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If the admission of students to sit on General Faculties Council means anything at all, it means more than the mere fact that some of the members are now students -- it must mean that students are now represented. The distinction is important. Trevor Anderson argued a few years ago that while students should be listened to, they were incapable of the maturity or permanence necessary to sit on council. We argued that this was untrue, that we could put forth representatives who were mature and responsible, and could perform their job properly even though their term of office was short. We soundly won our seats. Yet we could hardly have won them if we confined ourselves to our mere capabilites to handle ourselves maturely. After all, General Faculties Council conducted itself quite competently without our intervention. The people there are at least as articulate and generally better trained and more mature than ourselves. But that was not our point, to fill the chamber with bodies to prove our existence. We won our seats on the premise that we, as students, had something to contribute and a right to be

But which students? Could I, as the elected member from Law, ignore the interests of law students if I felt that those of students in general were different? I would maintain that I could not. The basis of this contention lies in the system of representative democracy itself. If we were only concerned with putting forth the views of the corporate student, all 18,000 or so of us, we would hardly need more than one representative, and we already had three under the Universities Act before parity.

The democratic system of government is premised upon bringing the decision-making process as close to the grass-roots as is consistent with efficient operation. Thus council can be neither too large so as to be unweildy nor too small so as to engulf the views of minority constituents within a majority compromise.

With this in mind, I would maintain that it is fundamental that a student representative put forth the views of his own constituency ahead of those of students in general. In many instances, however, the interests of the representative's constituency will merge with those of the student body, yet go against the administration or some other group. When this happens, the representative will of course vote with the rest of the students. But he does so only because that is in the best interests of the students he represents. The fact that other students share that opinion is relevant only for the purpose of winning the issue, for in

terms of the duty of his office it is only coincidence.

Once we have established the primary duty of a student representative, we should ascertain how he is to carry out that duty. Once again, a glance at the theory of democracy is in order. It would be totally inappropriate for every member of a society to attempt to put forth his views at the decision-making level. Thus we elect persons to speak for them. But it would be just as difficult and unwieldy for the elected person to canvass the views of each constituent as for the ultimate body to do so. Thus a person's stand on various issues becomes, along with his maturity, speaking ability. and responsibility, the basis upon which he is elected. Once elected, the representative knows he has a mandate on certain issues. He knows that on these topics his views are shared by a majority of his constituents. He also knows that his constituents have given him their faith to make on-the-spot decisions for them. Yet there is one fundamental duty which corresponds to this faith -- the representative must act in the best interests of his constituency.

Thus, while it is not expected, or desired, that an elected representative return to his constituency upon each issue for which he has not obtained an express mandate, it is nevertheless incumbent upon him to ascertain what the best interests of his constituency are and vote accordingly. This is not to say that the representative takes orders from anyone. He is a representative, not a delegate. Nor does it necessarily mean that he must go along with the majority of his constituents, though to take such a course would be highly irregular, as long as he honestly addresses his mind to the needs and interests of his constituency. He should never vote along a course, no matter how much he believes in it himself, knowing it to be contrary to the best interests of the constituency. Likewise, he should never take any action without addressing himself to those interests. In most cases the process is automatic, for the ideal representative is one whose own views correspond with both the views of the majority and their best interests.

By following these guiding principles, duty to the narrowest constituency and action in the best interests of it, our representation will be responsible and effective. To act as individuals only, or to confuse our allegiances means that we have accomplished no substantive changes in University government and cannot hope to put forth the true student voice, much less have it respected.

> Rob Curtis Law Rep

Should members of GFC 'represent' pead constituencies? Gateway asked two student reps to

The philosophy and structure of GFC has been misinterpreted and misunderstood by certain students and their representatives. Since students achieved proportional representation on GFC there have been continual calls for the organization of student GFC reps. Furthermore, there are suggestions that student reps are accountable and responsible to students for their actions on GFC. These propositions have been overwhelmingly ignored by student GFC reps, however it is time that such conjectures are dispelled for good.

These hypotheses are apparently founded on a vision of GFC as the democratic arm of the university.

GFC does not have a definite constituency. The many and varying interests in university make it impossible to believe that there could be proportional representation. GFC must be responsible not only to the university community and the various interest groups but also to society at large and any decision on numbers representing various groups must necessarily be arbitrary. Moreover, many GFC members including university administration, heads of faculties and schools, ex officio members, and the representatives of interest groups such as SU, AAS, NASA are not necessarily elected. Indeed, the chairman of GFC is not even elected. Is this democratic?

It is obvious that GFC was not designed to have democratic representation. Therefore members of council should not be expected to act as representatives as they normally would in what we consider a democracy.

In accordance with the above, historically GFC members have not been held accountable to any constituency. Those members that represent an organization or faculty are expected to express views on behalf of that faculty or organization as the represented body desires. However, in debate and vote no member has obligations. To bring this issue home, we should look back to the debate on increased student representation on GFC. As I recall, no faculty or school supported the report calling for proportional representation and most faculties showed overwhelming opposition to that report. Nevertheless the report was accepted by

GFC and it was evident that numerous Deans, faculty members, etc. voted in opposition to the expressed views of the body they represented. This was in keeping with the tradition of GFC.

meet head on to argue the question.

The fact that students are not accountable does not mean that students are not represented. The students on GFC will naturally tend to see the issued presented in GFC from a student perspective.

There is also the argument that GFC is obviously composed of interest groups and students must organize themselves in order to be equally effective. I can no argue with the philosophy implied in the argument but more important, the underlying assumption is false. Every member of GFC naturally has his or her particular bias, nevertheless, there is no evidence of the existence of interest groups within the GFC (except perhaps the administration). I have yet to witness a debate in GFC where any group had a cohesive stand nor has there been any apparent division between students and any other group.

The few proponents for organizing student GFC reps, however, mostly argue that with organization students would be more powerful. They believe that it is the student reps' duty to get as much as they can for students. This is contrary to the philosophy of GFC as already outlined. I would suggest that this view is immoral as well as invalid. Students organizing for power would have serious and detrimental effects of GFC.

I am unaware of any attempt of any other group to organize GFC members. Nevertheless, Mr. Delaney, the Student Union V.P. Academic, campaigned for office on a platform that included the organization of student GFC reps. Last month he organized a party for GFC reps and student councillors. Although I know of no one that attended this affair, the implications involved are clearly improper and irresponsible.

In conclusion it must be recognized that GFC is not a democratic body representing the university or any other constituency. The primary allegiance of GFC members must be to the university and society and all GFC members should be free to vote on this basis. Most important, any attempt to organize any group of GFC reps, must not be premitted.

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