

BY ROBERT CASTLE

## Catering to club needs

For many years now there has been an on-going battle between cultural clubs and the office of Housing and Food Services.

The issue is simple enough: should cultural clubs be allowed to bring ethnic food onto campus for their special events. The answer has

always been equally simple: no. Now, as York's cultural clubs are gaining a higher profile on campus, it is time for the Administration to give serious consideration to a change of policy.

For many of you who are not involved in these groups the question is 'why should a few clubs get a break from the "food monopoly" of the caterers?' I shall do my best to point out that ethnic groups have special needs and interests which I believe the Director of Food Services, Norm Crandles, should recognize.

The issue seems to go beyond food to the actual role played by groups such as the Iranian, Ukrainian, Malaysian-Singaporean student associations and the 23 other cultural clubs. They provide York with a cosmopolitan community unequalled in most universities in Canada. It is possible to interact with cultures from around the world in both a social and an academic setting right here at Steeles and Keele.

I have heard some complain that these clubs serve more to segregate York students than to unify them. Such comments are from those ill-informed who have never attempted to participate in the various activities, such as the highly successful Multi-Cultural Festival, that are put on by the clubs. Through my involvement with the Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF) over the years I have come in contact with many cultures and have been deeply enriched for the experience.

But what of food? We all have grudgingly accepted the quality and variety afforded by our caterers in the cafs so why shouldn't the clubs? To adequately answer this question one must understand exactly what the clubs are requesting. They are not requesting a special dispensation from Food Services that would allow them to have ethnic food served on a regular basis at York (though the idea somehow seems wonderfully appealing).

Rather, they are seeking the opportunity to provide their mem-

bers with ethnic food on the odd special occasion. Presently, requests to bring food on campus are considered by Crandles and decided on an ad hoc basis without, to my knowledge, a written policy or guidelines. Crandles points to only two occasions during the school year when such allowances are granted: orientation and the Multi-Cultural Festival. He considers that his rulings allow "sufficient flexibility." They do not.

Clubs bringing food on campus for cultural events, which I might add happens throughout the school year and not just during the festival, in no way threatens the caterers' monopoly. Since the caterers cannot meet the needs of the groups, the groups know better than to request the caterers to supply ethnic dishes. Refusing clubs permission to supply their food does, however, threaten cultural activities on campus and, thereby, the role these groups play.

So why all this fuss with stories and columns in *Exca*? Because the role food plays for ethnic groups is central to their culture, their way of life. To deny them the right to cater their own functions with their own food is to deny them the right to fully participate in their heritage. There are few people who have travelled anywhere outside North America who do not remember a country or a region because of the people and their food.

Ours is a country of immigrants and York's population thankfully reflects that reality. We encourage people in Canada to maintain their heritage. We hear our leaders extol the virtues of the Canadian mosaic for it makes us a more tolerant and understanding nation. Let us call on the Administration at York to allow our ethnic richness to flourish. It is such a small request, but represents so much.

□ Rob Castle, a first year Ogoode student and executive assistant of the Student Centre initiative, was last year's *CYSF Academic Affairs Director*.

## FREE CLASSIFIEDS/COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Excalibur* now offers free space for community announcements (qualifying York events, lectures, meetings, debates, etc.) and classifieds fulfilling these requirements: they must be of a personal nature, no more than 25 words, and must be accompanied with the submitter's name and number AND MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE THURSDAY AT NOON. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS FOR LATE SUBMISSIONS!! We reserve the right to edit free ads. Ads other than personals cost \$2 (up to 25 words) for York students, and \$5 (up to 25 words) for non-students.

### REFUGEES in POLICY and PRACTICE

is the theme of a seminar series co-sponsored by the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Refugee Documentation Project.

The first in the series,

#### REFUGEES AND THE LAW,

will include presentations by

*Prof. J. Hathaway, Osgoode Law School*  
*Prof. H. Adelman and Prof. M. Lanphier,*  
*Refugee Documentation Project*

discussant will be

*Mr. R. Girard, Director,*  
*Refugee Policy Division, CEIC, Ottawa*

February 5, 2:30 p.m.

Room 035 Administrative Studies Building

Discussion follows presentations.

## Issues surrounding suspension of CSA funding in need of clarification

By TAK CHAN

*Mr. Chan is the secretary of the York Chinese Students' Association*

My opinion piece "Student Centre won't make up for weak club system" in the November 20th issue of *Excalibur* was responded to by Filipino Students' Association President Clarence Borja in "Chinese Students Association's grievances largely unjustified" (December 4th). My article questioned if Gerard Blink had displayed any merit other than arrogance and recklessness in his decision to suspend the York Chinese Student Association (YCSA) \$1,000 of its funding as a penalty for the club's protest against the CYSF for more funding.

Borja, despite his article's length, did not address my argument. Instead he attempted to demonstrate that the YCSA deserved a decrease of \$200 of its funding because its functions failed to include the entire York community.

In proving his point, Borja came up with a number of "facts": YCSA posters were all in Chinese, the club never sponsored any academic events, the YCSA emergency meeting was not conducted in English, and so on.

Yet in the November 11th CYSF general meeting, John Tse, the president of YCSA, displayed dozens of bilingual (English/Chinese) posters which gave information about parties, career talks, scholarships and many other functions immediately after he met similar accusations from Blink.

As to the charge that the YCSA emergency general meeting was conducted in Chinese, Borja got it right. But more facts need to be filled in before one could venture any judgment.

First of all, the audience present at

the meeting was almost all Chinese-speaking except three (including Michael Latchana, CYSF's Social and Cultural Affairs director). I acted as their interpreter.

Secondly, Tse (the speaker), as far as I can judge, speaks poor and broken English. Thirdly, there are things called priority, habits and cultural identity in all ethnic groups; I doubt if anyone would ask Queen Elizabeth why she never delivered her speech in Chinese when she visited Hong Kong and China.

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of the remarks sprinkled haphazardly throughout Borja's article. Let us take the quote, "To boycott the Multicultural exhibit and to threaten to pull out of CYSF sponsored events was a worthless threat that did not work. Had the YCSA executives used their 'political wisdom' in acting in a diplomatic manner, surely CYSF would have had a positive ear for their concerns."

What Borja implies is that the CYSF (or Blink?) was justified to retaliate because the YCSA used a boycott and protest instead of other "more diplomatic means" in expressing its grievances at the inequity of funding allocation.

Again, certain facts need to be

clarified: firstly, Blink promised the YCSA one week before the Multicultural exhibit that the CYSF cabinet would decide within three days if it should submit the request of the YCSA for an increase of \$200 of its funding to the November 11th Council Meeting. Three days later, Blink told Tse and me that he did not have time to discuss the matter with his committees.

Secondly, the above promise was made only after an hour argument in which Blink time and again said "there is nothing I can do," which was simply untrue.

Thirdly, there are things called propaganda and demonstration (not to mention boycott) which are legal ways to put pressure on the government. By saying this I do not intend to insult the reader's intelligence, least of all Borja's. What I would like to point out is Borja's faulty assumption that to deliver a speech in Chinese is "disrespectful" whereas suppression of freedom of speech is okay.

Here I would like to remind Borja on behalf of the YCSA that he still owes our members a verbal explanation as to why he misrepresented the club in his article. Borja promised to do so on December 4th when Tse pointed out his mistakes to him in Founders 201B. Apparently Borja never went to any of the meetings I have mentioned, but he chose a stance regardless of the insufficiency of his knowledge.

As for Blink, I would like to remind him of his explanation due us on why he did not release the cheque of our first term funding, dated October 24, until November 19 when the Masters of Founders College phoned him on YCSA's behalf. Our request was mailed on November 24th, but so far there has been no answer from Blink yet.

I never saw another butterfly

YORK UNIVERSITY  
Jewish Student Federation  
presents

## HOLOCAUST AWARENESS WEEK

FEBRUARY 9-12

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9TH

12 noon, East Bear Pit

#### Candle Lighting

Opening Ceremony with York Club Representatives. Dedication to the children of the Holocaust.

7:30 p.m. Curtis Lecture Hall 'A'

#### Jewish Resistance During the War

Panel featuring survivors: Mr. Isaac Gasco, Mrs. Faye Schulman, Mr. Peter Silverman, and Mr. Nathaniel Wurman. Presented in cooperation with Canadian Society for Yad Vashem.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

8:00 p.m. Samuel Beckett Theatre, Strong College

#### I Never Saw Another Butterfly

Play presented by Impact Theatre

Admission: \$4.00

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11

12 noon, Bookstore

#### Irving Abella

Book signing by author of 'None Is Too Many'.

1:00 p.m., Scott Religious Centre

#### Closed Doors: Canada & the Holocaust

Irving Abella, Professor of History, Glendon

5:00 p.m., 5157 Ross

#### Anti-Semitism: Are Our Lives in Danger

Speakers: Professor Stanley Barrett (University of Guelph); Mark Mendelsohn (Metro Toronto Police, Ethnic Squad); and Bernice Farber (Canadian Jewish Congress). Presented in cooperation with AEX.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12

7:30 p.m., Stebbins Lecture Hall 'A'

#### Acknowledging our Heroes: Honouring a Righteous Gentle

Speakers: Maria Jacobs, Rev. Roland de Cornelle and Mr. John Oostrom.

Displays everyday East Bear Pit

Continuous movies everyday

(including Shoah and Sophie's Choice)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 736-5178

