

# Excalibur

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

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## Question of leadership

### Time for do-nothing administration to do something

Student president Dale Ritch looked in fine form Monday night, directing seemingly pointed questions at local 254 union secretary John Sobolewsky and will-be server manager Joseph Hamade, receiving all the expected blissful answers, and supplying a few of them himself, alluding to some \$30,000 of CYSF funds he would be prepared to put in jeopardy for the cause, forgetting to mention that he has no authority to allocate funds, and generally setting the groundwork for a boycott of Complex II and Central Square cafeterias.

But this is no time for details, there's a coup to organize.

The victim of this insurrection is Paul Farkas' Commercial Caterers, the beleaguered caterer who not coincidentally was the target of the last Ritch-directed boycott. The last one had almost no chance of succeeding, this one has more than an even chance.

There are a number of sound reasons why. While in October the food boycott

began as an egalitarian gesture to protect the jobs of several dozen workers and ended as a ULC caprice proving how activist the ULC can be, the upcoming boycott will have come after all the normal channels have been exhausted.

Months of talking with the caterer has neither improved the food nor lowered the prices. The food service committee, voting to terminate the caterer's contract, was eliminated as a means of effecting change through the system when the administration tossed out the committee's findings, and in typical Marie Antoinette manner said, "Let them eat elsewhere."

Some members of the university's administration when asked to comment on the results of December's food referendum politely informed the caller that they had never received the results and did not know how the students had voted. The administration had long before stopped talking to students; now, it seems, they stopped listening as well.

Ritch's behind-the-scenes

approach to this boycott and take-over is more likely to succeed than last October's upfront, raise-hell campaign, which turned off more people than it turned on. With a mandate tucked away in his pocket by way of a December referendum, the union firmly behind him, a named manager in Hamade, and Bethune council members as believers, Ritch has almost everyone he will need to launch a successful boycott.

Chances are that Stong will soon follow suit. In a small group Ritch can be a remarkably controlled and eloquent speaker, and it is doubtful that Stong's residence council will be able to resist his mellifluous call.

Just as significant, possibly even more telling in the final outcome, is the mood of Farkas. The Commercial Caterers vice-president has all but given up on York — he is convinced he can never make enough money out of the operation to make it worth all the troubles.

Which leads us back to the administration.

The CYSF was not created to run food services, nor was it created to do the administration's job.

Because of the administration's policy of sticking its head in the sky



Item: Stong and Bethune disagree over future of Commercial Caterers.

and praying for those fractious little people down there to go away, it is now far past the time when it could have solved the matter by a bold, unilateral act of leadership.

No matter how much it regards the thought with loathing, it will have to deal with Ritch on a personal level to try and come up with a compromise that will appease both Ritch and the remaining caterers.

A university-run server in Complex II and Central Square would not be a bad solution, even if Ritch thought of it first.

Ritch might have to abandon his students-staff-faculty board idea, but he should insist

on something with a few more teeth than the present food service committee. Possibly a governing board composed of 51 per cent student-staff-faculty representation and 49 per cent administration personnel would fit the bill. That way, in a crisis situation, the students, faculty and staff could carry the day by voting en bloc.

This is just one possibility. We're sure the university and the CYSF can think of others. But before any of this happens, the university administration must establish diplomatic relations with the CYSF, the body that is elected each year to represent student interests.

### Protest 'pie-in-the-sky' cutbacks

The Special Program Review (now more commonly known as the notorious "Henderson Report") has certainly caused a great deal of ballyhoo, particularly among Ontario university and college students. For them, the hardest-to-swallow portion of the report is the recommendation that post-secondary school tuition fees be raised to something like \$970.

We've been watching the usual flurry of handbills, canvassers, petitions, mini rallies and mass rallies (culminating in yesterday's march on Queen's Park). And we've listened to all the valid protests: the fee hike will discriminate against the poor; post-secondary education is a universal right; the cutbacks are an expression of elitism. And so on. Nice phrases, nicely put, to the point.

It was not until yesterday, however, that we gained some real insight into the motives behind the government's cutbacks programme. (We had hitherto, and no doubt naively, assumed it had something to do with an across-the-board austerity drive.)

A fascinating press release from an outfit calling itself the Toronto Wages for Housework Committee slid across our desk this week. Predictably,

the TWHC is refusing to submit to the cutbacks in government funding to universities. The writer of the release, Joan Sparling, has some delightful thoughts on the subject.

The cutbacks are actually a cleverly disguised plot by the government to put women back in their place — a sinister attempt to rob women of the financial victories they have won over the past 10 years. Sparling writes that "increasing education costs mean that women, who are already hard-pressed to make enough money to stay in school because of our lower income levels, are being pushed out of the educational institutions."

It may seem like a great deal of trouble for the provincial government to go to (publishing a great big report with 402 pages and 184 recommendations and all) simply to make women dumb again. But you've got to hand it to those Queen's park machos — they'll go to any length for what they think is right.

Sparling also has some quite interesting things to say about private enterprise and socialism. On the one hand, she maintains that "the only reason that we want to go to school is because school is the route to higher wages." A

disturbing remark with a fairly clear capitalist undercurrent: we want to be rich. But the problem is, writes Sparling, that "if the Henderson Report is implemented, it means that we will all have to compete harder. (God forbid!) We will have to be even more productive in school."

In essence, we will have to work. But, of course, we don't want to work; we want to be rich. The solution? "We say NO to the proposed cutbacks and more — we want wages for schoolwork. Wages for schoolwork... means that the government could not threaten us with even less money."

So, there! Let the government, in fine socialist style, give us dollops of money while we're in school so that, in fine capitalist style, we can continue to have dollops of money when we're out of school. The affluent best of both worlds.

Sparling concludes, "The government has stated that it is concerned that a good education be a matter of choice for ALL. If so, then let them pay us to go to school, and not ask us to pay."

Right. Let's all be fat, rich and lazy. Protest the pie-in-the-sky cutbacks!

**Staff meeting**  
1 p.m. Central Square room 111

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