

Ritch slams Excalibur's "sensationalism"

By DALE RITCH

The analysis of the United Left Slate and CYSF which flowed from the pen of Excalibur editor Julian Beltrame last week offered a very one-sided and unbalanced picture of what really occurred in the student council offices this summer. The article was obviously intended to create as much sensation as possible while appearing to be within a framework of unbiased objectivity.

The sensationalist headline ("Confrontation politics still the heart of ULS strategy") can be tied to only one episode in the entire article, that is our decision to cash a \$10,000 term deposit rather than borrow this money from the administration. How can a desire to be financially independent from the administration possibly be construed as confrontation politics?

Does Beltrame know that the administration was prepared to lend us money interest-free when we had \$10,000 in the bank collecting interest? Does Beltrame know that the administration now has a policy of charging interest on back debts from student organizations on the campus?

Although Beltrame could find no other examples of this mania for confrontation, he does note that I am now busy at work preparing for "another confrontation," this time with my standby enemies, the administration and catering companies.

Does Beltrame not consider the abrupt firing of more than 50 employees who have given years of their lives to the community to be a confrontation? Is not the raising of food prices by 30 per cent while wages are being cut harshly an act of confrontation?

Does Beltrame know or care that CYSF was not alone in its revulsion from the firing of the food workers? Does he know or care that YUSA, YUFA, CUPE 1356, the GAA and York Governor David Archer, all signed a statement condemning the administration for its responsibility in this matter?

I will make one thing very clear right now, CYSF will take no action against the administration and the caterers unless there is very strong support for such action among the students at this university. That is why CYSF is holding a mass rally on October 2, to give the students an opportunity to decide strategy for themselves.

Beltrame emphasises the ULS's "distrust of non-leftists" claiming that "when unopposed they often relate only to the left". He offers a few totally false examples to prove his point. Beltrame was so eager to score debating points that he didn't bother to check his information. The book-keeper, C. Spanos, was not fired; his resignation was accepted by CYSF at its Sept. 16 meeting. Bill Bain wasn't accepted for speaker—not because of his controversial role as speaker last year, but because he never applied!

Beltrame distorted the nature of the \$1,000 loan to the National Union of Student which he described as "being of dubious merit." In fact, the money extended was not a loan; it was an outright grant which really only amounted to about \$100 because CYSF approximately owed \$900 to NUS in back debts.

Another distortion concerned the \$500 given to Horace Campbell for a pamphlet. Not pointed out was the information that the motion to give the money was made by none other than Vanier rep, Kevin Smith, a long-time foe of the ULS. Almost all of the non-ULS members at the meeting voted for the motion. I was the only person who abstained.

Also inexcusable is what Beltrame out of the article about CYSF's summer activities. Our summer work was not accomplished only in the interests of a radical fringe.

The main issues that we focused on are the real bread-and-butter issues for students: housing, unemployment, food, student aid and educational cutbacks. We have started a campaign to repeal the North York bylaw which prohibits more than a single family from living in a residence. CYSF now has an OSAP ombudsperson, Mike Kates, who will counsel students who feel they have been shortchanged on their student aid want to appeal.

CYSF sent telegrams to James Auld protesting the high student unemployment level and demanding that student aid be increased to make up for the buying power lost because students were out of work.

CYSF has perhaps put more time and effort into the food issue than any other, but what issue is more important? The new food prices and resultant high profits for both administration and catering companies are scandalaf-

fecting everyone who eats here.

CYSF also managed a strong campaign in the provincial elections, which Beltrame somehow places in the category of off-campus events.

CYSF, I might add, fulfilled its responsibility to the students of this university much more seriously than did Beltrame, who could not even produce an issue of Excalibur before the day of the election. CYSF not only endorsed the NDP; it conducted canvassing drive to enumerate students, thus ensuring that many more students were able to vote and it hosted an all-candidates' debate to allow students to weight the issues in the elections.

The ULS members of CYSF have not been afraid to work with 'non-leftists', as Mr. Beltrame suggests; actually we have done a good job of encompassing many of the non-ULS council members in the council activities. CYSF has established a number of committees—on housing, constitutional and electoral matters, finance, cutbacks, Board of Governors research and social affairs. These committees are open

to all students regardless of political beliefs and many non-ULS students sit on them.

One of the more exciting work areas has been the social and cultural realm. CYSF has been an initiator of the York U. Social Co-op, a new organization which combines the college councils and CYSF. This "social co-op" is planning several concerts in the Tait Mackenzie Gym and Burton Auditorium. Other aspects of our ambitious programme include a regular forum series and a movie series on Thursday nights.

In summation, I would like to direct a few questions to the originator of the attack on myself and the ULS.

What responsibility do you owe to the students at York U? How do you account for the fact that you were unable to publish an issue of Excalibur during orientation week, thus abstaining from the issues posed by the election, including the fact that many students were prevented from voting and finding out about the issues due to issues posed by the election? What is the purpose of a campus

newspaper? Is it to create sensation and scandal or is it to clarify the issues and to expose all the corruption and oppression found in this university and elsewhere? Is it to convey the sickening cynicism expressed by the heading "Who are they kidding", placed above the transcript of the telegram sent by CYSF to honor the Kent State martyrs, or is it to present students with an alternative view, the view perhaps of those courageous students of Kent State who were brutally massacred while struggling against a war which they considered to be an affront to human decency?

You are in a position of influence and authority. I challenge you to use that influence and authority not to sensationalize and scandalize but to tell the truth about the nature of this university, to expose the callous disregard of the administration and Board of Governors for students and food workers alike and, most importantly, to offer an alternative view, a view that students through their own organized actions can begin to change the unjust nature of this university.



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