

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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Who decides when the fee strike will end?

The fee strike is over, according to student representatives who got together at the University of Guelph over the weekend.

The failure of the tactic was predictable. OFS went into it with no planning or real grasp of where it was heading; "withhold your fees" and "universal accessibility" were slogans tossed about but never made meaningful.

At the majority of universities, referendums of support for the fee strike were never held, some universities received no support, and others got mixed support.

At York, that was not the case. Students voting in an October referendum endorsed the call for a fee

strike with 2,205 out of 2,475 votes, 25 per cent of the York student population. Recent figures indicated that York led the fee strike in strength with 66 per cent of the students withholding their second term fees.

Small wonder. For at York a student occupation won the release of loan-grant cheques and an old senate ruling forbade academic penalties for non-payment of fees. So what did York students have to lose in withholding their fees. It was passive resistance costing nothing and giving some a windfall in a released loan without tuition deductions.

Middle-class self-interest at York had students crying foul play over the \$100

fee hike. But rarely did the real issue of accessibility and its link to the provincial loan scheme or the class cross-section of students at York come under scrutiny.

But the issues behind current government trends in raising loan ceilings and fees to redefine the parameters of post-secondary education should indeed be investigated and protested.

That isn't a process left to a student elite, however.

It took a mass referendum to start the fee strike at York: It takes a mass referendum to end it. The election is on this week; one more referendum

question could have been easily added to the ballot.

Because York's student politicians were too shortsighted to do so, they must not be excused. The fee strike must continue until York students decide otherwise. Mass meetings to make the decision is a second choice since another referendum would cost \$500. (The York federation has already spent more than \$2,500 on the fee strike.) Whatever the students now decide, they must extend their base of action to encompass study and an understanding of the issues that can create a successful lobby against the inequity of the present government course.

Cutbacks are applied fairly to all?

President John Yolton said Tuesday he does not think the university can afford to make budget decisions "on the basis of principle" considering our financial situation.

Well we think that's crap.

He said he does not think of the cleaners, yardsmen and tradespeople as members of the community as he does the faculty.

Again crap. Let's see what happens here if CUPE goes out on strike after Feb. 26. When the tons of garbage start to pile up we'll see how important the workers are to the smooth functioning of the university.

Yolton can agree "in the abstract that wages are low" but he argues the university wage offer must be seen in the context of our supposed budget crisis. The mentality of our philosopher king does not belong in the twentieth century. How could a public institution — we hope committed to fostering the highest social values — condone such an insensitive stance.

Yolton claims the budget planners are trying to apply cutbacks fairly and evenly across the university. But that simply does not apply to the CUPE workers, who are on the bottom of York's income ladder. No pay increase for a president with a chauffeur driven limousine may mean a few less luxuries; but to a cleaner making \$3.50 an hour, it's a devastating blow to his standard of living. And with today's rising prices, the six per cent increase offered by the university is a cut in real income.

Must the workers suffer for mistakes made in the past by the university and a government over which they have no control?

The union wage demands are fair — parity with similar workers in the North York board of education. Toronto is an expensive place to live, especially if you have to commute to York.

The demands for benefits are fair. Will they be denied free tuition when the staff and faculty already have that concession? Surely this is a clear case of our society's class bias: better if the \$60,000 spent on the faculty tuition last year went to the workers.

As fellow members of the York community, faculty and students should support the fair demands of the workers. In the event of a strike, we call for the university to be shut down in support of a just settlement. We can continue the learning function by holding classes in our homes.



Letters continued

Sports aren't well balanced

In objection to "Men's and Women's Sports are well balanced"; dealing explicitly with ice-hockey it is obvious that the write up in February 8th's edition on the equality of Men's and Women's Sports is grossly simplified. Such superficial jottings may seem realistic to some, but absurd to those who are aware of the unadorned situation. In order for both Nobby Wirkowski co-ordinator of athletics at York and Bryce Taylor, director of physical education to deny that there is a discrepancy between men's and women's sports indicates a complete oblivion to the situation at the ice arena.

1) There is no equality when the Yeowomen's equipment is stored in freezing, moist lockers and the men's is aired in a warm dry dressing room. However, since male and female teams are now balanced, the dressing room will have to be allotted; next year Yeomen will use lockers!

2) There is no equality in university paid trips to Queens and Cornell for the Yeomen,

and self paid trips to Loyola for the Yeowomen.

3) There is no equality between the teams when the Yeomen have five practices a week at prime ice time and the Yeowomen have two.

Priority is given to the Yeomen; the teams are definitely not well balanced. Bestowed one-half of the publicity given to the men's team, the Yeowomen could also become an integral part of our university.

MARYLYNN MENTIS

Alumni objects to media

At the January 29 meeting of the governing council of the York university alumni association the following statement to the senate and the community of York university was unanimously endorsed:

The council of the alumni association urges all members of York university — students, faculty and staff — to cooperate and work

together for the future well-being and excellence of the university. York is facing a changed social setting and new public attitudes towards higher education, and each member of the York community must respond positively to this new challenge.

Recent disruptions of the administration of this University and media reports of internal dissension within the university, overshadow the continuing endeavor of the university to pursue academic excellence, and do little to attract competent faculty and well-qualified students to York.

It is imperative that York continue to concentrate on its primary task and that agreement be reached on the essential priorities to accomplish this. No individual or group should be able to deflect York from its over-all goals in pursuit of their own interests.

The members of the alumni council, and, we hope, the 10,000 alumni we represent, feel we have a life-long interest in the past, present and future of York university, which we intend to vigorously pursue.

PAUL HOLLANDER
Vice-President, The York University
Alumni Association