

Bipin Lakhani responds

Social and Cultural Affairs Director answers accusations

Dear Constituents and friends,
This is the text of the address I made to council on October 28th. It is a response to the call for my resignation.

"Well, it appears to me that certain members of this Council have already expressed their desire to have me removed from this Council. I do not wish to respond to their phony desires. I am here to talk to these members of Council who have in themselves a sense of justice and are willing to allow me an opportunity to get to the real reasons behind this whole thing. Slanderous accusations have been hurled at me. Varying from calling me 'racist' to being an 'irresponsible member of our society'. I deny that I am either.

"Their base-the ones that want me out of Council-is simply that I used C.Y.S.F. facilities and funds to propogate what they call hate literature. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry, but that to me is not hate literature. It is literature that can be verified, those are facts. I agree that they (the facts) are gathered in a sensationalist form.

"Regarding the abuse of misuse of privileged positions, I would like to

remind Council of a most flagrant abuse of a privileged position during the last election campaign. Ladies and gentlemen, this incident went unheeded and no Council proceedings were called to discuss the improprieties of that matter. I refer in particular to Mr. Pearlman's use of a York Student Fund advertisement which acted as a part of his electoral campaign.

"Now, don't you see the paradox?"

"The obvious paradox that the conductor of this orchestrated move to oust me is none other than Mr. Pearlman himself. My 'abuse' may have amounted to only \$8.75 (which I have subsequently paid to Council), but his flagrant abuse amounted to nearly \$1,000.

"This to me, members of Council, smacks of sheer hypocrisy.

"If they wish to accuse me of improprieties, then I ask you: who was snooping into my cabinets? What did they want from there? and what right did they have to remove anything from there that wasn't even theirs?

"So let us not dwell on the phony and baseless grounds they render for

my removal. Let us get to the core of the matter. The real reason is obviously because that literature was against Begin, and that has connotations of it being anti-Zionist! I am no expert on Zionism, but from what I have read I know that that it is called by many, including the U.N., a form of racism. This is a view that is shared by a growing number of people throughout the world, even in Israel. I know what it is to live under racism; I was born and brought up in South Africa.

"I am merely expressing my beliefs and opinions. Am I not allowed to hold any? What if the literature had a picture of Yasser Arafat instead? Would we still be here? Isn't that, then the real reason? Well if it is then make it clear. Let the members of the Council know that they are asking me to resign because I am against Menachim Begin and Zionism. Do not make phony claims such as a misuse of \$8.75 as being the reason.

"Council members were quoted in *Excalibur* saying that "people are angry about this thing". What thing? The fact that the posters reflected an opinion that the new McCarthyites denounce or that

\$8.75 was used and then paid back. Let it be known in Council that these are the real reasons, or grounds, for this Motion. Let the members be aware of what they are voting on. I do not mind being asked to step down if the real reasons are given, but not when the reasons are disguised and splattered with balony!

"I am being victimized here, ladies and gentlemen, for my opinions and beliefs. This is an abuse of a basic human right--the right to freedom of

speech! I will read to you from our Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, paragraph two (2), Fundamental freedoms:

"Everyone has the following fundamental freedoms:

- a) freedom of conscience and religion;
- b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communications;
- c) freedom of peaceful assembly; and
- d) freedom of association.

If this Council wants to remove me on the grounds that I am not allowed to hold opinions or beliefs or associations outside of my portfolio, then I wish it seen that no member in this assembly has any opinion, belief or association outside his or her portfolio. If that is the case, I want an inquisition into the minds of each member that they hold no beliefs or

opinions (political or other) that can influence their intellectual capacities to function.

"It is evident that there is a sustained propaganda campaign on campus. The campaign is on both sides and it is both verbal and non-verbal. Furthermore, it is my contention that it is the intent of certain members of this Council to suppress one side of the information, and, by so doing, promoting the other side. Therefore, I say that regardless of which side of the debate one may stand on, it is my firm conviction, that the C.Y.S.F. is an inappropriate forum in which to resolve an issue of such magnitude.

"And I shall conclude that if what I have said today sounds as though it is said in vehemence, then I am sorry; because it is. Because as a human being, and I quote a faculty member, Mike Mandel, 'I was brought up to hate racism and hypocrisy.'

"Thank you."

Bipin Lakhani

Bipin has right to express views

I support Bipin Lakhani's right to express his personal views, but at the same time I also expect him to respect my rights, and those of many others to express their view that Zionism is not Racism. As has been illustrated in the CYSF meetings that have taken place, it is not the

matter of \$8.75 (it has been repaid) that is the point of contention, nor has it been clearly illustrated beyond a shadow of doubt, that the posters were distributed by Mr. Lakhani, let alone the contention that they in some way represent a CYSF position. It appears to me that the nature of the poster is the all encompassing factor.

I urge council to consider the following: if the reason behind asking for Mr. Lakhani's resignation is based on the content of his beliefs, let every member be warned that a dangerous precedent would be set. And every member who openly states his beliefs, regardless of what they are, may then be subject to the same treatment Mr. Lakhani is now experiencing.

Furthermore, the proceedings to find a solution to the problem have gone on far too long. It is now CYSF that is contributing to the inter-racial tensions on campus (The last meeting had to be adjourned as a result of this.)

Lastly, I must categorically state that I do not agree with Mr. Lakhani's view, and I am sure many would agree with me, but how can anyone with a clear conscience ask that a person resign or be impeached on the basis of their beliefs, if they themselves wish to enjoy this freedom of beliefs themselves?

I may not agree with what Bipin Lakhani has said, but I, as we all must, defend his right to say it.
Sir Mark L. Alter

No defence please

On Tuesday November 9 a screening in the bearpit of the film, "To Live in Freedom", dealing with the problems of Palestinians in Israel, was interrupted by the "Jewish Defence" league. Now, they have every right to protest the screening of this film, even to picket it and to leaflet the people watching it, but what they did was to deliberately plant themselves in front of the screen, so that no one could watch it. What exactly did they hope to accomplish by preventing us from seeing the film? These tactics don't seem to be the best way to convince others of the rightness of your argument.

What bothers me the most is that the JDL, by their name, claims to be defending Jews. I'm a Jew and I don't need their "defence" - I need defence from people who want to keep me from making my own decisions.

Rhonda Sussman

Just a witchhunt

Aside from the fact that the issue concerning Mr. Lakhani's use of CYSF facilities has been blown completely out of proportion, as he is not the first nor will be the last to use the facilities in such a way, I feel that *Excalibur's* handling of it has been very sensationalist. The attempt to impeach Mr. Lakhani seems to be a witchhunt instigated by Pearlman and Cronies for reasons not being dealt with in Council meetings. Possibly Pearlman is still smarting from his showing at the polls last year, losing what he felt was a shoe-in for CYSF President to an ASUM supported candidate. *Excalibur's* editors are giving him ample coverage in their endorsement of his position. As well, the editors comments on Third World students unfamiliarity with parliamentary procedures comes dangerously close to sounding like patronising racism somewhat similar in vein to a recent IMAGES editorial characterizing ASUM members as left leaning students from developing countries. *Excalibur* is losing its credibility as a student newspaper and seems to be becoming a mouthpiece for certain students interests on campus.
Axelle Janczvr

Pumpkin club was a smash!!!

I wish to comment on the review written by entertainment correspondent, Paul O'Donnell. His impressions were so miscalculated, how can we rely on such a critic in guiding our entertainment value. I am a fourth year fine arts student and a group of us went to the party and found it to be the best dance party we'd ever been to on campus. I was so ticked off by the review that I decided to seek out the party organizers to verify a few facts. What I found was that our critic Mr. O'Donnell was really quite clued out. Firstly, Knobb Hill Farms was only a joke, not a sponsor. Secondly, there was only one mime performer, and the leather seen by leather X can not be seen in any department store. Trying to represent a tunnel? Apparently none of the organizers know what he was talking about. Dada tradition in Europe in the early thirties? I suggest our party critics attend some of the hot dance clubs in the city, if so you'll find that *Smashed Pumpkins* was an environment very conducive to dancing. That's why there was a full crowd still dancing until 3 a.m., just what York needs!

Yours truly,
Craig Johnson

P.S. I hope that you include this in your letter to the editor because events of this type are very important to people like myself who like to dance all night. Give a Voodoo Club, Twilight Zone dance party the coverage it deserves.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS should be sent to Room 111, Central Square, Ross Building. All letters MUST be typed, and should not exceed 300 words (we want to provide space for everyone).

Editor explains comment

As an editor, I have often warned reporters to avoid using generalities; yet, is last week's editorial I did just that, and in the process, unintentionally slurred a good portion of York's population.

Many, if not the majority of those *Excalibur* readers with whom I have spoken, interpreted the fifth paragraph (which I contributed to last week's editorial) to mean that Third World students as a group are ignorant of parliamentary procedure and democracy.

However, it was not my intention to say or imply that Third World students are less familiar with those concepts than the general York population.

The paragraph hastily written, late in the evening, is poorly structured. The first sentence, "No doubt, some of the problems spring from an unfamiliarity with parliamentary procedure", refers to some members of all political groups involved in the dispute; logically, the sentence should have been followed by the third sentence, "all parties in the dispute have demonstrated impatience with the procedures that are designed to permit democratic debate."

The sentence referring to Third World students was meant to apply to a minority of Third World students present at the meeting. In a misguided attempt to explain the action of this minority, I created the false impression that all Third World students at the meeting acted improperly, and that all students who acted improperly were from the Third World.

Because the Third World consists of diverse countries representing a gamut of social, economic and political situations, it was wrong of me to refer to the minority of Third World students in question as a uniform group, and it was equally wrong to attribute the actions of those students to any political conditions they may have experienced.

I apologize for any damage this unintentional misrepresentation may have caused.

Michael Monastyrskij

EXCALIBUR

Established 1966

Michael Monastyrskij Paula Todd
EDITORS

Production: Lerrick Starr, W. Hurst, Mark Zwolinski, Elissa Freeman, Alison Bailey, Elizabeth Santia, Nigel Turner, Mario Scattoloni, Himbara, David MacAdam & drop-ins.

Graphic Artist: John Notten

Thanks to Iris Duncan Design

Yorkman cartoonist: John Ens

General Manager: Merle Menzies

Chairperson of the Board of Publications: Paula Beard

Well kids...the ads blew us away again; we hope for pennies from heaven. Thanks to everyone who helped with this issue--doesn't anyone want to stay up all night with us? See you all Monday morning with triple-spaced, typed-on-one-side-only copy. Until then, stay cool and hang loose...sleep tight.

Excalibur is published every Thursday by *Excalibur Publications, Inc.* with the help of volunteers from the York community. Our offices are located in Room 111m Central Square in the Ross Building, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario M3J 1P3.

Editorial Office: 667-3201 Advertising: 667-3800

LET US PREPARE YOU FOR THE DEC. 4 LSAT OR THE JAN. 29 GMAT

- Each course consists of 20 hours of instruction for only \$140.
- Courses are tax deductible
- Complete review of each section of each test
- Extensive home study materials
- Your course may be repeated at no additional charge

Classes for the Dec. 4 LSAT, Nov. 26-28, and for the Jan. 29 GMAT, Jan. 21-23

To register call or write: GMAT/LSAT Preparation Courses P.O. Box 597, Station A Toronto, Ont. M5W 1G7 (416) 665-3377

Course for the December 11 GRE in Toronto December 4, 5