

EXCALIBUR

Everything secret degenerates; nothing is safe that does not show it can bear discussion and publicity — Lord Acton

Excalibur, founded in 1966, is the York University weekly and is independent politically. Opinions expressed are the writer's and those unsigned are the responsibility of the editor. Excalibur is a member of Canadian University Press and attempts to be an agent of social change. Printed at Newsweb, Excalibur is published by Excalibur Publications under the auspices of the Council of the York Student Federation.

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Issues and policies must be election base

At its worst, a student government only supplies certain services; at its best, academic and political leadership that's a safeguard in the bureaucracies of the institution and the government.

Students at York pay \$27 in student fees each year — \$17 to their colleges and \$10 to the York student federation. Some wonder where the money's spent:

This year, the federation spent \$25,000 administering its \$74,484 budget. It allocated \$25,000 to campus media; \$4,620 to clubs; and so far, about \$2,500 publicising the fee strike. It's also paid off \$11,500 of an accumulated debt — with another \$27,000 left to pay.

With such financial potential, all that's needed to fire a good student government is a good program of policy. Such a program comes from an analysis of the issues facing students and some notion of what a student government should be doing.

There'll be more need than ever for a strong student government next year:

Government cutbacks and reorganization in the ministry of education mean \$100 more in fees; higher loan ceilings; cutbacks in courses and professors; and a change in education priorities. In the institution, profs and courses will go; a government imposed quota on Canadian professors may be in the offing. The search for a new president at York is underway; students are striking for increased representation on committees where policies running the university are

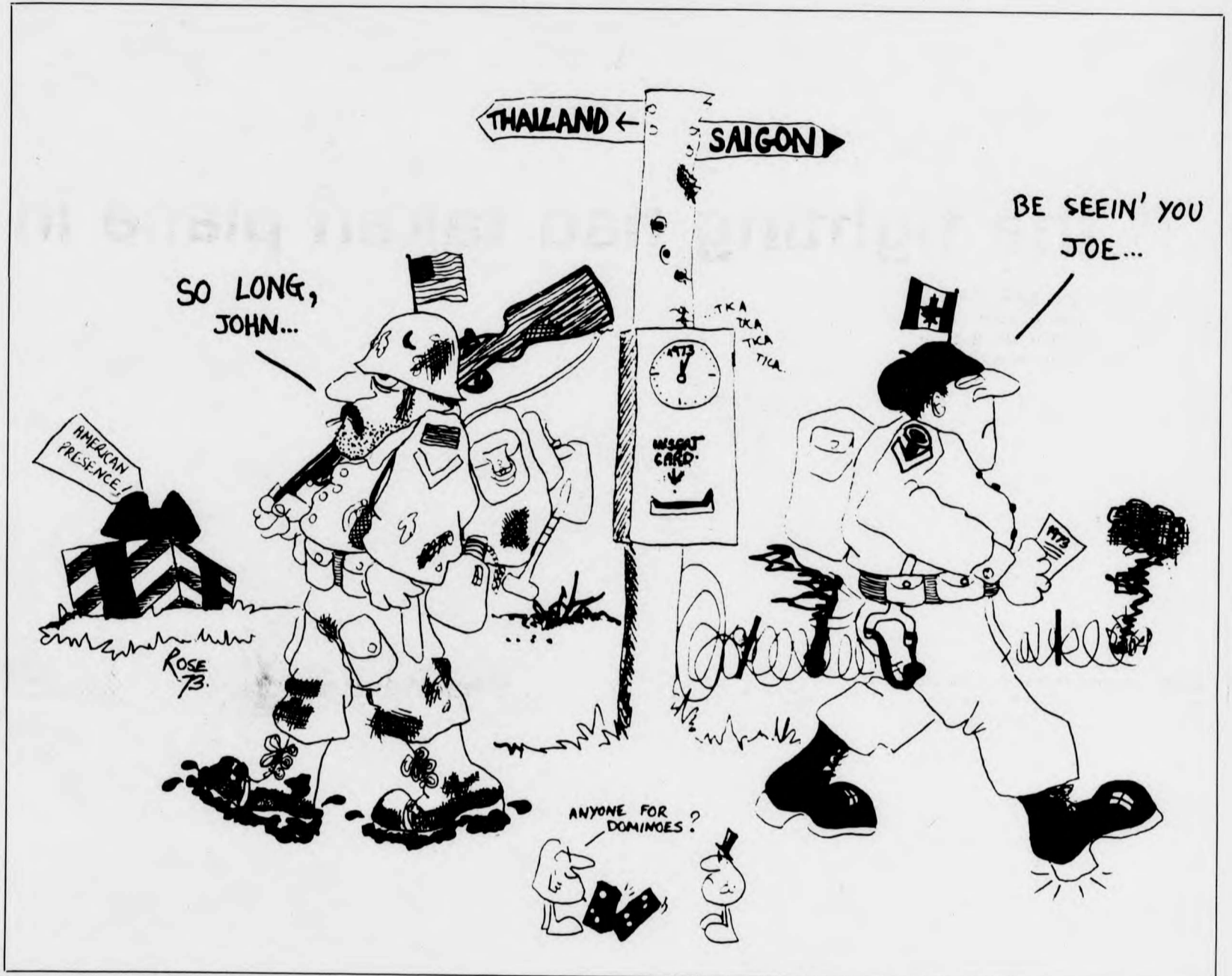
made; vigorous, informed student pressure is needed to democratize York.

In all cases, a student government elected on issues and programs, not personalities or vague ideas of "doing my part" are prerequisite for anyone

pondering student political life.

Nominations for the 28 positions on Council of the York Student Federation opened yesterday and close Tuesday. We urge students to run — but only after serious consideration of the issues.

From such consideration, programs should evolve and applicants with similar proposals must come together. Then voting students can assess the potential of the programs for a base of strong student government at York.



All students running for office in York's student federation are asked by Excalibur:

- + What should student government do?
- + What is your program to represent the interests of students at York?
- + What do you intend to do to democratize York?

The 500-word replies will be published in an Election Extra, Tuesday, Feb. 13.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor should be sent c/o Excalibur, Central Square, Ross Building. For reasons of space, letters should be no more than 250 words and Excalibur reserves the right to abridge letters for length. Any letter, which in the opinion of Excalibur's advisors, is libelous or slanderous, will not be printed. No unsigned letters will be printed, but the writer may ask to remain anonymous. All letters will be run — but due to limited space, they may not run the same week they are received.

Fetus is human from conception

The editor remarked that: "A fetus at conception is not a human". Interestingly, her opinion would be controverted by most of the world's life scientists. In 1967, the First International Conference on Abortion was held in Washington, D.C. Authorities in the field concluded (19 to 1) the following:

"The majority of our group could find no point in time between the union of sperm and egg, or at least the blastocyst stage, and the birth of the infant at which point we could say that this was not human life.

"The changes occurring between implantation, a six-weeks embryo, a six months fetus, a one-week old child, or a mature adult are merely stages of development and maturation."

One could still defend abortion if one does not mind erasing a human life now and then for social convenience. But this position sounds strange coming from a leftist or liberal because it is precisely the position used to justify the Vietnam War.

The editor referred to a study done in Denmark (actually Sweden). (K. Hook, "Refused Abortion", ACTA Scandinavia Psychiatrica, Vol. 39, Suppl. 168, 1963). It showed only a twenty per cent difference in incidents of social behavior in the "un-

wanted" study group versus the "wanted" control group. The misbehavior was mainly drunkenness, homosexuality and military unfitness. These qualities do not seem to be considered anti-social among some liberal-minded students. Pro abortionists never mention the facts of this study which actually supports them very poorly. Of course facts don't mean anything, do they?

G. MILLENBACK
Chairman, York Pro Life Group

'Friends of fetus' is derisive name

Your sneering reference to those who would protest the lives of unborn children as "friends of the fetus" reminds us of the label that used to be applied to those who worked with black people in their struggle for freedom — "nigger-lovers". In each case the effect of the derisive nickname is to dehumanize the people whose lives and freedom are being defended. Dehumanizing our opponent makes it much easier to mistreat or destroy him.

It is strange that you should fault Dr. Heather Morris, an eminent gynecologist, for not giving footnotes. I would not have thought it normal to expect footnotes in an oral presentation. And I notice that you did not give any footnotes in your written editorial.

As it is, you fluffed your reference to the study of children whose mothers were denied abortions. The study was done in Sweden, not Denmark. (Hans Forssman and Inga Thuwe, "One Hundred and Twenty Children Born After Application for Therapeutic Abortion Refused", Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica, vol. 42, 1966). One of the key findings of the study was that while 68 per cent of the "unwanted" children showed some sign of instability, 48 per cent, of the control group of "normal" children showed the same symptoms. Does this 20 per cent difference justify the conclusion that the "unwanted" children should have been aborted? Moreover, the children studied were born in 1939 and many of them ended up in orphanages. Today there are long waiting lists of adoptive parents.

Your ideas about the beginnings of human life are peculiar. It is commonly agreed among geneticists and embryologists that human life begins at conception. The egg and the sperm are quite different from the fertilized egg, because if left alone they will inevitably die. The fertilized egg is an autonomous, organism, quite separate from its mother. It has the genetic information of a human being and if left alone will grow into a fully developed person.

Unwanted pregnancy is a very real problem, but it shows a sad failure of imagination to suggest that the best solution is to kill the unborn baby

IAN GENTLES
Glendon College

SCM made no chapel decision

The item in the York Briefs column of 18 January about the SCM discussion of the chapel question is incorrect. There were no decisions, either by vote or consensus, taken during the discussion. As you start out the brief saying, "The York SCM voted . . . to oppose the building of a campus chapel . . ." We ask that the impression given the York Community on this matter be corrected.

To further clarify our involvement in this issue, we of the SCM indicate our willingness to discuss this issue further with individuals and groups, as we have taken no decisions on the re-opened chapel question. In 1968-69 the SCM did take a position against the construction of a campus chapel; we are now in the process of re-evaluating that decision.

An extensive file on the issue, including theological reasons for the 1968-69 decision, is available to anyone who asks. Call me at 667-3545, drop by Ross N105, or call me at home at 536-8131.

JUDY SKINNER
General Secretary
York SCM