

BOG Rep Report

Trenton, Chile and York...

Peter Brickwood

Another Committee, this one apparently without name, has been created by the Honourable Bette Stephenson. Apparently its purpose is to restructure the University system in Ontario. That means cutbacks. It seems fairly clear from the committee's terms of reference that Universities are to be made to conform to the existing funding formulas. There does not appear to be any prospect for an examination of quality and what funding will be needed to provide a quality education but simply an examination of ways and means of solving the financial problems created by the Government's fiscal restraint policy.

COU in a Governments Clothing

The Council of Ontario Universities seems to have been the main mover in bringing about this new committee. Certainly the membership of this committee represent University Administra-

tion and corporate interests with people like Mr. R. P. Riggin from Noranda and the Presidents of Queen's and Western. They will be joined by Mr. Wiengard of the Ontario Council of University Affairs and Professor M. Pilkington of York's Osgoode Law School.

Staff, Students and Faculty

None of these groups are to be represented on the committee. How anyone can presume to plan education without the input of the people who directly participate in that education is beyond me. Yet that is exactly what Bette Stephenson has done.

And this is no mere bureaucratic oversight. Last Friday (November 29th) the Ontario Faculty Associations met with the Minister of Colleges and Universities and she specifically refused any faculty involvement in the committee.

Election Year

This committee may be a smoke

screen for the spring election, who knows? What we do know is that it is scheduled to report by June 30th, 1981. that has two advantages; first that it is almost certain to be after the election expected in the spring so for any question referring to University funding Bette can cry, "I'm waiting for the Committee Report!" Secondly, in June most students are so busy making enough money to get back to school the following fall year that they don't have time to deal with government reports.

I fear that this committee is not going to do the quality of education in this province no good at all but might please the fiscal restraint and cutback supporters of the Davis Government.

"Do Not Buy Bata"

You may have heard about the Bata strike in Trenton and if you have it is probably because of the violence around the picket lines.

Mrs. Sonia Bata who is reputed to have a lot of influence in the Bata Shoe Company, is also a member of York's Board of Governors.

The issues under negotiations between the Local 1979 of the Canadian Food and Commercial Workers Union and Bata shoes are complex. What is not complex is that Bata Shoes has used security people to clear a path and the Ontario Provincial Police have escorted trucks through the Union's Pickets. This action has been accompanied by some violence.

Another place where there has been considerable violence is in the country of Chile. According to the CBC program 'The Establishment', Bata Shoes recently secured the contract to make the boots for Chile's military forces.

Trenton, Chile and York

What's the connection? Last month at York's Board of

Governors meeting Mrs. Sonja Bata reported as chairperson of the newly formed Community Relations committee. Her report was what you might expect except for the last item.

The committee had agreed that no political programs should be shown at the University, unless they showed "both sides" and should certainly not be published in materials for public distribution. Apparently she saw a York Gazette announcement of an on campus showing of an anti-Pinochet movie which opposed the current Chilean Government that is widely regarded as right-wing authoritarian and even fascist.

In the Committee meeting where she first raised the topic Mrs. Bata apparently urged that no political movies at all should be shown at York. Mr. Lumbers from the Noranda which was the first Transnational Corporation to support the Pinochet regime seems to have been in strong agreement with Mrs. Bata. North York Mayor Mel Lastman is reported to have argued that a University is a forum for thought and argument so that every opinion can be legitimately raised and must be refuted rather than repressed.

Mrs. Bata is willing to restrict the free expression of opinion in this University, she is also willing to make boots for the military of Chile and precipitate violence to break a strike in Trenton. We should know who makes the money decisions about our University.



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