

"We tend to forget the university is a society devoted to the pursuit of knowledge and involvement. And the university must be a reflection of the community of scholars who compose it. If the university is to become this reflection and if it is to produce the total man, its students and teachers should exercise at least fifty-one per cent control over it."
- Laurier LaPierre -

"...when students demand that they be voting members of...governing bodies and insist that they hold public meetings, enthusiasm on the part of the board and senate for a close association with students diminishes rapidly."
-Murray Ross, President of York University-

This year's issue...

Student Representation in University Affairs

by John Dufort and D. John Lynn

In 1965 it was "Abolish Tuition Fees"; in 1966 it was "End the War in Viet Nam". This year the theme of activist students on campuses across the country will likely be "Student Representation in University Government".

Traditionally the domain of the Administration and a Board of Governors filled with prominent businessmen and generous benefactors, university government in the past ten years has been opening up more and more to professors, who insist on having a say in the policies their university follows.

The idea of student representation is based on the premise that the university is undemocratic in structure, and that its policies should reflect the feelings of the "total university community" - including students, professors, administrators, and governments.

Ontario's Duff-Berdahl Commission on University Government paid lip service to the suggestion that universities accord students a role in their decision-making bodies. Quebec's Parent Report came out even stronger for the idea, but both combined to plant the seed of an idea in the minds of both administrators and students.

Students are already sitting on senates and senate committees in several Canadian universities, including York. However, over the summer the first serious attempts to get freely elected student representation on university Boards of Governors met with failure.

A private bill reforming the charter of the University of Western Ontario was the first battlefield. The original bill, submitted by John White, MPP for Londont South, on behalf of the university administration, contained a clause giving students indirect representation on the Board of Governors, through a former faculty member or a UWO graduate at least one year out of university. This clause was discarded in the private bills committee. Inserted in its place was a provision for direct representation on the Board.

However, the UWO administration and the London establishment maintained their staunch opposition to direct student representation, and brought pressure to bear on the government to change the clause. The administration at one point threatened to withdraw the entire bill if it did not get its way.

The *London Free Press* on April first ran an editorial criticizing the idea of a student voice on the Board of Governors, calling it the first part of a long-range plan of the Canadian Union of Students to get a major voice in the management of Canadian universities.

The editorial said:

"A student on the university board of governors makes about as much sense as high school students on a board of education, patients on a hospital trust, apprentices on an international union's executive, or civil servants in Parliament.

When the bill arrived in the legislature, Premier Robarts, declared the government's opposition to the clause in question, and so Conservative members who might have voted in favor of direct student representation (there were reportedly 12 such members) were obliged to vote with their party against the clause.

In the midst of procedural objections from the Liberals and NDP, the government managed to substitute the original clause for the one passed by the private bills committee, waiving the two-day notice required by ruling that it only applied to "important" amendments and that this was "not important".

Western's Student Council President, Peter Larson, claimed Premier Robarts' contention that representation of students on the board had not been supported by the faculty was untrue. "The original draft was prepared by the faculty association and it made unmistakably clear their desire for student representation" he said.

In Quebec City wholesale reorganization marked the University of Montreal's transfer from a papal charter to a civil charter. A two-tiered structure was designed: 1) a board of directors representing the government, the faculty, the graduates, and the undergraduates, and 2) the Assembly, a larger body representing all members of the academic community and dealing with the orientation of the University staff status, discipline, and other internal academic matters.

Six student council appointees would represent the students in the Assembly, but again the Administration seemed leery of giving students unilateral power to name representatives to the Board of Directors. They therefore put the appointment of the two student representatives in the hands of the existing Board, in consultation with the Student Council (AGEUM). This would prevent "unacceptable" persons from being seated on the Board, said University Rector Roger Gaudry.

Despite a major bid by the students of U of M to change the clause, the Administration had won the support of the National Union government, and the bill was passed.

It appears that university administration across the country have conceded students a voice in the senates and related bodies of their institutions. However, they seem to have drawn the line at the Board of Governors level, and are using their considerable power to prevent freely elected student representatives from sitting on the highest body of their respective schools.

The road to student representation will probably be long and hard, and recognition as always will take time. But students are a perennial breed, and the cause will not be given up. They all look forward with hope to the day when these university reforms will be part of the mainstream of Canadian attitudes.



Democracy at York - talk all you want kids, but for God's sakes don't vote.

The New Discontent

by Peter Calamai

(The writer is former editor-in-chief of the *McMaster Silhouette*; now on the copy desk at the *Hamilton Spectator*. The following article was written for the *Spectator*.)

A discontent is spreading on Canadian University campuses--not among the students, but among the faculty.

Professors have decided they want more say in planning the aims of education. But the present organization of authority in universities almost entirely excludes professors from responsible planning positions.

In Ontario, with 14 provincially-assisted universities, tensions between professors and administration are nearing a critical point.

And so the cry has gone out, from students and faculty alike, re-organize university government.

In answer to this cry, each Ontario University has established committees to consider re-organization of internal administration and governmental structure.

Three groups are involved: the non-academic administration, which is supposed to control only the daily functioning; the faculty, whose role has been, until now, mainly teaching; and the board of governors, or trustees, whose original duty was to control finances and raise funds.

Re-appraisal of the traditional responsibilities of these three groups has been prompted by the publication of the Duff-Berdahl report last spring.

The report, commissioned "to examine charges...that scholars no longer form or even influence university policy, that a new, rapidly-growing class of administrators is assuming control and that the gulf of misunderstanding is widening between academic staff and administrative personnel..." found all charges to be at least partially true, and blames defective university government structure for most of the present tension.

Although the Duff-Berdahl report opens the door for discussion, many professors find it basically false because "it prevents the question of university government being raised in terms

of the purpose of the university."

"We want the university to have at least a double aim--the training of personnel for society's need, and the proper education of individuals who want an education," said McMaster's faculty association head.

This is an old argument--education for education's sake versus training for society's needs, but these professors want the two aims to be mutually inclusive, not exclusive.

Professors advocate increasing the tutorial programs in which undergraduates discuss subjects with graduate students, and eliminating courses.

But before the professors can succeed in their re-organization schemes, they face at least three major battles.

Battle number one will probably be a power struggle with presently-entrenched board of governors members who may be unwilling to accept any reduction of authority.

The professors will face an even more violent struggle within their own ranks.

In Canadian universities, the individual departments make most of the decisions concerning curriculum. If attempts to make curriculum changes are to be successful, these departments will have to accept guidelines set down by a co-ordinating committee. Many professors fear departments will be unwilling to surrender any of their authority.

Most important of all, a major fight is inevitable if universities try to shift their role away from the training of students to fit society's demands.

The current discontent among Canadian professors appears to have all the makings of another Berkeley affair. Whether it becomes one depends on the professors deciding--as did Mario Savio, a Berkeley student leader--that "the operation of the machine has become so odious you have got to put your bodies into the bears...you've got to make it stop."

Even if some professors do become this drastic, many will probably be discouraged by the realization our powerful society, with its mighty technical cravings, has dictated the present curriculum.