

the HERALD  
**Outlook**

# Failing grade for fake essays



Somewhere in the dark heart of Toronto, an entrepreneur may be about to bite the dust. As far as university officials are concerned, it would be good riddance.

The entrepreneur is in the business of selling essays to students. At the prompting of the Council of Ontario Universities, police have raided an office and seized a list of several hundred names of students who have bought essays.

Students submitting essays written by others may be guilty of passing forged documents, or fraud.

University officials are meeting this week to decide what to do. In the meantime, professors have been advised not to return - until this mess is cleared up - the end-of-term essays that students are submitting.

This is not a new problem. Throughout Ontario, and elsewhere, too, universities have been plagued by students who buy rather than write their essays. Penalties range from suspension to expulsion to having one's degree taken away. Professors scrutinize, cheaters sweat, but still it goes on.

Supplying essays to students is a lucrative business. The gap between what dealers in illicit papers pay writers and what they charge students is large. In addition, they can sell a paper more than once if they're lucky.

PLEASING BUSINESS

Students who buy them, meanwhile, have been relatively happy with the results. The mark they buy is usually better than the C, D or F they would get otherwise.

While an argument could be made that submitting essays written by others is a criminal offence, it seems likely that students caught red-handed will find themselves subject to a university's code of academic discipline.

University spokesmen say each student will be dealt with individually. In the past, guilty students have been suspended, sometimes for several years. This time, officials are determined to get tough.

York University officials are cautioning that cheaters could lose their degrees; University of Toronto officials are recommending expulsion. Both are terrible prices to pay for being lazy.

**WHO CHEATS?**

The typical cheater is one whose English is weak, and who is enrolled in a math, engineering, medicine or some other science program. Because all students are forced to take some humanities courses, people who are poor essay writers, or who have trouble with English, find buying essays an easy way out.

Students don't mind handing over \$200 or more for a paper. Cheaters no doubt cut through a cross-section of the student body. For users of essay-writing services, morality does not seem to be an issue.

Not surprisingly, professors and university administrators see things differently. Plagiarism is the most serious offence in the Academy. Exasperated professors express no sympathy whatsoever for cheaters who may face expulsion.

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STAFF WRITERS  
Brian MacLeod Donna Kell

SPORTS WRITER  
Paul Svoboda

ACCOUNTING  
June Glendenning

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING  
Joan Mannall

PUBLISHER  
David A. Beattie  
EDITOR  
Brian MacLeod  
AD MANAGER  
Dan Taylor

ADVERTISING SALES  
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CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT  
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PRESSROOM FOREMAN  
Brian Aikman

PRESS ASSISTANT  
Lee Bittner

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"J.B. hired her so he can run the family business after he dies."

## The race is on: Is anybody running?



Ottawa

Stewart MacLeod  
Thomson News Service

You can be forgiven for not knowing this, but there is a leadership race under way in the New Democratic Party. The only missing element is a contestant.

Amazing, isn't it? Nearly six weeks have passed since Ed Broadbent announced he will be giving up the party leadership near the end of November, and so far not one person has officially entered the race to succeed him.

This certainly isn't the Tory and Liberal way of doing things. Not only would potential leaders in those parties use every moment of such a six-week period, they would probably have unofficially started months, or even years, earlier.

Right now, for instance, it's hardly likely that former Liberal cabinet minister Jean Chretien is travelling across Canada on the rubber-chicken circuit simply because he enjoys airplanes.

And it's fair to say that Brian Mulroney had more than a passing interest in the Tory leadership before there was a vacancy.

But, so far, it's remarkably difficult to find a New Democrat willing to indicate any intention of campaigning for Mr. Broadbent's job. You might get an odd smile, a raised eyebrow, or the rare admission that the matter is getting minor consideration - but not much more. Nobody, it seems, has decided to run.

There are several compelling reasons - not the least of which is money. In order to open the field to more candidates, and inject greater fairness into the process, the NDP has clamped a \$150,000 spending ceiling on each candidate. This doesn't go very far in a national campaign.

The worst thing that could happen would be for a candidate to run out of money in the stretch, and

have the campaign stutter to a stop.

This \$150,000 ceiling compares with the \$1.65 million the Liberals allowed each leadership candidate to spend in 1984. A year earlier, the Tories permitted their candidates to spend as much as they wanted.

In addition to the ceiling, the NDP is restricting donations from individuals and organizations to \$10,000 - which prevents, say, a trade union from bankrolling a favorite candidate.

The party is also insisting that the perks available to all MPs - such as free postage and airline travel - not be used for leadership campaigning.

"The result," says one MP, "is that even those who might otherwise announce their candidacy are very reluctant to take an early plunge. There is no point becoming a candidate if you can't afford to campaign."

But that doesn't mean the bushes are not being beaten for support.

"Yes, I've had a few calls," acknowledges one MP. "But everyone seems to be hanging back to see who will enter."

All the early speculation centered on Yukon MP Audrey McLaughlin - after British Columbia MP Nelson Rills said it was time the NDP was led by a woman, and many other MPs said it was time the NDP was led by a westerner.

For a time it seemed that the articulate and unpretentious Mrs. McLaughlin was the only person being talked about and, as often happens with a media hero, she took on larger-than-life dimensions. Recently, more questions have been asked about her qualifications, such as her grasp of national issues and her personal ideology.

This is not to suggest her support is waning. What it does mean is that other possible contenders are finally getting their names in print and their faces on television.

And the name one hears more than most is that of Stephen Lewis, former Ontario NDP leader, who last year stepped down as Canadian ambassador to the United Nations.

## Cut back borrowing



Ottawa

Vic Parsons

Hey! You out there. Yes, you, Mr. Consumer, and you, Ms. Business Entrepreneur.

You're spending too much! And you'd better cut back on your borrowing.

That message emerges from John Crow's latest review of the national economy, set out in his 1988 Bank of Canada annual report. Crow, you'll recall, is governor of the country's central bank, and the man who's on the hook for setting our interest rates.

Central bankers are a dour lot. There are few people alive today who can remember the last time a jolly Bank of Canada governor showed his face in Ottawa.

And, in keeping with the reputation of his chosen profession, Crow let it be known that he is not amused when consumers and business people are too cocky about the economy.

Confident buyers, his argument runs, spend more than is good for them. And producers and sellers invest more than they should.

To keep up this spending pace, they turn to credit and borrow the funds to make purchases and investments.

So, Crow maintains, they give a push to inflationary pressures. To stop this inflation, the good Bank of Canada governor must raise interest rates. The devil doesn't make him do it, but buyers and sellers do.

Crow explains all this in general remarks in his report, before getting into the gory details. Undoubtedly, this explanation aims at defusing some of the public complaints about high interest rates. Canadians are cursing the Bank of Canada for its killjoy attitude.

**SPENDING SOARS**

Crow says total dollar spending in Canada last year was eight-per-cent higher than in 1987, which was 11-per-cent higher than the year before. "This pace is far above even the most optimistic measures of the economy's capacity to add to the supply of goods and services in volume terms," he says.

Moreover, credit to individual households - that is, money borrowed to buy on time - rose by 17 per cent last year, and business credit was up 10 per cent.

Crow says a substantial increase in demand for goods and services early in an economic cycle is a sign of prosperity. But, in time, adversity strikes in the form of price inflation.

"And the danger of a cost-price spiral becomes greater the longer the demand pressures persist," Crowsays.

This is not just a Canadian phenomenon. Crow says a "mutually reinforcing surge of demand" has applied pressure around the world.

And so, higher interest rates are administered in a "timely way" as a kind of sulphur and molasses to cure what ails an inflationary economy. That bitter medicine is intended to curb the taste of consumers and investors for spending.

Crow argues that had the bank not pushed interest rates to the current levels - the central bank's prime rate is at a five-year high of 12.52 per cent - the situation would be worse.

## Berry's World

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**FAMILY SECTION**

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**RUDE & CRUDE SECTIONS**

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