

# Excalibur

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

Excalibur 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 attempts to be an agent of social change. Typography by Foto Set, printed at Delta Web. Excalibur is published by Excalibur Publications, a body incorporated under the laws of Ontario.

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## In the midst of celebrations, Breakthrough's battle lost

So, *Breakthrough* has finally folded.

York's only feminist magazine (not to speak of Toronto's!) finally succumbed to an almost permanent crisis of funds, and the

*Breakthrough* Collective announced last week that it had published its last issue.

Its passing is truly sad, and the magazine will be missed, by us at *Excalibur*, and by many other women and men on this campus.

It was the only forum for a feminist viewpoint at York. And it consistently, issue after issue, provided professional, thought-provoking articles that challenged the stereotypes of male and female sex-roles that plague our society.

It is criminal that though there's money to burn on this campus for scads of self-indulgent little college rags (some of which, like the *Mac Truck*, make the *Toronto Sun* look liberated) a magazine of the quality and importance of *Breakthrough* has to go under for lack of money.

It is ironic that the announcement of the magazine's demise occurred during the same week as the biggest ever celebration of International Women's Day. But it also was a striking example of the need for a women's liberation movement, events such as International Women's Day, and magazines such as *Breakthrough*.

Our world is male-dominated and part of that world is our male-

dominated administration, and our male-dominated student councils. This year's CYSF has only one woman member, and being a member of the opposition, she has no voice in the council's policymaking. The men-only club that is the CYSF executive, has shown that it has little understanding or interest in services oriented towards women, and has consistently put them, including *Breakthrough* at the bottom of its list of priorities.

The *Breakthrough* Collective, though, makes it clear that although *Breakthrough* is finished, their commitment to the feminist media is not. The implication is that sometime in the future, we will see in Toronto the re-emergence of a feminist publication.

We look forward to that day. In the meantime, we extend an invitation to the members of the *Breakthrough* Collective to write for *Excalibur*. Although that can be no substitute for writing for an independent feminist publication, it is better than no publication at all.

And we at *Excalibur* can always use writing of the calibre of *Breakthrough's*.

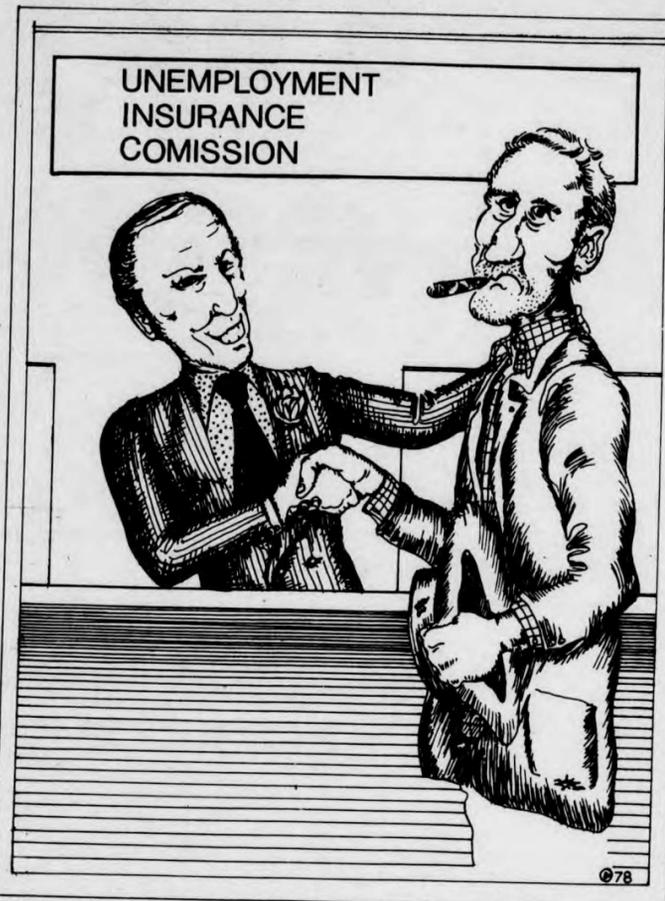
### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF REQUIRED Excalibur 1978 / 79

Submit written application  
with resumé and clippings to:

The Business Manager  
Excalibur Publications  
Room 111A Central Square  
York University

Deadline: Tuesday, March 21,  
4 p.m. Editorial candidates are  
screened and elected by  
*Excalibur's* volunteer staff  
members.

This is a paying position!



Congratulations! You're the one millionth person to be out of work in Canada.

## Chodikoff proposal for Excalibur election senseless

During the CYSF presidential campaign, candidate David Chodikoff created an election issue: the election of the editor-in-chief of *Excalibur*.

In *Excalibur's* 12 years, the editor in chief (hereafter editor) has always been elected by the staff. To our knowledge, this is the case with every student newspaper in Canada.

Chodikoff, in his campaign, advocated a referendum asking all the students if they wanted the vote in the election of the editor regardless of involvement in the paper.

Presumably Chodikoff wants to make *Excalibur* more democratic and or to let the students have more input into the paper.

Laudable ideals, both of them, but if Chodikoff was familiar with *Excalibur's* operations, he would realize that throwing the editorial election open to all students would serve no constructive purpose and possibly do grave damage to the newspaper.

(Although, as Chodikoff is eager to point out, he was a member of the *Excalibur* staff last year, his participation was virtually negligible, and as he told *Excalibur* in an interview, he is not familiar with what goes on in our offices this year.)

The arguments against his proposals for editorial elections are

many.

Firstly, any member of the York community can contribute to *Excalibur*, (and we provide instruction in a number of areas) and have a say in the way the paper is run, the stands it takes, and who is to be elected as editor. Once two contributions have been published, one has a vote at our staff meetings (twice weekly). Among the things decided at these meetings are extent and style of coverage, which stories are to be on the front page, what we will editorialise on, and what stand our editorials will take.

As well, any Yorkite can make their views about *Excalibur* or any other topic known through the letters page - we print all letters received.

Another form of community input is the *Excalibur* Board of Publications, made up of representatives from the colleges and elsewhere, which oversees the paper's operation.

Secondly, as it now stands, the elections for editor are already democratic — being an extremely open form of participatory democracy.

In order to vote for editor, a staff member must have made at least six contributions to the paper during the year. In this way a basic

familiarity with the paper on the part of all voters is guaranteed. As well, the staff members must attend the screenings of applicants for editor, or listen to the tapes thereof. This insures that all voters are familiar with the candidates, their credentials and plans for the paper. An average of 30 staff members fill these requirements and vote each year. This year, already, 36 staff members qualify.

These guarantees would be lost were all students to vote.

Thirdly, the current contest for editor takes place within the confines of the *Excalibur* offices, and on the journalistic merits of the candidates.

The style of election advocated by Chodikoff would make the campaign campus-wide. The best politician would win, not the best journalist (not surprisingly, the proposal is coming from a politician). Students who are well-connected politically would have a tremendous advantage over other candidates who have nothing to stand on but their record. Candidates might compromise their integrity by forwarding a platform they thought would be the most popular, not the one which would be best for the paper.

As campaigns are notorious for gobbling up time, the quality of the paper would decline during the campaign, as there are invariably assistant editors running for the position.

Most importantly, who is better qualified to vote for editor than the staffers, who have worked alongside them all year and know their capabilities and shortcomings?

Fourthly, if the editor was elected by any group other than the staff, our membership in Canadian University Press, a co-operative of 60 newspapers across the country, would be jeopardized. CUP's cornerstone principle is that the member papers' affairs are decided by a staff democracy.

Were *Excalibur* no longer to qualify as a CUP member, we would be cut off from its many services (mailings of every other CUP paper,

a twice-weekly package of stories and graphics, fieldworker services, and more) and cut off from other Canadian campuses.

(We have been unable to print much CUP material this year because of annually declining grants from CYSF, reducing our number of pages.)

This would be an isolationistic move comparable to dropping out of the Ontario Federation of Students or the National Union of Students - which York voted to retain membership in last year.

Fifthly, in a piece of campaign literature, Chodikoff signed his name to the following: "*Excalibur* in past years has been known throughout Canada as one of the best weekly student newspapers. David (Chodikoff) feels that this reputation has suffered in the past year because of irresponsible editorial content, political clique control and unwarranted tampering of reporter's submissions.

"David supports the Editor in Chief be elected by all the CYSF and Bethune College members who financially contribute to the paper".

Chodikoff's argument appears to be that his style of election would alleviate the alleged poor conduct of the paper. Yet in the "past years" he refers to, the editor was always elected by the staff. Why, therefore, do the paper's alleged problems this year stem from the editor being elected by the staff? The argument doesn't hold together.

What exactly would having the editor elected by all students do to correct problems in the paper? The editor has only one vote on editorial decisions on a sizable staff.

The election proposed by Chodikoff would not even amount to giving the electorate a vote on the paper. A candidate could not be mandated by the students to vote a certain way in certain issues, because the news has a funny way of happening, without giving prior notice.

Lastly, we believe Chodikoff's real motive in supporting editorial elections by all students is not the furthering of democracy and

student input within the paper. His recent record on democratic rights is less than stunning. Two weeks ago he did not support the policy of having student representatives on the Board of Governors elected, rather than appointed by the Senate student caucus.

In January, he supported CYSF's move to have vacancies on council filled by appointment from college councils rather than by holding by-elections. He has also agreed with the decision to leave Harvey Pinder off the CYSF presidential ballot on a technicality.

It's also contradictory that Chodikoff wants all students to be able to vote for editor-in-chief without working on the paper, while he spoke vehemently against a proposal before CYSF to hold a referendum asking students whether they wanted *Excalibur* funded by a direct levy. The success of such a referendum would end CYSF's control of *Excalibur's* funding.

On the third day of CYSF presidential campaign, Chodikoff told *Excalibur* of a two-pronged plan concerning the election of editor. He said he would propose to *Excalibur's* Board of publications that the editor be elected either by the students at large, or by the board itself.

Chodikoff clearly thought better of this, for the following day he said he would move only that the election be up to the students. As his professed concern is the students' interests, the original two-pronged plan would have been contradictory. One would put the election in the hands of over 10,000 students, the other in those of 11 board members, three of whom are not students. It would have appeared that he didn't care who elected the editor, as long as it wasn't the staff.

The election of the editor is already in the hands of the students. Working within the paper, both by contributing and participating in decision making is a pastime open to all York students - a more active involvement than putting an "X" next to someone's name.

## Staff meets Friday at 1

Editor in chief  
Managing editor  
News editor  
Photo editor  
Sports editor  
Entertainment editor  
CUP editor  
Contributing editors

Paul Kellogg  
Ted Mumford  
Paul Stuart  
Bryon Johnson  
Kim Llewellyn  
Cynthia Wright  
Denise Beattie  
Agnes Kruchio  
Laura Brown

Staff at large, currently eligible to vote for editor in chief:

all of the above, John Brunning, Tony Cheung, Michael Christ, Scott Clayton, Mary Desrochers, Alan Fox, Bruce Gates, Annette Goldsmith, Gary Hershorn, Sue Kaiser, Ian Kellogg, Maxine Kopel, Pam Mingo, Andrew Nikiforuk, Harvey Pinder, Cynthia Rantoul, Jeff Rayman, David Saltmarsh, B.J.R. Silberman, Colin Smith, George Trenton, Michelina Trigiani, Eric Walberg, Ian Wasserman, Hugh Westrup, Sandy Zeldin, Norm Faria.