

EXCALIBURGER INTERVIEW

with H. Ronald Macdonald, new president of York University

The York University board of governors announced this week the surprise appointment of a new president of the university. The board appointed H. Ronald Macdonald to take over as chief administrator of York.

Macdonald was formerly the head caterer to Ontario Premier, Swill Davis.

Excalibur spoke with Macdonald Tuesday in his styrofoam furnished ninth floor office.

By MICHAEL HOLLETT

EXCALIBUR — We may as well start by discussing the body that selected you as the new president, the board of governors of York. Do you see the board as the power of the university?

MACDONALD — I wouldn't say they are the power. Many people in this university have areas of authority and responsibility. It just so happens that the board can veto absolutely any decision made by anybody about anything on this campus but I wouldn't say they have any real power.

EXCALIBUR — Would you say the board is a democratic body?

MACDONALD — Sure. I was elected president for example.

EXCALIBUR — Would you say yours was a fair election, considering the fact that the only other candidate was a box of french fries?

MACDONALD — The best man won.

EXCALIBUR — What justification is there for the board holding all their meetings in secret?

MACDONALD — If the meetings were open people might attend and hear things they didn't like. People might come to meetings and decide they don't like the decisions the board makes so it's better we don't let anyone in, then no one complains.

EXCALIBUR — Really?

MACDONALD — Uh, no. Only kidding. Actually there is no reason for anyone to attend the meetings because nothing that important happens at them. If anything important did happen you can be sure we would tell everybody. Anyway, now we do publish double-decker, pre-screened neo-confidential minutes of the meetings.

EXCALIBUR — You mean you decide what will be published.

MACDONALD — That's right.

EXCALIBUR — What do you think of the recently announced \$100 tuition fee increase for next year?

MACDONALD — It's totally unnecessary. The problem is, and I've talked with Swill about this, the Ontario University system is inefficient. I came up against this same problem in the burger business and we handled it easily. When you maximize efficiency you can cut costs, make profits and still turn out a reasonably good product. There's no reason tuition fees should be in the hundreds of dollars and there is definitely no reason it should take three to four years to get a BA. If I had my way we would be turning people out with degrees every four weeks.

EXCALIBUR — How?

MACDONALD — Simple. Let's say you're a student and you want to enrol in the September semester. The first thing you would do is show up at the university and pick up a big styrofoam box full of all the books you would need for your courses. This would eliminate the expense of the bookstore and cut down on the number of staff.

You would also get another styrofoam box full of course materials, essay topics, tests and so on.

Students would then take the stuff home and periodically show up to stuff their essays and tests into big boxes with happy faces on them in Central Square.

As I said the whole course of study would take about four weeks to finish. Students would get really nice degrees at the end of it all. I know a guy who could print them up for cheap. Anyway, the whole thing would cost about \$19.95. You'll get change back from a twenty. Poorer kids could get discount coupons or something from the government. We'd be graduating them faster than you can fry an egg.

EXCALIBUR — What do you think of the college system at York?

MACDONALD — It's got some potential. I especially like McLaughlin College. It has inspired me to make some changes in the other colleges for next year.

EXCALIBUR — Like what?

MACDONALD — Some name changes for example. The colleges will be called; McStong, McBethune, McFounders and so on.

EXCALIBUR — We have also heard you are planning on changing York's motto from "Tentanda Via" to something else. Is this true?

MACDONALD — That's right. The new slogan will be "Tu-deservas a degree-as today".



Egg McMuffin photo

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EXCALIBUR — Tell me about the 'One Canada' conference?

MACDONALD — Did you say 'One Canada' conference?

EXCALIBUR — That's right.

MACDONALD — Jesus, that changes things. I thought it was the 'Bun Canada' conference. Christ. I'd made all these plans. I was gonna cater the thing, I thought I'd sell tons of burgers. I was going to make a killing.

EXCALIBUR — Do you follow student politics at York?

MACDONALD — Let me put it this way, if the United Left Slate gets elected they'll probably change the name of this place to the Red Barn.

EXCALIBUR — What does the initial 'H' in your name stand for?

MACDONALD — Hamburger of course.



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