

news from CUASA

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BOVEY COMMISSION

by Stan Jones, President

When the Bovey Commission (the Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario) visited Carleton on September 25, they heard briefs from many campus organizations. There was one brief submitted to the Commission that was not discussed at the hearing. On August 15, Mrs. Jean Teron, Chairman of the Board of Governors of Carleton University, sent a brief to the Commission in which she attacked tenure and the existence of faculty unions. Like all submissions to the Bovey Commission, hers is a public document and we have been given access to it and we are now publishing it to our members because we believe that nothing is to be gained by trying to ignore her views.

The President of Carleton University, William Beckel, has assured me that her statements do not represent his position or that of the academic administration of Carleton and he reiterated this at Senate. The administration, however, wants to deal with the brief as a procedural issue, rather than deal with its substance. Their objections center on whether or not Mrs. Teron should have identified herself as Chairman of the Board in her submission for the brief does not represent official Board policy. While I think that this is an issue, it is of minor importance when one considers what Mrs. Teron actually said.

CUASA is not afraid of a public debate on tenure. We believe in the open and free discussion of all issues which is, after all, what tenure is about. We think that Mrs. Teron is wrong; we would like the opportunity to convince her of our views. We won't achieve that if all we debate with her is whether or not she should have signed the brief as Chairman of the Board. CAUT and OCUFA both have obtained her brief and will be responding to her arguments.

CUASA will be negotiating a new collective agreement with the Board of Governors this academic year, and we cannot ignore the fact that Mrs. Teron's views on tenure and the union may influence those negotiations. Finally, CUASA feels that collegiality is imperiled by withholding pertinent information from its members which should be considered, debated and resolved in the same manner as the original Procedures Governing Tenure were handled back in 1972 (three years before CUASA became a union).

In the course of this debate it will be incumbent upon the management of Carleton to publicly put their views on record. If they do not agree with Mrs. Teron's views then they should say so.

MRS. TERON'S BRIEF TO THE BOVEY COMMISSION (reprinted in its entirety as submitted)

Commission on the Future Development of the Universities of Ontario
14th Floor
101 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1P7

Dear Commissioners.

In view of the time constraints imposed on the Board Chairmen involved in the writing of their individual University briefs, it was not possible for the Council of Chairmen of Ontario Universities to prepare a collective brief before the August 20 deadline.

Our respective universities will answer your posed questions. But Chairmen have a unique perspective of the overall management of Ontario Universities. As the unpaid and diversified representatives of the community we have accepted a trusteeship to manage the financial responsibilities of our local universities, even though some of our duties may be unpleasant. You have given us an invitation to be openly critical of any area of weakness in university governance. Although I understand our Council has requested a fall hearing before your Commission, I feel strongly about the issue of faculty tenure and want to inform you of my views in advance of whatever collective presentation there may be by the Chairmen.

I believe that the establishment of the your Commission is a constructive and determined act on the part of the Government of Ontario to deal with the realistic problems that face our Universities today. Attacks on budgets are not arbitrary or vindictive acts. They are conscientious attempts at living within one's means or achieving the best results within one's resources.

Reading from recent comments sent to our Council Chairman Ernest Steele by Mr. Bruce Bryden (York University Board Chairman) I quote "the growing powers of the university unions are challenging the collegiality of institutions and tipping the scale away from a balance few of us would think appropriate."

Foremost among union powers that leave university administrators hampered in the pursuit of excellence is the application of tenure. The reasoning for the past inclusion of tenure clauses in the era of rapid growth, adequate funding, and faculty shortage can be understood, or the equal application of the tenure concept in non-unionized campuses. But in this time of rationalization and struggle to provide the highest quality education with very finite resources - one can only view tenure as an outdated job security blanket.

A revised concept of faculty employment can, just as well as tenure, permit a professor absolute freedom to criticize society or the university without fear of reprisal. Such freedom is now a firmly established principle as well as being safeguarded by human rights legislation. But a contemporary contract should permit a university to ask a consistently mediocre professor to find other work.



If the result of the your Commission's recommendations is that certain university departments are closed down as a cost-cutting measure with the resultant letting-go of all staff (both excellent and indifferent), it would have to be viewed as a very poor choice if, previous to that, any university as a whole had been unable to exercise its own potential rationalization because tenure principles had made it impossible to weed-out poor performers, or to reallocate resources from departments with lesser student demand to those with greater need for new faculty.

Although each university will have to find an individual solution, the initial step to deal with the tenure problem is unlikely to be initiated by one university at the risk of faculty upheaval - but only when the basic concept is confronted by the province as a whole.

Manitoba's Minister of Education Maureen Hemphill is quoted saying "Tenure as a justification for academic freedom is not a compelling argument since such freedom is now so well established."

Professors Tom Symons & James Page in their recent study wrote "Lazy, dull, incompetent teachers are sheltered by tenure."

In a number of speeches the Chairman of Northern Telecom Walter Light has constructively criticized Canadian universities. Regarding tenure, he referred to the "throttling stranglehold" it has on the quality of teaching.

The debate is not just Canadian. The 'Chronicle of Higher Education' (May 23/84) reports on the British government's proposed legislation to override the royal charters of the universities and force them to reduce the protections provided their faculty members by tenure.

Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education & Science told the House of Commons that "Tenure in the Universities should for future appointments be limited, subject to safeguards for academic freedom." The proposed new plan would give faculty contracts allowing termination for reasons of financial exigency or redundancy. There is also thought being given, as reported, that the proposed legislation could be amended to take effect retroactively. Sir Keith in a letter to the Chairman of the Committee of University Chancellors & Principals (The Times' Supplement, May 18) stated that universities may choose to comply voluntarily with the Government's wishes or have the proposals put into legislation.

A University Affairs article by C. Tausig (Mar.83) on tenure refers to some U.S. colleges and universities that have done away with tenure. One system described at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington "employs faculty for 3 year terms with renewal based on several criteria including the professor's excellence in lecturing, program design, student counselling, and written evaluations by students and colleagues."

As our nation continues to be concerned about the competitiveness of every industry in the world market, we are constantly aware that no segment of our society has tenure. No one guarantees farmers a lifetime income from the land. Ask the hundreds of bankrupt businessmen, or the executives of national corporations struggling to stay solvent what guarantees there are in the marketplace. They have learned that merit and relevance in rapidly changing conditions are the only keys to success.

As the proportion of our university funding from the private sector must increase, it is reasonable to expect the attitude of many potential donors to be less charitable than possible when they know that universities have not yet confronted the luxurious concept of tenured employment for life. It's well known that students suffer from inadequate libraries and outdated equipment. How does a university justify to a potential donor that a given dollar will be spent effectively when necessary books and physical equipment are cut back although incompetent teachers are retained? We must demonstrate contemporary value to the donor and taxpayer.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Jean Teron
Chairman of the Board
Carleton University

NEW BUILDINGS ON CAMPUS

The University, through its Deans, has announced several new building projects: an extension to Herzberg and a new social science facility next to Loeb. The price tag for all this is said to be some \$1.5 million with the Social Science building estimated at 985 thousand. While we welcome the additional space, we are concerned with how the management intends to finance these projects. It appears that the University will ask the Ministry for money but we are told that the money could come from operating funds. We do not remember a public debate (senate would be the appropriate place) over how this operating money should be spent. Who decided that more space for social science research was more important than additional funds to make up for the years of neglect in the library collection? (There are still many journals Carleton should be getting that it is not.) Who determined that we have these new structures while faculty in every department are greatly overloaded with teaching? This debate is particularly important because converting operating funds into capital funds is not a normal way of funding new buildings. The transfer is a one-way street: operating monies (our salaries, for example) apparently can be turned into capital monies, but capital monies, apparently, cannot become operating monies.

It is customary for the university to discuss the use of funds this large with the donors; and make no mistake about it, the workers at Carleton are the donors of these operating funds. Carleton has this money not because the senior administrators have suddenly discovered superior management skills, but because Bill Davis and Larry Grossman changed our 8.95% scale increase for 1983-84 into a 5% increase and let the university keep the difference.

The \$1.5 million is itself a curious amount. It is just the amount that we have been told the university will owe to CUASA members if we are successful in our arbitrations over CDI and scale increases due on May 1, 1984. When we succeed in those arbitrations, we expect that the university will use other money donated by the members of CUPE 2424, CUPE 2323, GAU, the security guards and the operating engineers when their salary increases were restrained by the Davis government. Perhaps the proposed new building ought to be named after the true donors; perhaps Rolled Back Scale Increase Memorial Building would be appropriate.

by Stan Jones, President

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TOLL-FREE NUMBER CHANGED -- PLEASE NOTE

The toll-free number which appears on the inside cover of the CUASA Calendar and on the inside back cover of the Staff Directory has been changed. Please note the new number is

1-800-267-7917

Bob Jones is on campus every Tuesday and Wednesday in 447 St. Pat's at 231-4310.

