

York Unions

CUEW: Excal's logic murky

This weekly column is allotted to each of York's unions in succession. This week - the Canadian Union of Educational Workers.

"...let them eat theses!"

So *Excalibur* has taken a position on our negotiations. Good for them. We should be less than human if we failed to be annoyed when their verdict goes against us. However, when the arguments supporting their position are so incoherent and misinformed we feel that the record needs to be set straight.

Two-thirds of the way through last week's tortuous editorial is the comment "If you've followed the logic this far, you'll probably lose it soon." They are referring (we think) to our contract proposals. However, it is a far

more apposite comment on the editorial as a whole, because *Excalibur's* logic starts to get murky way before this point.

Having completely misunderstood how TA's are paid and the present discrepancy between the TA salary plus grant-in-aid and part-time salaries, *Excalibur* assumes that we are expecting the gap to close *this year*. Not true. We wish to *begin* to reduce the discrepancy over a five-year period, during which time the grant-in-aid would disappear because both groups would receive the same salary as the TA rate. So *Excalibur* is similarly wrong when they claim that we refuse to give up the grant-in-aid ('the fruits of...patronage'.) Our long-term aim is equal pay for equal work, as well as the elimination of the patronage relationship.

Not to the question of these

additional 'privileges' (sic). Just what *Excalibur's* objection is to what after all are minor benefits in contracts which contain virtually *none*, is very hard to discern. *Excalibur* seems, in lamentable ignorance of union contracts, to feel that benefits have no place in a wage relationship, that working conditions cannot be addressed by a contract. Would *Excalibur* regard YUFA's or YUSA's or CUPE's dental plan for instance, as a frivolous luxury? Why should a proposal concerning thesis typing which aims to alleviate some of the burden upon a grad student to produce work required by the University, be regarded as a privilege? A tuition waiver for TA's is a similarly unremarkable salary-benefit (one which incidentally, is in place at the U. of Calgary).

Finally, *Excalibur* tries to demolish our position by trotting

out the old financially-strapped-University argument. The York Administration has made a series of political choice regarding its budget, from the decision to reduce its deficit over the last few years from about \$6 million to the latest decision to make a \$1 million cut in the part-time budget (a sector already slashed to ribbons). We say these are political choices because they occur in a context of rising enrollments—the latest figure is a 2.7% increase. As well, the Administration's budget is based on at least a 2% increase in enrollment over each of the next few years.

Our argument and the rationale behind many if not most of our proposals, is that by inflicting cutbacks upon the most vulnerable section of the community, constricting the ability of departments to mount adequate course offerings at the

cost of undergraduate class size, the Administration in the interest of short-term gain, is making choice which will have serious long-term academic effects.

By eliminating part-time faculty (gutting Atkinson College, the Writing Workshop and ESI in the process), overworking grad students, continuing to increase class size (one of our proposals calls for a limit on class size) and eliminating many services which a normally functioning University needs, Macdonald, Bell, Farr, Found et. al. will end up with a pathetic excuse for a university, one which potential undergrads and grads alike will avoid like the plague. They have set in motion a destructive spiral which can mean only doom for York University. CUEW, along with YUFA and YUSA, are trying to halt that spiral. We are sorry that *Excalibur* fails to grasp these realities.

Student Special PHOTOCOPYING

Now you can get your copies when you need them and at a price you can afford.

1-10 copies	.08 each
11-99 copies	.07 each
100+ copies	.06 each

plus FREE Pick-up and Delivery on Printing



7777 KEELE ST. 669-5612

CAN YOU AFFORD TO EAT WELL?

GOOD FOOD FOR LOW PRICES AT THE ONLY REAL ALTERNATIVE ON CAMPUS

- Trail Mix 2.02/lb.
- Whole Wheat Flour .26/lb.
- Sultana Raisins 1.32/lb
- Mushrooms 1.60/lb.
- Carob Chips .91/lb.
- Wildflower Honey 1.10/lb.

Plus Fresh Dairy, Produce, & Much More

BLACK CREEK FOOD CO—OP

124 Bethune College. Open Thurs & Fri., 3-7 p.m.

Just say OV.

