

editorial

A time for action

Legend has it that, in 1789, as the starving and frustrated French peasantry exploded into the streets of Paris, a frightened servant ran to his coiffured and scented master and cried, "My lord, the peasants are revolting!"

To which the nobleman replied, "Yes, they are rather, are't they?"

Unlike the peasantry of revolutionary era France, the students of Ontario have not been revolting in the least. Funding cut-backs, over-crowded classes, a lack of university accessibility, and a provincially appointed commission that talks of 'streamlining' universities to produce skilled workers for the technological work-place like factories produce tractors; all have met with barely a peep of real resistance from the students of this province.

Shamefully, university professors have done far more to act, not just speak, against the almost criminal governmental neglect of the post-secondary educational system than have the students whom these policies will most adversely affect.

Fortunately we may see that pitiful situation changing in the next few months. The Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) has finally decided to act, not just talk. At the OFS fall conference last weekend the federation voted to organize a province-wide protest against provincial funding policies for November 15.

And it's about time. Talking is all very nice, but there are times when governments must be pressured into action, and massive protests, in which every protester represents a lost vote to the sensible politician, are an effective means to that end.

One recent case in point is the Refuse the Cruise campaign. While the campaign was unsuccessful in stopping the testing of the cruise missile in Canada, then-Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau later admitted his much-vaunted peace initiative was a direct result of concerns expressed by the anti-nuke groups.

Suddenly, because a large proportion of the electorate did more than 'just talk,' nuclear arms had become a politically sensitive issue in Canada.

A similar instance in Holland, where public pressure in the form of massive protests caused the government to impose a five-year moratorium on the installation of nuclear weapons in the Netherlands, is an even better example of the power of protest.

There is no reason to think that that power cannot work here. The OFS has 200,000 members, and are also attempting to create alliances with faculty groups, secondary school students, and other concerned organizations. Numbers like that pack a lot of political clout.

All that is needed now is the political will to use it.

But, with any luck, the whispers will soon be circulating Queen's Park that the students are revolting. Really revolting.



STAND BACK, SON -- I'VE ALREADY GOT MY PASSENGER!

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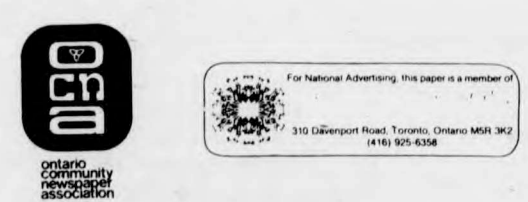
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letters

"Glorifying murder"

Editor:

This summer, the world was to hear of the brutal mass murder of innocent diners at a Californian MacDonalds. On Sept. 18, Metropolitan Toronto Police Constable David Dunmore was shot and killed by another quasi-military psychopath.

With "entertainment" such as *First Blood* and *The "A" Team* glorifying violence and murder, and the sale of "toys" such as guns, it is little wonder that weak psychological minds blur the line between fantasy and reality. But the appalling fact is that Gary White, Dunmore's cold-blooded murderer, had over 27 firearms at his disposal. It is sad enough that our society is capable of producing these psychopaths, but allowing them easy access to dangerous weapons is unacceptable.

The time has come for the public to demand a crackdown on firearms. If a million hunters or collectors are inconvenienced to save one life, is it not worth it?

D. Harvey

False firing

Editor:

Thank you very much for running a story concerning my situation as an ex-employee of the York Bookstore on Sept. 6th. I want to clarify some elements in the

situation which the story did not touch upon.

The Bookstore and the University have seriously strained their credibility in this affair by the number of stories which have been circulated to account for my termination. The first and second were concerned with my satisfaction with the job after three years. In neither of the explanations could specific or serious examples of my dissatisfaction be produced, nor could any criticisms of my job performance be offered. The third explanation, that I did not clearly accept the alternative employment, appears to be the explanation the University administration has settled on. However, it is full of misinterpretation and outright untruths. Despite these discrepancies the administration sees no point in conducting an investigation. This credibility problem may stem from the fact that they did not expect a casual worker to complain about an unjust dismissal. Complacency is always dangerous.

The second point I wish to clarify, is the question of whether or not I had accepted the alternative hours offered. As I recall my conversation with Ms. Lucas, I did accept the hours. This acceptance was acknowledged by Lucas, as we subsequently discussed the hours I would be working, the day I would start and so forth. It should also be pointed out that the computer hours as an alternative were originally suggested by myself, after a discussion with Pat Froese who was currently performing the task. She suggested that additional help would be

helpful, and that we could both suggest the idea to Lucas for her approval. I can see no reason why I would not accept the hours, if they were partly my suggestion in the first place. Then there remains the substantial evidence offered by the schedule showing my hours, and the work I was assigned by the head of the computer department that same Thursday, August 2nd, according to the head, on Lucas' orders. It has also been suggested that the Bookstore was under no obligation to continue my employment into the fall and winter term. However, until the incident with the strips, there was never an indication that I would not be employed in the evening during the year, indeed my immediate supervisor had verbally given me a tentative schedule for the month of September and October that same week. It may also be pointed out that the Bookstore has been forced to cover my information desk position with employees not accustomed to the position, and are running slightly short in the evenings.

The third point concerns the fact that I reported ill on the Thursday and subsequently left. I am not the first person who has called in or left after leaving the message with the receptionist, if the Operations Manager is occupied. Further, I did notify the person in the Accounting Department for whom I was working that day.

The fourth point is that the problem with the stripe was not only confirmed by the manufacturers, 3M, but by the Health

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