

# Editorial

## York's student centre: the benefits of past failure

Perhaps it's beneficial to fail once in a while. A case in point is this year's campaign to build a student centre at York. A year and a half ago, a referendum to construct such a building was greeted by the student population with a resounding no.

Sixty-two percent of the 2,158 students who cast ballots voted against the proposal of the Student Centre Steering Committee (SCSC), despite the fact that most students liked the idea in principle. And this failure was the best thing that could have happened to ensure the success of this year's initiative.

The last campaign was far too premature as it lacked the research and consultation phases such an undertaking requires. A well-organized 'No' side attacked the gaping holes in the SCSC's proposal: It dealt in generalities with regard to the size and cost of the centre; there were no guarantees regarding existing student space; no other sources of funding were pursued; and there was a minimal amount of consultation with the students.

The referendum loss forced this year's student centre initiators (CYSF President Gerard Blink and summer researcher Rob Castle) to analyze the defects of the last campaign in order to avoid these pitfalls again. As a result, this year's strategy is markedly different.

Student centres across Canada were examined to see how they were paid for, what they contained, and who owned and managed the facility. With this background information compiled, the groundwork was laid so the planning of York's student centre could begin. The student centre committee has made sure it has an "open door policy" to gain student input into the initiative, something the last campaign sorely lacked.

Last week a feasibility study, conducted by five MBA students concluded that the proposed centre could be financially self-sufficient. Questions of location, ownership, space and funding were tackled in the report. The study even included exact breakdowns of the available square footage as well as annual revenues the centre could generate. These are the specifics which students need in order to make an intelligent choice in the February referendum. Their absence in last year's campaign doomed the proposal.

Learning from the mistakes of the '85 referendum and of problems other student centres across Canada have faced can only help this initiative succeed. And York is in need of a student centre. Student space is extremely limited—space originally intended for one person is now shared by three. One only has to look at Central Square and the Scott library to see how cramped York is. More study space, club space and food services are desperately needed.

The research and organization exhibited so far by the student centre committee bodes well for a successful referendum. After the upcoming meeting with the Administration, the committee will hopefully have written agreements guaranteeing a student controlled management board, no loss in total student space, a commitment to co-sign a mortgage and a capital contribution.

In this campaign the research and organization is there. Now the final decision rests with the students who will have to determine whether a few dollars added on to registration fees is worth the immense advantages a student centre will bring.



OUR LEGAL FUTURE IS LOOKING GREAT IN THE NEW "MACOSGOODE" SWEATSHIRT!

## Letters

### Santarelli lacks racial understanding: Reader

Editor:

It is obvious from last week's "feature" (Santarelli Speaks on Security) that the recently released Report of the Committee on Race and Ethnic Relations has arrived just in time. The Director of Security and Safety Services has, by his remarks, made some of us quite concerned about our safety.

In particular, Mr. Santarelli has made distinctly racist remarks, in my opinion. He seems to feel that people "from different social cultures" are in some way less able to respect the law of the land, the regulations of the University and commonsense.

People who speak native languages other than English or who do not speak English as well (like Santarelli) think in different ways, according to Mr. Santarelli.

Mr. Santarelli would benefit from a better understanding of, and respect for, the many people who have made Canada their home. These people are just as capable of following the appropriate procedures as anyone else. Rather than add more officers, perhaps that department needs better, less bigoted leadership.

—Wayne Burnett

### Santarelli compromises Safety and Security

Editor:

I must confess to being a little dismayed after reading the interview conducted by Lorne Manly and Paulette Periol in the November 20 issue of *Excalibur* "Santarelli Speaks on Security." Santarelli's overt racial slurs are not only counterproductive in the creation of a harmonious environment on campus but they also show an incredible amount of stupidity on his behalf. His ability to perform in the capacity of Director of Safety and Services has been seriously compromised.

The answer to low staff morale is obviously attributable to Santarelli's opinion of his staff. "Now we have

officers here who come from different social cultures who don't think the way you or I do as North Americans." As a North American I cannot condone the sentiments expressed by Jack Santarelli nor do I believe can the members of the York community.

Mr. Santarelli you owe your staff and the York community an explanation and apology, let's have them both soon.

Matthew Rotenberg

PS No wonder Santarelli is opposed to the issuing of night sticks to the security officers, he may well find himself being a victim of their use.

### 'Santarelli unleashes verbal night-stick'

Editor:

Re: Santarelli Speaks on Security. I must express my shock and amazement at statements made by Mr. Jack Santarelli, Director of Safety and Security Services in last week's interview with *Excalibur*. I will concentrate specifically on answers to questions on special constable status and the use of weapons for protection.

Mr. Santarelli says, "Now we have officers here who come from different social cultures who don't think the way you and I might do as North Americans . . . etc."

While Mr. Santarelli mentions (twice) that his remarks are not meant to be disparaging, why make reference to his officers' cultural backgrounds? If the officers are not properly trained, then say so! Do not imply that "North Americans" (?) are superior in their thinking or interpretation of the law. The law's the law! If someone is going to be hired, then make sure she/he learns and knows the rules first. But, don't imply an inferiority on the part of some cultures.

And, finally, in York's multicultural context, which the university and so many of us are proud of, did North American Jack Santarelli think before unleashing his verbal nightstick?

—Michael Latchana  
Director of Social & Cultural Affairs  
York Student Federation

### York requires Western's luxurious atmosphere

Editor:

I am absolutely appalled at the treatment of students at the York University Coffee Shop!

This morning I entered this "establishment" and purchased my lunch. The cashier told me that I did not give her any money when I had just placed a two dollar bill in her hand. I argued with her and she rudely conceded her mistake.

I proceeded to sit down and eat the sordid fare they call food here, and opened a book to keep me company as I detest eating alone. The manager whisked by my table, telling me that there was "no studying in the cafeteria." I ignored her, thinking she was merely experiencing momentary madness. She returned 20 minutes later telling me to put my books away. I looked around me and saw many people with open books in front of them. Hence I disputed the point with her but when she threatened to take my student number I gave up. I cannot see having severe repercussions for reading a book.

I cannot understand how one may not read, study or otherwise while taking nourishment in a "university." I put no blame upon this woman as she has rules to follow from her employer. But really, is it necessary to make such a rule in a university?

From all I have seen at this university, I have observed that there is a severe travesty of justice and comfort. The profit made by this university each year is too much to excuse its scanty operation. The university should take some lessons from the University of Western Ontario, where the comfort of its students is foremost in its mind. The cafeteria, consisting of long tables upon which one can spread one's books, is surrounded by carpeting and comfortable chairs where the weary student may take a snooze or curl up with a required textbook; this is their Community Centre.

However, here at York we have cold, uncomfortable wooden

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