

letters & comment

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, *Excalibur*, room III, Central Square. Please type letters, triple or double spaced, and keep them to around 250 words. Name, address and phone number must be included, but name will be withheld on request. *Excalibur* reserves the right to edit for grammar and length. Deadline Monday 4pm.

Criticizes Hayden's "back-room wheeling and dealing"

Board rep challenges Hayden's accusations

I have drawn the ire of Paul Hayden upon myself.

He maintains in his letter last week I am "consistently confused on what is happening at this university", yet he himself states "the Senate... who have to ratify budget and academic policy" which is a factually incorrect statement.

In the *York Act*, the division of responsibilities is explicit, the Senate deciding academic policy and the Board of Governors (BOG) determining the budget.

While the Senate may participate in budget talks, it does not ratify the budget, let alone amend or reject it.

If Hayden does not understand how York's financial decisions are made, it throws into doubt his ability to deal with the fiscal crisis York is experiencing.

Hayden maintains that he did

something about the library cut-backs in a Senate student caucus meeting. He did not, however, deign to inform the students about what he was doing. His actions remain unknown, and it is that which I criticised in my letter.

I said student action - the Osgoode Legal and Literary Society's mass meeting and threatened study-in - had helped reverse the cutbacks. In that context CYSF and Hayden did nothing. I stand by that statement but will add: "publicly did nothing".

Hopefully this will resolve Hayden's confusion.

The letter continues with the charge that "I have yet to recognize the Senate." Since the Senate continues without my recognition, he probably means I have "ignored the Senate." He

Perhaps he did not notice my attendance at the last three Senate meetings.

But I have noticed his absence at all public Board of Governors meetings. Furthermore when the Senate Committee on the Library reported on where they recommended the cuts be made, Hayden was silent. Not a whisper nor a hint of objection from his lips.

The next matter concerns Chancellors' Dinners. In my letters to *Excalibur* I exposed the spending of university money on free liquor and food for the elite of York. Hayden was prompted by this to refuse to attend the most recent dinner.

Again he did not bother to inform the student body, nor did he protest the spending of the money, nor did he ask anyone else not to attend. He

may have satisfied himself but he left the university to spend the money.

The letter then mentions a Third World Student Union meeting to which both of us had been invited to make presentations.

He again mentions my "ignoring the Senate."

Selective blindness prevented Hayden from seeing the diagram of the university structure which I drew and which including the Senate, President, and BOG.

He also failed to hear my explanation of the Senate, its responsibilities, the number of members, and their constituencies.

This selective deafness perhaps explains the extraordinary quote which I allegedly uttered, at this meeting, namely, "The more students that come out and disrupt Board of Governors meetings the better it will be for students at York".

At the very least this is a self-serving misrepresentation achieved by quoting out of context. I do not recall saying it, nor do several others at the meeting; but nevertheless it is possible that I did say it, when someone asked me what students could do to change the university.

I replied that the support of large numbers of students was necessary.

The example of the Legal and Literary Society is instructive. Before their governing body held a mass meeting of law students, proposed a study-in, and received their overwhelming support. With this mandate they organized for the study-ins.

The study-in is a kind of civil disobedience and technically they would have been breaking the law, but who would condemn them? Perhaps Hayden in his legalistic purity, but I daresay that the overwhelming majority of students would have supported them.

By taking the quote out of context Hayden has attempted to convey the impression of myself as advocating wanton, unprovoked disruption of the BOG (and probably of the university as a whole). During the election of last spring we heard each other speak over half a dozen times.

I was, and still am, consistent and straightforward in advocating change by and through the involvement of large numbers of students. It is dishonorable of Hayden, and an insult to myself, to misrepresent what I stand for, since Hayden is fully aware of the facts.

And to top off the letter Hayden engages in a bit of inanity, to wit, "If Mr. Pinder would spend less time condemning the BOG... he could better serve the interests of the majority of York students". Since the only condemnation in the letter concerned the university providing free food and liquor to the elite with which he agrees with me) he unwittingly stabbed himself in the back.

The intent of the sentence, is to

propagate Hayden's view of political action, namely, back room wheeling and dealing, with no public criticism of the administration, and no action on the part of students.

Perhaps Hayden has forgotten that I ran on an explicit program which advocated fundamental change of the BOG and university, and was very critical of the BOG in my campaign speeches. Since the students chose me over the two alternatives I fail to see how Hayden can say I would represent students better by not criticizing the BOG.

Hayden should worry more about his own claims to represent students, seeing as two petitions, aimed against CYSF actions, one concerning Harbinger and political clubs, obtained over five hundred names each.

Harvey Pinder
Student Board of Governors Rep.

Clubs policy paralleled with Chile's

The Third World Student Union (TWSU) is disturbed about the CYSF's decision to eliminate its funding policy for all political clubs at York University. Based on the CYSF's definition of the concept of "political", we are not immediately affected by the new policy, for the TWSU is not conditioned by a single political ideology. Nonetheless, we view the new CYSF policy at two levels.

Above all, it is an attack on the basic democratic right of "freedom of speech" within the university. Furthermore, it is the non-establishment clubs which will suffer most from the new policy. While the TWSU might not necessarily agree or disagree with their world-view, it is the Trotskyist and NDP clubs which have most consistently defended the interests of all students at the university. These clubs will find it far more difficult than the Liberals and Conservatives, to organize their campus activities.

Secondly, the CYSF move could eventually affect our program because from time to time we give honorary donations to political speakers with specific ideological orientations. The CYSF could easily decide to cut off our funding activity for these speakers.

In light of the above reasons, therefore, we of the TWSU, call on the CYSF to immediately abandon this notorious policy.

A similar policy is a governing feature of all Chilean universities at the present time.

TWSU political committee



Political interference in media: a problem even here at York

Political control of the media in Canada has been a progression from strict government supervision to independence from editorial and financial restrictions.

Government financial support and patronage had been almost the sole income of the newspapers in Canada prior to the early 1800's, and this effectively stifled any anti-government content in the printed media. The innovation of advertising and subscription revenues enabled printers to be self-sufficient and safe from the threat of financial cutbacks, but legal restrictions still prevailed.

The jailing of journalists in the early 1800's for political criticism was a common practice in Canada. Here in Upper Canada, now Ontario, an editor, Francis Collins was fined 50 pounds and went to York jail for twelve months after he was convicted of libellous attacks on the attorney general. In Nova Scotia, William Wilkie, a pamphleteer, was sentenced to two years' hard labour for statements he made, and other examples of such repression occurred in all parts of British North America.

A precedent for freedom of the press was set in the infamous Joseph Howe libel trial of 1835. Howe, in an open letter in his *Novascotian*, had accused the magistrates and police of civic corruption, and had been subsequently brought to trial for libel and sedition. The precedent resulting from the hearings was that

if a journalist makes a statement that he can prove to be true, then legally there are no grounds for prosecution.

In the present day, the media has no financial or policy responsibility to the government, with the notable exception of the CBC.

Recently, the network came under attack from Solicitor-General Francis Fox, for statements on its television news concerning the illegal break-ins and mail openings of the RCMP. Fox suggested that perhaps the government funding of the CBC should be reduced so they couldn't afford to conduct investigations, and the funds could be given to the RCMP. Although he retracted his suggestion when Secretary of State John Roberts, the minister responsible for the CBC, stated it would not occur, the old issue of media independence was brought glaringly into the public light.

Zeroing in on a smaller sphere, the relationship between the political and media sectors of York University is potentially restrictive, specifically in a financial aspect.

Although at this time, Radio York has no political content in its broadcasting, the operation and policy of the station is controlled through guidelines and is closely observed by the student council. Radio York has gotten itself into this situation through past inefficiency, and it is their responsibility to regain their independence.

However, the tenuous nature of independence has recently been illustrated by the cutbacks in the *Excalibur* budget by the CYSF.

The newspaper depends on a student council grant for a large portion of its budget, and over the past two years this grant has been reduced by half from \$28-14,000. The immediate effect of this cutback is a reduction in the number of articles and editorial pieces by students, and relative increase in the percentage of advertisements. But the economic recession of the 70's is forcing advertisers to reduce the size of their ads, and this reduces the solvency of *Excalibur* and increases its dependence on the student council grant.

An illustration of the potentially restrictive nature of the present financial dependency occurred on July 12, 1973 when then CYSF president Michael Mouritsen and members of his council voted unanimously to suspend *Excalibur*, fire the staff, and seize its property. The reasons for this were plainly and simply, the dissatisfaction of council with the political and editorial content of the paper. The operations of *Excalibur* were later restored, but a precedent of a total grant cut has been set.

There has been no suggestion that the present student council is planning to act against either Radio York or *Excalibur*, but the point has been made that the apparatus and the precedent does exist for political control of York media.

Scott Clayton

There will be an organizational meeting of the CYSF Student Aid (OSAP) Committee to discuss action and methods to be taken in response to Dr. Harry Parrot's new OSGP (Ontario Student Grant Program).

Date: Tuesday November 29, 1977

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Place: Room 105 central square

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