

# editorial

When new universities appear, their chairman and chancellors are selected from the boardroom of the nearest dominant corporation.

—John Porter, *The Verical Mosaic*, 1965

## Television medium plugs Bovey into prime time format

The worst disappointment of the Bovey Commission's report, *Ontario Universities: Options and Futures*, is not bound within the covers of the 64-page document released on Tuesday.

The real news of the day was the electronic media's determination to condense the complexity of a year's research, the myriad of implications stemming from the commission's 51 recommendations and a one-and-a-half hour press conference/grill session into a dramatic turn of a phrase.

At Tuesday's press conference the contingent of television reporters became quite aggravated with the three commissioners for what they believed to be long-winded, evasive answers to their questions.

One exasperated reporter asked Bovey to simply assign blame for what CFTO's John Borley suggested was the run-down condition of Ontario's universities. Of course, when the commissioners refused to do so because they were not asked by the provincial government to dole out condemnations some reporters scoffed.

As an example of the general tone of the confrontational dialogue between the commissioners and the television reporters this exchange illustrates the difficulties with which the medium of television and the rapid-fire pace of TV news have coping with complex issues. TV thrives on curt political drama, not drawn-out analysis.

Since the TV reporters were constrained by time they earnestly struggled to encapsulate the thrust of Bovey's report by capturing him uttering a dramatic condemnation, or some other entertaining remark. They wanted a concise political oratorial—preferably negative.

On the other hand, Bovey, struggling to place his every remark in its proper context, answered many questions at length, exploring the intricacies of the university system. Verbally dodging what he must have felt were mines laid by the media, Bovey in turn became exasperated with the media's attempt to trivialize the significance of his findings.

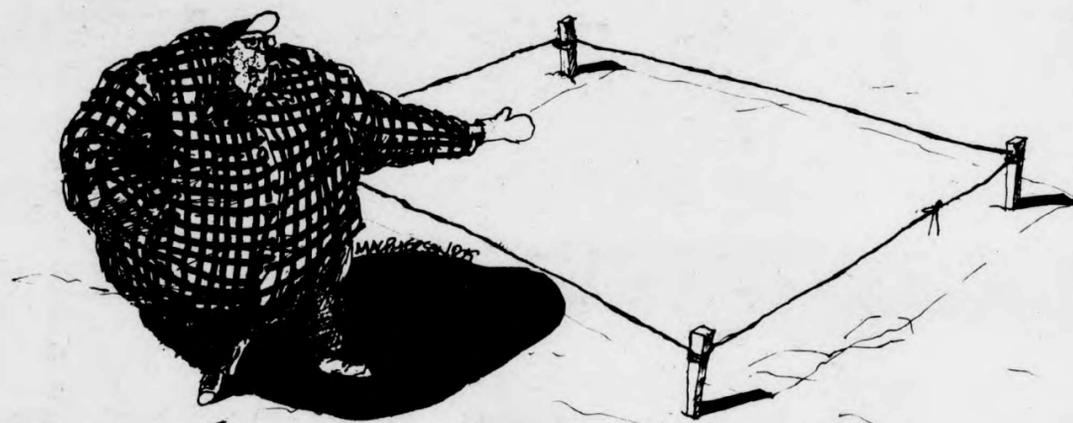
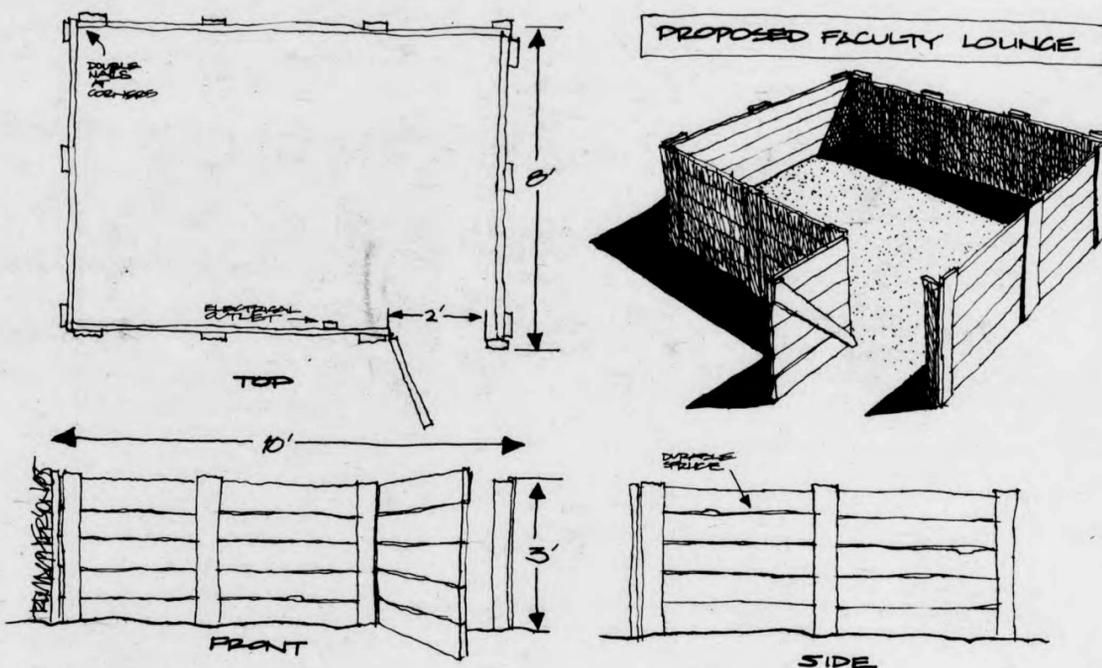
The significance of the whole affair was that the electronic press was not there to 'objectively' report on what Bovey had to say. They thrust themselves into the news, in effect tampering with reality by attempting to evoke what they considered an appropriately public performance.

There is no one to blame for this type of reporting; the reporters are attempting to make do with the limitations set by television news.

Yet the fact remains that the complex story was not conveyed to the public as it really happened. The whole report process was pared down to tid-bit radio and television reports that focussed not on the thrust of the entire report, but on its decontextualized sensational aspects.

We can only suggest that one remain aware of the inadvertent distortions inflicted upon news by different media in the frail hope of avoiding what amounts to being misinformed.

Next week we will attempt to tackle the content of the report.



YORK PHYSICAL PLANT PART-TIME WORKER BRUNO WEBSTER SHOWS US THE PROPOSED LOUNGE SITE.

## letters

### Rights wronged

Editor:

I am writing with regard to your editorial attacking the animal rights movement, which in my view struck a new low in irresponsible journalism.

First of all, you made a number of claims which you did not substantiate in any way; for example, that lab animals are being treated humanely, and that animal rights groups use "irresponsible, propaganda-style literature" based on "an unsubstantiated appeal to the emotions, using misleading or false statistics."

You also grossly misrepresent the views and analysis behind the movement—I have never heard anyone claim that there was any sort of conspiracy to deliberately subject animals to pointless cruelty, and rarely that "sadism or psychosis" is to blame—and indulge in petty name-calling, labelling activists who engage in illegal actions or civil disobedience "reactionary," "hysterical," "irresponsible," and "criminal."

As a political activist in many issues, including animal liberation, and someone who has engaged in civil disobedience in the peace and anti-nuclear movement on more than one occasion, I would like to respond to your charges.

Serious animal liberationists view the exploitation of animals as another manifestation of the same authoritarian, patriarchal system that fosters the exploitation and oppression of womyn, third world and native peoples, gay people, and workers.

Historically, it is not uncommon for the oppression of one group to be justified by the oppressors with the claim that it will benefit another group, usually the one in power.

Animal research benefits humans; enslaving blacks and massacring native peo-

ple benefitted whites; keeping womyn in the home benefits men; oppressing gays is supposed to protect children (although nearly all child-molesters are heterosexual men); the arms race is supposed to protect us from Soviet imperialism; and exterminating Jews was supposed to benefit the "Master race."

I would also like to say a few words on behalf of those individuals who engage in illegal actions for political reasons. The idea that only legal, reform-oriented political activity is necessary or justified rests on the belief that the system as a whole is justified rests on the belief that the system as a whole is just, workable and fair, a belief which many, including myself, feel is totally unfounded.

Thus we have no alternative but to seek to change the world ourselves, through whatever actions we find necessary. I oppose violence as a means of social change, but those who take non-violent action against any and all forms of oppression have my full support.

—Lynna Landstreet

### 'Final typeset'?

Editor:

Did whoever proofreads your final typeset take an extended vacation? Not only the obvious switch of titles on page 3, but also the phrase "liberal-minded university population" which seems to have jumped out of your editorial on page 4 to replace text on page 8 and page 10 and fill blank space on page 6 and page 12. Make it seem that way. Or perhaps it is social comment, in an attempt to see who is awake out there, or even a subliminal message gone public. Whatever the reason the January edition was somewhat disconcerting and tends to reinforce Ms. Seymour's verdict of "sloppy."

—G. Johnson

Graduate Anthropology

### He who laughs...

Editor:

It's terrific—the idea for a degree. I laughed!

Of course, if the brilliant person who created this 'bone' can't spell "potato(e)"—he might have to do that with his degree. (Or hers!)

I suggest next time he keep to the common 'spud'—it's easier to spell.

Keep at it. I look to *Excalibur* for my laffs, etcetera (of course).

—Sheila Creighton, Atkinson student and Master's Office, Atkinson P.S. Of course I had to check my Webster's.

(Thank you for your concern. We've never received a letter from a Master's Office. —Ed.)

### Clarifications

*Excalibur* would sincerely like to apologize to CYSF and the Office of Student Affairs for an error incurred by our printer on pages 6, 10 and 12 of last week's issue. We regret any embarrassment caused by the error.

*Excalibur* apologizes for any confusion resulting from the reversal of the headlines for the two stories on page three of the January 10 issue. (Blush.) We would also like to clarify one point made in the "FIS bash turns to brawl" story on the same page. In addition to not receiving CYSF funds, the Federation of Indian students are not recognized by the council. The Indian Students' Association also receives no funding from CYSF but is recognized by the council.

## excalibur

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