

# "Ombudsman"

promoted seniority on campus.

As I say, even winning costs. And it seems to me that if a vindictive or narrow-minded or otherwise wrong Faculty Committee decides somebody shall not get tenure, and an Appeals Committee decides that decision was wrong, then somebody should also try to undo the damage done by that first wrong decision. As it is now, if you Appeal a tenure decision, and win, what you get is tenure and nothing else. You bear all the other costs. I don't think that's particularly just, although some of it may be unavoidable. And for the record, the late University ombudsman-flak-catcher didn't agree with me, when I tried to enlist his help in this issue.

The point I want to make with these unhappy anecdotes is that first of all, a lot of the ways in which tenure works are still less than wholly just, and secondly the psychological impact of the tenure decision appears still to be quite out of proportion to its real meaning. Right now, it's nothing more than a union card: union cards shouldn't be worth thousands of dollars, heart attacks, broken homes, etc.

The new Faculty Handbook for this University has made some small changes in the tenure proceedings, some larger ones for appeals. But the two major injustices of the old Handbook proceedings are still mostly retained. It is still possible to keep damaging letters of reference "confidential"; meaning the Tenure Committee can read them, but the candidate can't. The only changes are that now the candidate must give a summary of what they say (this was the key procedural issue in my case and that of Fisher and Whiteside); and that (in deference to the Slavutich case) these letters can never be used against their author.

But the second key idiosyncrasy is left entirely intact. When you are denied tenure, it is initially the Chairman of your Department who denies it - and an adversary situation arises pitting you against him. But the Chairman still sits on the Tenure Committee which is supposed to "impartially" decide your case; and he still has a vote.

Hardly anyone has ever tried to justify that; old polis and faculty members know that Chairmen have more status and power than most of us. And apparently there's just no way they can be made to relinquish this final source of wholly illegitimate power.

shameful thing. Some of us, however, came out the close in varying degrees, just as Vanek has recently. Ted Kemp got massive student support. Seth Fisher and Don Whiteside were the focus of demonstrations and sit-ins in the Sociology Department and across the campus. My story was written up in *The Journal*, but not until some time after I'd won. And what did the winning cost us?

All of us hired lawyers, and most of us paid heavily for them (in my case, over \$1000 late-60s dollars; I don't know precisely how much the others paid). Even after we got tenure, nobody suggested any kind of recompense for that.

Most of us suffered physical and emotional upsets that were fairly extensive, as Vanek appears to have in the past three years also.

George Hicks, in Philosophy, was physically so ruined by the proceedings that getting tenure was immediately followed by sick leave that lasted until his retirement. Except for a very brief period, he never taught again.

Ted Kemp, in Philosophy, suffered two heart attacks and a broken marriage after winning his case. The Department refused to let him teach, giving him instead the position of staff "researcher" and ostracising him to Campus Towers, just as Vanek was. Ted, who loved teaching with more passion than anyone I know, quit, of course.

Seth Fisher, in Sociology, won tenure, but found the University inhospitable. He resigned at virtually the same instant he won, and returned to California. His wife stayed here.

Don Whiteside lost his appeals case. Neither his health, his marriage, nor his sanity appeared to be affected.

My marriage broke up a year after I won tenure, and much of the marital rift dates from the tension of that appeal. (I can't really say I'm sorry, though of course, besides the tension of that appeal at least contributed to my discovery of *cambis*, which is fine compensation, I'm not complaining, just reciting.) Most members of my Department feel I got tenure on a "legal technicality" although this is totally untrue; virtually none will support me for promotion, so that I am now, I think the Assistant Professor with the longest un-

## tenure - What it Means

I suggested in my last column that over the years it was established as a shield for harassed administration and faculty, the actual meaning of tenure, as well as its job significance, had changed

you have problems you want the "Ombudsman" to help with, or if you're someone who wants to help solve others' problems, contact Dirk Schaeffer at 439-6486 person at 1010 Newton Place, 8515-112 St. or Kevin Illiese in Gateway 432-5178 (Room 282, SUB) or at home, 433-2136.

Since the tenure decision was, when tenure was bargaining, an important one in the faculty members' that is, to get tenure. More and more, failure to get tenure came to be looked at as personal, professional, and a failure of the individual, rather than as a failure of the system. "If I don't get tenure," the prospective member moaned to himself or his wife late at night, "where can I go, what can I do?" As if there were other universities, no other jobs. As if he were to be ended with a red F (in all its shades of meaning) back on the middle of his forehead.

Tenure as a protective device turned into prospect-tenure as an instrument of terror.

And when people were denied tenure, it cost. Even as worth.

I was denied tenure here some years ago. Like any others, I appealed and won. I want to talk for a minute about the people I knew then, and what it cost them. At that time (the end of the Sixties), there were re of us who all got the tenure shaft in the Faculty of Arts at about the same time, that I know of - there were others that I only heard vaguely about. But here I can talk only of the cases I had some information about, through the media, the parties involved, or their friends.

Most tenure shafts stayed hidden, like rape victims: the very idea that anybody could even think of denying you tenure was somehow felt to be a shameful, as well as a disgraceful, thing.

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## Disappointment follows dismal NSD turnout

Student politicians reacted with disappointment following yesterday's National Student Day rallies on campus, where NSD rallies on campus, where Gateway, two features in the pamphlets, posters, ads in the

Only five spectators in-cluding two Gateway staff members, appeared for a morning panel on student aid and summer employment. Seventeen people attended an afternoon debate between the 23 Students' Council members who attended the general meeting of Council.

Over 100 people attended a poor NSD turn-outs on a short-hour panel discussion with Secretary Brian Mason blamed the lack of "flashy posters," and the lack of people attending showed with the quality of the people attending, and the familiarity that the students weren't interested enough to listen to Hohol and to inform on issues in post-secondary institutions that affect them," commented Len Zeteman, Students' Union president.

Mason did not expect NSD, however, to be an annual event.

News editor Henry Hess said the staff, which has been publishing the "Free Chevron" since the student council cut off funding from the University of Waterloo.

The federation decided at its meeting Oct. 31 to refinance the paper pending the staff's decision of an "interim" editor.

He said the paper is sticking to its original demand - that it be immediately reinstated as the student-funded campus medium and that the paid editorial staff be dismissed by the federation be-

## Chevron refuses U of W funds proposal

Chevron staff charged he and supporters filibustered the meeting to block other motions. The Chevron was originally an off-council funds by a federation executive action Sept. 26 after the editor-in-chief resigned claiming "political pressure" from some staff members. A public meeting Oct. 29 to vote on proposals for restructuring the Chevron's by-laws failed to produce any results after turning the Chevron's by-laws to produce any results after the only motion to make it to the floor was defeated. Roberts termed the meeting a failure while rehired with full compensation.

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