

Administration fiasco revolves around Slater

By JIM DAW

Big Dave is still on the ninth floor and all is right with York — we guess. The leadership crisis has gone with the snow — most of it . . . for now.

Until well past the press deadline for Excalibur's final edition last term, the editors were waiting expectantly for an announcement that president David Slater would resign. It did not come and the senate meeting of Dec. 13 was as dry and uneventful as usual — in marked contrast to the exciting political intrigue developing in the backrooms of the administration.

The scenario for the debacle was highlighted first by the resignation of vice-president academic Walter Tarnopalsky in early December.

The Dec. 7 issue of Excalibur said the resignation resulted from a conflict with the deans, but it was later learned that Slater had failed to define the role of the academic vice-president or delegate effective authority.

The second major incident was a dramatic demand by Slater Dec. 10 that Atkinson dean Harry Crowe give him a loyalty oath within five minutes or resign.

The previous day he had asked for a vote of confidence from the joint committee on alternatives, a committee struck by senate in October to investigate the university's financing, to reassess the budget and to suggest ways enrolment might be increased and expenses cut.

In the course of their investigation the committee discovered gross inefficiencies within the administration and many members lost confidence in Slater's ability as an administrator. The blunder with Crowe was a final straw, and when the meeting rolled around the next day, the committee was ready to take things in hand.

Most were determined to incorporate within the administration an agent for continuing review of the university and implementing JCOA recommendations. The status quo was not working.

It was the administration that caused the panic in the first place with reports in the fall of huge budget deficits caused by an enrolment shortfall. The threat of 120-160 faculty firings prompted the senate to set up the JCOA.

The committee was able to trim the \$2.4

million dollar deficit to \$705,000, to be absorbed by means of deficit financing. Nearly \$375,000 worth of administrative savings were recommended.

It decided that faculty need not and should not be cut and made a number of proposals for increasing enrolment, including a university run bus service from the Yonge subway and the Etobicoke area.

Discussion of possible solutions rambled in the Monday Dec. 11 meeting for several hours but after a recess and a few drinks the committee warmed to a proposal made by Barry Richman, who has since resigned as dean of administrative studies.

Under the plan, the president would have been asked to delegate substantial authority for such things as the budget to a five member committee. Dean of arts John Saywell, Richman, student senator Cal Graham and vice-president of finance Bruce Parkes were to be on the committee with a fifth member elected by senate.

The committee's exuberance for the master-plan was short lived. Slater called another meeting Tuesday night and made it known he would not be happy as a figure-head president. He suggested he would have to resign if they did not consider a compromise. He then left.

After some caucusing, some discussion, and some weak-knee bends, Ted Olson worded a compromise. An absurd 5-2 vote on a 21-member committee sent it to senate with no membership clause.

Slater met with some senior senators before the senate meeting the next day. During the meeting, two of these men, Michael Creal and Donald Warwick, recommended that three members be elected by senate and two be appointed by the president to the new budget-advisory committee. Passed.

Slater now had no reason to resign. The compromise gave him ultimate power in budgetary matters and he had a measure of control over the membership.

The news of Slater's triumph convinced Richman he should resign since he was convinced the administration would not come under the fundamental review he considered necessary. His resignation was announced at a senate meeting the following Tuesday.

Those nominated at that meeting and the finally elected to sit on the committee are

supporting Slater on the issue of confidence and if anything, appear to have reservations about some of the work of the JCOA.

Since only one member attended meetings of the JCOA, there is poor continuity between the bodies — a definite disadvantage when there is so much material to be reviewed and comprehended before budget recommendations are made in the next few weeks.

Senate elected members are Creal (humanities), John Buttrick (economics), and Joe Greene (assistant dean fine arts), Slater appointees are John Goodings (chemistry) and Warren Grover (Osgoode).

Apparently none have had experience on committees dealing with university budget-related problems. None have particular expertise in administrative matters. There is a real danger the committee is vulnerable to

domination by the permanent administrative staff.

One point of optimism, however — being all teaching professors they should be more related to the basic education function of the university than most of the JCOA heavies.

Slater is still refusing to talk about the events of the past month but a statement is expected within the next week.

The report will undoubtedly be a classic example of public relations writing, but the gist will be that the university has weathered a minor storm.

Glendon principal Albert Tucker told the Globe and Mail before Christmas: "All feel that the university is carrying on a very successful academic program (sic) but things could crumble because of inefficiency. Probably we should wait to make a judgment on that."



York student Jeff Weltman left his '64 Chev in parking lot DD while in the Bahamas over Christmas. Thieves raced it around lots C and B on the night

of Dec. 29 along with a second car stolen from a Don Mills apartment garage. Both cars were later found crashed by campus security in lot B.

ahead with acceptance of this gift. We hope as well that Theobald will seek out a thorough and well-informed student opinion. Above all, we call upon Scott, as we did some years before, to consider again his gift and either donate generally to York's immediate needs, or donate a religiously-earmarked gift to a religious organization. It is embarrassing to have to confront in this way a man who has been good to York. However, it would be folly to accept a gift that York neither needs, nor indeed, can afford.

JOHN ADAMS
Vanier College (1970)
MARSHALL GREEN
Osgoode III

Security needs greater powers

During the Christmas holidays my car was stolen. When I called up York security on my return, I was told that my \$75 parking sticker did not entitle me to any protection. There were only three men on duty the night my car was stolen. Having no other course of action I decided to write to Excalibur to try and raise a few points about the security on this campus.

Having a few men in their fifties to hand out parking tickets and lock doors, does not give this campus security.

Closing down a few of the entrances to the campus, and staffing the remaining entrances with guards 24 hours a day (these guards could ask questions and refuse entry) would eliminate the actions of many of the undesirables who abuse this campus.

Increase the numbers and the powers of the security force or, failing that, use Metro police to augment our security force. Failing that start a student security force that will protect not only the 2,000 to 3,000 people who live on this campus, but also protect the furniture and equipment that is stolen every year and replaced increasing the cost of education.

I am not trying to blame anyone in this letter. I am trying to make people realise that this campus attracts a lot of undesirables who will not be deterred from coming here until the security gets a lot tougher.

JEFF WELTMAN

Staff reporter "taken to task"

Recently an article appeared in Excalibur which I feel is both erroneous and misleading for your readers. I write of "Charming, or just a bore — it depends on your taste." The author was a Robert Fisher and I feel for this sort of criticism reporting he should be taken to task.

The book in question review is Bolts of Melody, New Poems of Emily Dickinson, Dover Press, 333 pages, \$3.00 paperback.

The review is about as new as the book. The book first published in 1945, contains poems which Mabel Loomis Todd had kept in storage from the time of Emily's demise in 1886. It seems that Todd had a disagreement over some property which was to be hers with Emily's sister Lavinia, and the poems were locked in a trunk during the outrage of Todd and not revealed until 1945 by her daughter Millicent Todd Bingham. The poems over the years survived much; moving, warehouse fires, and the great Florida hurricane of 1926. It is assumed that they will also survive the trite, superficial and decided misrepresentation that Robert Fisher gives them.

His second paragraph is worth quoting as a curiosity-piece: "Part I of the book entitled Bolts of Melody is very simple and almost childlike in style. All thoughts of punctuation have been carefully tossed aside in a seeming effort to give the idea of fluidity. The language would not trouble anyone who is looking for simple poetry. The potential trouble lies in looking for too much in the meaning of her vocabulary or style."

The punctuation or lack of it belongs to the Todd and Bingham collaboration. It was felt necessary to leave out the punctuation in the past so that people like Fisher could deal with Emily's poetry. Not until the variorum edition of the poems in three volumes by Thomas H. Johnson, in 1955 at the Harvard University Press was this resolved and the poems printed as they were written . . . as masterpieces both for their content and their innovative style. Even Amy Lowell and Ezra Pound have declared Emily as the precursor of the Imagists for this reason. At the rate Fisher is going he will not discover the definitive edition by Johnson as being "new" until 1984. Perhaps if we hurry, we can intercept his next review.

His intellectual glibness is further evidenced by the comment that Emily deals with the boring question "Where is God?" It may be boring to Fisher, whom I am certain has the answers direct from the old gentleman himself, but it was not boring to Emily, the transcendental times she lived in, her family's stance, the heritage of her fellow-countrymen in Amherst or anywhere else in 19th Century New England. But any decent biography of Emily will deal with this . . . and many have. Her declaration as to the nature of her faith doubt is honest, personal, deliberated, genuine and a decision much in advance of her times . . . if not Fisher's.

Emily Dickinson is a poet often quoted, and misquoted but seldom read. This article is a classic 1972 example of the damage done to the woman's poetry and reputation since her death. She cannot be dealt with on a hit-and-run basis such as Fisher's review. There is no doubt that when she is bad, she is very, very, bad but when she is good, she approaches the sublime. Mark Van Doren was the first American critic to deal with this. Of her 1775 poems, fifty are good and a dozen of them approach the finest poems written in our language. Can Fisher claim as much? or Wordsworth? or Irving Layton?

Attempts to make Emily Dickinson just like everyone else or at least to fit into a shoe-box of predetermined categories, is nothing new but it still is annoying. It is only through those who feel poetry as she did, "As a boy passing by a burial ground at midnight whistles, because he is afraid" that she has survived. And the coterie becomes smaller every year because of the diligence, concentration and love that she demands.

It is indeed miraculous that she has survived at all, what with poetry and the 'precious' life being such novelties these days. But the real poets live on and are eventually restored to their rightful place when the time is ripe. And then, once again, "the understanding of the reader must necessarily be in some degree enlightened, and his affections strengthened and purified." Chances are, that Emily Dickinson will even survive the scandalous sort of reviews such as Fisher's who doesn't realise that he has been had by the publishers and not Emily. Her poems are not in Bolts of Melody. She survives in other editions. But then with Emily Dickinson it has always been an uphill climb.

CLARE MACCULLOCH
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Do away with first year

The first year at university is supposed to be dynamic. It can only be described as redundant, if anything at all. This is characterized by the number of students found slouching under, on or over their respective desks five minutes after the "eminent" professors (dare I say, professors?) begin to speak. The students have heard it all before!

Having spoken to a number of students and professors I think it might be safe to say that no one likes or wants the boredom of first year or the excessive work involved in the later years.

My suggestion then is relatively simple, perhaps a little more difficult to pull off, but I'll leave that problem to the people who make the changes. Firstly, eliminate the first year programme general. Secondly, move the second year into the first, thereby providing a first year "ology". Finally, spread the third year out over the second and third years and make full years out of half-year programs.

This will: i) provide first year students with interesting and unknown work in the area of their choice, ii) eliminate the need to employ professors who either don't know what they are talking about or are unwilling to reveal anything beyond the "everyday", iii) relieve the tension of excessive work from both students and professors in the third year of study, iv) allow for a better and more overall understanding of the field in which they are involved, v) save money all around, and vi) allow more students to invade the fourth year level because of their better understanding of their major. The positive aspects are numerous but, for the sake of brevity, the most important points are all that are necessary (It is assumed here that students are mature enough by the time they reach university that they know what they want from that university).

As a test, what say we ask both students and faculty to reply to this.

BRIAN LOFSTROM

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