign organization to an impressive peak, we began to have our doubts.

Those doubts reached a peak of their own during Tuesday's turbulent all-candidates' free-for-all in the Bearpit when the ULC seemed, if anything, stronger, better organized and more positive than ever.

Barry Edson, by contrast, was obviously flu-ridden and displayed about as much dynamism as a potato.

And so the ULC debacle, when it came, came as a bit of a surprise. Probably no one expected that the backlash would be so utterly devastating. After a year of holding 12 seats on the 21 seat council (and thus controlling it), the ULC was able to elect only five of its 21 candidates. The Edson team, however, elected every last one of its 15 candidates. One independent was voted in as well.

ULC presidential candidate Gael Silzer trailed the victorious Edson by 274 votes. In fact, of 1,550 presidential votes cast, Edson's collection fell just seven short of the combined totals of Silzer and the third candidate, Izidore Musallam.

It was not a close decision.

And that may be a problem. The Edson team (a loose assortment of students of vaguely NDP or liberal tendencies) will hold 75 per cent of the seats on the CYSF next year. More than enough, it may be too much.

Where will there be dialogue and debate? Where a balance of power? The tiny band of ULC survivors will be unable to provide a constructive opposition; they'll be lucky even to make their voices heard.

And, despite all that has been said and all that has happened this year, the ULC voice is worth hearing. It has made a colossal number of botches but it has nevertheless spoken sternly and sincerely to the important issues: women's rights, racism, social service cutbacks, the student's role in society. We have often shuddered at both the volume and the tone of that voice, but we have always admired its resonating conviction.

However, the ULC may have been too powerful this year. With a decisive majority of seats on the council, it was allowed to become arrogant, self-centred and self-righteous. We do not lament its sinking, but that it has sunk so low.

For we face the same problem next year. And although we approve of and support the programmes of the Edson team (which stress community and social activities, multicultural events and a more flexible attitude toward external political activity), we worry about the size of Edson's majority on the council.

This year's ULC-dominated council has taught us that, where there is too much power, there lurks the danger of arrogance. It was a painful lesson. We hope it will not have to be repeated.

Dale Ritch resigns

Dale Ritch's announcement of his intention to resign the presidency of the CYSF effective today brings to a close a long and remarkably energetic career in student politics.

If the announcement came as a shock, it need not have. There are only six weeks remaining in his term; there are few further material accomplishments he can hope for; what remains is merely the winding-down of his administration.

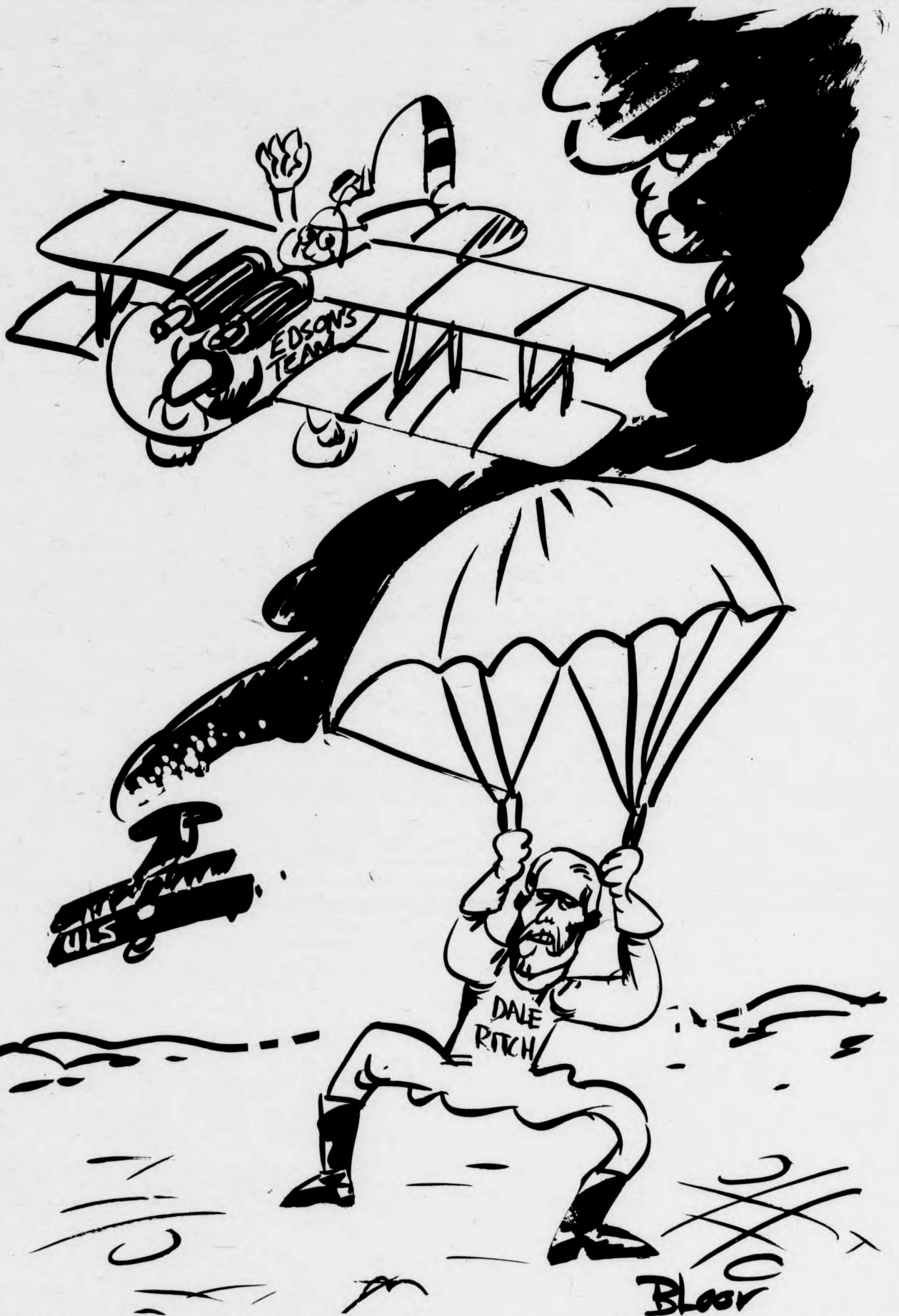
And Ritch has pressing personal reasons for leaving office now, rather than six weeks from now. His wife has still not fully recovered from serious injuries she suffered in a car accident one year ago.

Ritch is not skipping school; his resignation can in no way be seen as a cop-out. This has not been an easy year for him: being the sort of man he is, he has shouldered far more of a burden than others in his place would have done.

He deserves the holiday he is planning.

Ritch has been a fixture at York for several years. He has not been loved by all who have met him, but his presence has most certainly been felt. He will be missed.

We wish him well.



Dale Ritch contrives to make a timely exit from the political scene as Barry Edson sends the United Left Slate into a tailspin.

A clear case of meddling

The university administration's refusal to submit to the Board of Governors the results of two student referenda calling for tuition hikes of \$2.50 to meet membership dues to the OFS and NUS smacks more than just a trifle of meddling.

"We have no evaluation system at York which would help us decide which of the many requests we receive each year should be agreed to," vice-president for student services John Becker offered, this week, as one of the reasons for refusing the student council's request.

Mr. Becker, of course, is being facetious. Two separate student referenda approved the increases, and two separate student councils have indicated their support for the increases.

The per student grant to the CYSF is presently \$10. It has not wavered from that figure since 1968, despite the fact that inflation has reduced the spending power of that \$10 by about half.

Mr. Becker knows well that the CYSF cannot accommodate within its budget the \$2.50 which the national and provincial student associations ask each student as a price for membership in these associations.

So in fact, Mr. Becker has told the students that despite their referenda to the contrary, they cannot join the OFS or NUS. He has indicated that such an increase may be more propitious next year, but again, he gives no guarantees.

When pressed, Mr. Becker will admit that the Board of Governors, not he, has the power to set tuitions. Yet it is his office, through failure to alert the Board of the students' request for a tuition increase, that is arbitrarily rejecting the students' request.

Mr. Becker has overstepped his bounds in deciding for the Board that the student request is unreasonable. It is now up to the student Governors on the Board to do what Mr. Becker has refused to do.

EXCALIBUR

Staff meeting today 2 p.m.

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