

Mac residents living under intimidation

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by David Tompkins

Residents of McLaughlin College are living under intimidation from residents of its second and third floors — the only all male house in residence — and the provost has decided not to act on this matter because the end of the year is only six weeks away.

Residence tutor Sean Squires alleges that the First House, comprised of the residence's second and third floors, is responsible for much of the damage in the building, but this cannot be proven.

One house resident said that the members of First House are threatening other residents with physical harm in order to keep them quiet about who is causing the damage.

Damage to the building includes \$3,800 to the elevators, broken furniture and broken windows. On the second floor the telephone has been used as a place to urinate, and urine has been left

in bottles all over the floor. Two weekends ago, the phones on both the second and third floors were ripped off the wall.

Squires said he suspects that members of First House are responsible for the damaged elevators but First House has denied the allegations. They said that when they damage something they pay for it or fix it.

They said that the elevators are not well maintained and were not licensed to operate from November 15 to the last two weeks in January. Squires said that during this period, the elevator was broken five times.

One resident told *Excalibur* that he cannot say, "Oh, okay Sean, this is who [damaged the elevators]. I might as well go out and shoot myself in the foot because I'm going to get the shit kicked out of me anyway."

The resident maintained, with two witnesses, that Squires told him he would not return to resi-

dence next year if he did not name those involved in damaging residence property.

Squires said no one has been able to prove that First House has done the damage because, "They have a code of silence, they don't tell on anyone . . . this has been festering for three or four years now. You do not tell on another guy in First House."

He said no one has been directly threatened, but, "There is a way of spreading fear." He added, "There is definitely a feeling of perceived fear" in the building.

"I have had threats that my car is going to get damaged," said Squires. He said that some of the residence dons do not bring their cars anymore because they have been threatened, and some women have said they felt threatened.

Squires said the house's don was fired in December because two women laid a complaint of sexual harassment against him. Since then, the house has had two dons, one who was removed within his first week for undisclosed reasons.

Two members of First House in turn accused Squires of using intimidation tactics on residents. Squires maintains that his methods are necessary because of the atmosphere of intimidation that First House has created in the building.

A meeting between McLaughlin residents and Provost Eliza-

beth Hopkins was held February 21 after a complaint was directed to Hopkins regarding Squires. The complaint, by First House members Frank Calcagni and Christopher Hastilow, cites 10 illegal actions and actions contrary to the University and College Codes of Conduct.

The complaint outlines charges of assault, illegal use of college funds, and discrimination. It states that a "majority of [first year students] are extremely intimidated by Mr. Squires arbitrary and draconian measures."

Hopkins stated in a letter to the complainants, "It became clear . . . that there were problems on both sides of this complaint . . . Many residents should have been formally charged with violating the University's Code of Conduct."

She added in the letter, "I do not believe Mr. Squires acted improperly at any time."

In a letter to residents of Tatham Hall (McLaughlin College's residence), Hopkins said, "I have investigated several complaints surrounding the behaviour of First House in Tatham Hall, the dismissal of their don and the manner in which the residence tutor conducts his duties."

"I have considered evicting ALL concerned from residence because the University and College Codes of Conduct have been violated. However, given the fact that we are only six weeks away from the end of classes, I

have decided not to pursue this penalty."

Hopkins said at the meeting that the all male floor will not be returning next year because too much damage has been done in past years. The decision was made before last September.

Squires said the men living in First House are feeling aggressive because they have a very strong sense of unity and they will not be able to return next year as a house.

There is "an underground current of problems" at McLaughlin, Hopkins said at the meeting, which has been getting worse and worse and is causing some people "to suffer in silence."

She said that as members of a small community, the residents "shouldn't have to feel intimidated," and that they should assert their rights as co-habitants. She added that many parents have phoned and asked what is going on.

The two students who filed the complaint against Squires said they were not given the opportunity to speak with the provost during her investigation and that the residents of First House believe they are being discriminated against.

They said First House was not given any indication that it was going to be disbanded, and that its residents were given no opportunity to defend their position relating to damage that has been done.

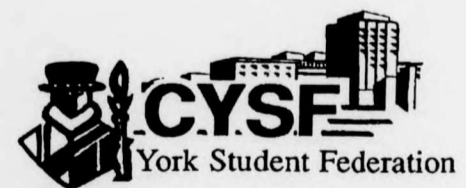
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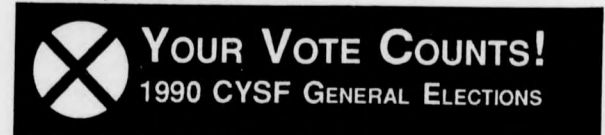
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