

University bows to pressure, decides to remove exposed asbestos in storage rooms

By PAULETTE PEIROL

Buckling under pressure from staff workers at Osgoode, York's Administration has opted to immediately remove the exposed asbestos contained in five rooms of the law school building.

The decision follows a policy grievance filed by the York University Staff Association (YUSA) last Friday demanding, in part, that the University disclose "all relevant information . . . pertaining to the reasons that the exposed asbestos in these rooms was not previously removed, sealed, or enclosed . . ."

The Administration has since disclosed various documents to YUSA. However, it has yet to explain why the five rooms were not included in either the Osgoode enclosure project of 1985 (in which ceiling tiles were installed to protect the asbestos in 16 service rooms), or the Phase One Removal Program (involving the removal of 20 percent of the school's asbestos), completed January, 1986.

In a March 23 memorandum leaked to *Excalibur*, H.S. Lee, Executive Officer of Osgoode, wrote that "No one" was responsible for the decision not to remove or cover the asbestos in the four service rooms plus one electrical room. "At the time (the enclosure) programme was undertaken the five rooms enquired about were inadvertently overlooked by everyone," Lee wrote.

When asked why staff of the Material Distribution Centre (MDC), who use two of the rooms, were not made aware of the exposed asbestos, Lee told *Excalibur* "it occurred to no one to inform anyone else about the asbestos in the five rooms."

Concern about asbestos exposure in Osgoode has raged for over five years now, despite the University's contention that based on results of biennial air testing, the asbestos is "not an imminent hazard."

Following a detailed 1983 study commissioned by York, an external consultant reported "... it is strongly recommended that the University ultimately remove all friable asbestos from the building some time in the near future. Duct shafts one and three, electrical rooms and service rooms should be given priority in the removal program as the asbestos material is not as stable in these locations as it is in the remainder of the building."

To date, neither of these recommendations have been fully implemented. Although duct shaft work was done in Phase One removal of the asbestos, mechanical rooms were given priority over electrical and service rooms.

In a subsequent report from another consulting firm dated May 23, 1985, three of the rooms in question were visually examined. The report states that in caretaker storage room 021 "the insulation is exposed and asbestos has fallen in a few areas." In storage room 022, "the insulation has suffered physical damage and there is loose hanging insulation." Electrical room 013 appeared to be "in good condition, although there is evidence of patchwork having been done."

When asked why these rooms were omitted from the 1985 service room enclosure project, Patrick Ramlall, an Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) officer, said that the rooms "are used less and have higher ceilings" than other service rooms. Ramlall was one of two people who

originally inspected the three rooms.

When questioned about the above reports, David Kurosky, director of OHS said that in his copy of the first report, the page which *Excalibur* quoted from was missing. Of the second report, Kurosky said he has no copy of it in his files.

"When I inherited this position (January, 1986), there were a lot of things wrong with it," Kurosky said, noting that the department had "no central filing system per se." Kurosky said he has since initiated a filing system, but acknowledged that his documentation of asbestos in Osgoode is incomplete.

Kurosky confirmed that the asbestos in rooms 013, 021, 022, 023, and 030 would be removed. He would not, however, elaborate on when or how the removal would take place, claiming that his removal proposal still had to be approved by Peter Struk, Assistant Vice President of Physical Plant.

Yet in a March 20 memorandum to the Osgoode Asbestos Removal Committee, Professor Eric Tucker, Chair of the committee reveals that Kurosky told him "the removal is scheduled to begin by (this) weekend at the latest, and is being planned so that the removal will occur while the building is still occupied."

The memo further states, "In terms of consulting and informing the community, Kurosky suggested that there should first be a small meeting . . . to iron out any problems with respect to the removal protocols."

Tucker fully supports the removal project. Yet, until one month ago, he was "under the impression that all the asbestos was covered." He noted that "no one on the (asbestos removal) committee was ever consulted as to the project to hang false ceilings."

When asked why the mechanical penthouse rooms were given priority in the Phase One Removal Project, Tucker explained that the air ducts asbestos removal necessitated shutting down the air system and removing occupants of Osgoode. Accord-

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Nixon surfaces but students do not

By ZENA McBRIDE

Students of today aren't as interested in "burning issues," Robert Nixon, the Treasurer of Ontario, told a sparse audience at Moot Court in Osgoode last Friday.

Nixon was at York, courtesy of the Liberal Club, to discuss the accomplishments of the new Liberal government in Ontario and then fielded questions from the audience. He described various changes that the Liberals have made in the rules of Legislature since taking power two years ago, claiming that the previous procedures were inadequate.

The main change, according to Nixon, deals with the opening up of the Legislature to private members. Now, parliamentary sessions commence with statements of the members and any matter that a private member feels important will be addressed at this time, said Nixon. The members' statements are then followed by Ministerial statements (where policy matters are discussed) and a question period.

"The opening up of the legislature has come a long way," Nixon said, adding that there is a general open-



A DUEL TO THE DEATH: The University recently instituted a new method for weeding out next year's applicants. As more and more students pick York as their first choice for university, desperate measures were needed.

Security system needs revamping outraged students claim in letter

By PAULETTE PEIROL

Restructuring of York's security system was the primary demand made by students in "An Open Letter to President Harry Arthurs," endorsed by the Council of the York Student's Federation (CYSF) last week.

The letter recommended that security officers be trained as peace officers, based on Ontario Police Commission guidelines, and that a security review committee with student representation be established. It also disclosed that the primary duty of York's 24 security officers is parking and traffic control. Copies of the letter were delivered over 20 students to both Vice President Bill Farr (Finance and Administration) and Arthur's secretary last Thursday afternoon.

The letter was prompted, in part, by statistics given to Catherine Lake, Director of Women's Affairs for CYSF, revealing that reported crimes on campus have dramatically increased in the past year. Assaults,

for example, have increased 190 percent, from 10 to 29 incidents in 1986. Break-ins have more than doubled since 1985, to a total of 92 in 1986.

Since January 1987, 46 reports of theft have been documented by security. Of these, none have been reported to 31 Division of Metro Police.

After meeting with Farr last week, students "were appalled that Farr had no answers to our questions and stated that he had no knowledge of the incompetence of York Security," Lake said.

"We were surprised that Farr blamed (Jack) Santarelli (former Director of Security and Safety Services) for Security's problems, since Santarelli was the man that (Farr) was actually responsible for," Lake said. "It seems he's passing the buck the wrong way."

Farr was unavailable for comment. Both students and *The Toronto Star* were informed by his office that he would respond to the open letter

"in an April edition of *Excalibur*." Farr has not personally informed *Excalibur* of such intentions, although his secretary has confirmed that Farr will take out an advertisement by the final issue, April 9.

Arthurs was unable to meet with students last Thursday, and therefore received the open letter through his secretary. He has since been unavailable to *Excalibur* for comment.

According to Eric Pond, Assistant Director of Special Services for the department of Security and Parking, concerns raised in the open letter were "blown out of proportion. The issues picked were selective to make a point."

Pond attributed the increase in reported crimes partially to "a lot more people reporting crimes and suspicious acts." According to Pond, "any reported criminal offenses, such as break and entries and severe vandalism, are forwarded

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I N S I D E

ELECTION SPECIAL

CONFRONTING THE CANDIDATES: Excal conducted an in-depth interview with the CYSF presidential candidates to determine where each stands on the pressing issues which student government will face next year. Pages 8, 9, 11

FEATURE

EXCALIBUR'S ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME TRIVIA EXTRAVAGANZA: It occurs less frequently than the appearance of Halley's comet, but alas it's right here on campus in this very issue! Challenge your knowledge of skill testing questions from the worlds of television, sports, movies and York! Pages 12-13

SPORTS

STILL NO LUCK, SECOND TIME AROUND: For the second year in a row, the York Yeomen were unable to win any games at the CIAU hockey championships after dropping two games to the University of Quebec and the University of Alberta. Pages 21-22

See picture on p. 3