

EXCALIBUR

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

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Thoughts on the CYSF election decision

Council of the York Student Federation met Monday to decide whether or not to accept the results of last week's election.

Perhaps the most surprising event of the evening was the declaration by chief returning officer Bob Williamson that it was in CYSF's best interests to hold another election March 21. Now that left everybody surprised — not just the United Left Slate but also the CYSF executive. Nobody had expected that sort of report yet it was the most honest and honorable that anybody could want.

As Williamson said, most of the contentions lay with the mechanics of the election — "the loose balloting", the unlocked boxes, and the lack of voter lists. To satisfy everyone, a new election with no campaigning among the four candidates was in order.

The second major recommendation was no voting at Atkinson where a great number of the irregularities occurred. The United Left Slate says it traces these back to John Theobald. Although technically unconstitutional under the new CYSF constitution the no-Atkinson vote was the most politically expedient way to remove charges that Theobald had successfully manipulated the vote through an Atkinson Student Association executive letter which supported him.

The five CYSF members — Michael Fletcher, John MacCallum, Bev Fink, Neil Sinclair and Dennis Lee had already made up their minds before the meeting had begun. They wanted no new election. They wanted no United Left Slate heading the CYSF. Rather than see anything else happen to CYSF through a referendum or petition campaign, they wanted Theobald there to preserve stability.

Theobald is the unfortunate victim in this entire debacle. Honorably he refrained from any voting at CYSF's meeting. He underwent persistent attacks from the United Left Slates Bryan Belfont, their lawyer Tony Kopyto and the campaign manager Ron Andrews.

Theobald wants that job as president badly. He refused to call for a new election. He could probably win handily with such a manoeuvre. Instead, he has hung desperately though never tenaciously onto the 39 vote margin that has given him the presidency for the time being. Should he survive all attempts to unseat him, he'll take over April 1.

The main blame for this entire affair lies with the present CYSF. They refused to give adequate funds for the CRO to



run a proper election. They refused to run another election. They refused to face up to the reality that CYSF is on the border of moral bankruptcy should it resist all attempts for a new election.

It tried to blackmail a vote at the CYSF meeting Monday night. It offered to put CYSF under receivership to the colleges should Theobald not get the job. It was like throwing the corpse to the hounds rather than give it to the ULS.

Hopefully, CYSF has learned a few things out of all this. Besides the fact that elections need a few guidelines — whether they are written down or not — the executive has learned that putting the election back to March offers absolutely no advantages to the York electorate. Had the election been held in February as in previous years, there would have been no problem in holding another election.

Since the politicians have insisted that it takes at least four weeks to run a campaign, then they should push back next year's election at least that much.

Even though we know they could run a snap election in one week — if they wanted to — we believe they might as well remain consistent with what they're saying.

And finally, even if Theobald remains as president, his credibility with York students will remain tenuous at best. And that's a sad way to begin a term of office. Still, it's better than last year.

York & the Wright report...

Next Wednesday at 2 pm the Wright Commission is holding a hearing at the Macdonald Block, Wellesley and Bay to discuss its report and hear York's brief.

Students face recommendations that simply don't make sense: increased access to the university but increased tuition fees. For undergraduate students, the sum is 50 percent of educational costs or \$625 per year. For graduate students, it's even higher.

In addition grants will be made for three year periods only to students whose parents earn less than \$7,500 per year. Other students will be eligible for loans only.

Other recommendations decrease university autonomy, increase government control, stress part-time education and suggest better ways to make cogs for the industrial wheel.

The Wright Commission has set a May deadline for submissions. After that the report moves to the legislature. Unless you give your opinion now, no one will ever know your objections.

The report's recommendations are already going into effect with current loan-grant changes that just happen to coincide with the report's general trend.

By acting now, we're already a bit behind. If we act tomorrow, it'll be too late.

Letters to the Editor

All letters should be addressed to the Editor and sent to Excalibur, Central Square, Ross Building, York University, Downsview, Ontario. Excalibur reserves the right to edit all letters more than 500 words long. Unsigned letters are the responsibility of the editors. All letters will be published however due to space limitations letters may not be published the week they are received.

Notes on election irregularities

At Founders

At Founders' polling station we were allowed to vote without presenting a sessional validation card. No record was kept of the number of times we voted.

Nelda Rogers
 Christopher Vebber
 Founders

At Stong

When I voted, I was allowed to open the ballot box to place my vote in the box. This will help prove the fact the boxes were not locked.

Jim Holmes
 Stong

At Atkinson

At 12 noon March 7, an envelope containing papers resembling the ballots were found on the table in Room 203, Behavioral Sciences Building. The contents were handed out by the professor and he stated that it was from Atkinson. He noted the irregularities of the Atkinson Student Association letter that accompanied the ballots which supported a certain candidate. He stated we could do what we liked with them. No one in the class was a full-time student and knew what to do. Some filled out the ballots while others did not. I do not know what happened to these forms.

Brian Heisel

The ballot boxes were not locked. At one point, one box was left unsupervised for a short period of time. My identification card was not checked when I voted.

Jan Onizuka
 Vanier

Why was there only one individual in charge of collecting ballots in Founders? The individual at Founders left his ballot station several times during the day leaving the station unattended.

I voted for Founders, Stong, MacLaughlin representatives but wasn't supposed to because I'm a Vanier student. Right eh?

Maria Peluso
 Vanier

At Winters

On behalf of Winters' student council I would like to point out at least two irregularities in our college:

The polling station opened at 1 p.m. and closed at 3 p.m. in the Junior Common Room (instead of 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.) when the polling attendant had a car accident.

The ballot boxes were open.

In addition, several students were able to vote for the Stong and MacLaughlin representatives — including myself.

Dennis Lee
 Winters.