Student societies' private enforcers

For at least two decades, the KSA and LSU have quietly hired private security companies as enforcers for their political control and to intimidate dissenters (who are often poor or ESL students, unaware of their rights). These guards are completely distinct from official college security, and answerable only to the student society leaders.

This contracted muscle is, ironically, paid for through students' mandatory fees, and with college presidents, staff and boards strangely indifferent to it all. Some may regard such bullying as an unsettling spectacle in a presumably advanced democracy.

Victoria, via law reform, should end this private security hiring and prescribe that only official public college security performs this function, with no student society control over it. (This could be done via amending the *BC Colleges and Institutes Act.*)

From KSA News file -

= An audit, by auditor Mary Ann Hamilton, also found that about $620,000 of student money was loaned out as part of what she called a "high-risk" investment strategy to Apex Communications, a Surrey- based telecommunications company. She learned that the KSA had paid $1,776 to a security firm called Dolo Investigations for undisclosed surveillance work.

> *(*From *Whistleblower Unearths Scandal; How one student exposed student association's diverted funds.* By Doug Ward, *Vancouver Sun*, Sept. 15, 2007)

= "Harman 'Sean Birdman' Bassi says he wants transparency, but KSA directors held a meeting in secret with security guards to keep students out."

> (From *Birdman walks like a duck but barks like a dog,* at KSA Secrets blog, at Wayback, Nov. 25, 2011. Now KSA Leaks)

= The current board members had hired private security for its meetings, as well as the one set up for the impeachment vote.

> (From *Chaos erupts at Kwantlen; Pepper spray and fire alarms fill halls during unanimous vote to impeach divisive KSA board*. By Carolyn Cooke and Amy Reid, *Surrey Now*, Dec. 1, 2011)

= Jennifer Campbell, Langley Campus Director for the KSA, said students are finally having their voices heard. "Over the past months students have attempted to attend council meetings to have their concerns heard only to be met with intimidation through private security at council meetings and public reports that vilify them," Campbell said.

> (From *Ousted KSA directors vow to take fight to court*. By Sheila Reynolds, *Surrey Leader,* Dec. 5, 2011)

= In Oct. 2024 a group of Langara students protested the Langara Students' Union annual election after their 250-name petition to cancel the vote as unfair was refused. Private security guards hired by the LSU – not the college – locked the doors and tried to confiscate the student journalists' cameras.

(From story by Sofia Mohamed, *Langara Voice*, Oct. 23, 2024. See video.)

As well, the numbers spent yearly by the societies on lawyers' fees appears to be a rich feeding ground for local law firms, for cases such as fighting defamation suits, political lobbying against Victoria's control, and blocking students' fiscal scrutiny, especially with the heavily litigious KSA – ironically all paid for via student's mandatory fees.

(The KSA's audited financial statement for 2024 says: "Professional expense includes $333,775 [up from $91,640 in 2023] for services provided by a legal contractor.")