

EDITORIAL

Olympics: commercial grabbing

In ancient Rome slaves were thrown to the lions; today, athletes are thrown to the media. The Roman tradition was marginally less civilized, but it was a damn sight more honest.

The modern Olympics have degenerated into an ugly spectacle of greed and hubris.

For the athletes, a fraction of a second can spell the difference between ignominy and millions of dollars in promotional fees. While athletes shouldn't have to live in penury, sports fans have a right to wonder if anybody cares about honest competition any more.

Furthermore, very sophisticated, and expensive, selection and training programmes are undertaken by the countries which are ideologically motivated, and wealthy enough, to do so. As well as being a disadvantage to smaller countries, the sort of hyper-nationalism that takes place at modern Olympics further erodes the amateur competitive ideal.

Because so much more than personal achievement is involved, it should not be surprising that drug abuse is becoming widespread; it would be surprising if it weren't.

Yet, Toronto is making a great effort to host the Olympics in 1996. Politicians at all levels, but particularly on City Council, are looking forward to the international stage it would give them. They must believe the Olympics will cement Toronto's reputation as a "world class" city.

Somebody has got to bring these people back to reality! What always made Toronto a great place to live was that it didn't pander after world class status; the streets were safe and clean, different ethnic groups used to live in harmony; most people were able to afford to live here. What made Toronto "the Good" for many people is fast becoming a thing of the past.

The worst part of the Olympics is that the public ends up paying for a lot of the sorry spectacle. The organizing committee claims the Games will actually make \$10 million; city figures suggest that there will be a \$90 million "excess of payments over receipts;" the Bread Not Circuses Coalition believes the Olympic deficit could be as high as \$940 million.

The decision on which city will host the Olympics will be made by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Tuesday, September 18. York University may benefit by having some of its sporting facilities upgraded.

Nonetheless, if one cent has to come from taxpayers in this city or province, the Olympics won't be worth it. The companies developing the grounds and facilities will profit. The television networks covering the Games will profit. The organizers and promoters (and politicians who backed them) will profit.

But the people of Toronto will lose. Big.

Ira Nayman

Excalibur is holding sub-editor elections this Wednesday at 4:00pm. Ho mates!



EXCALIBUR

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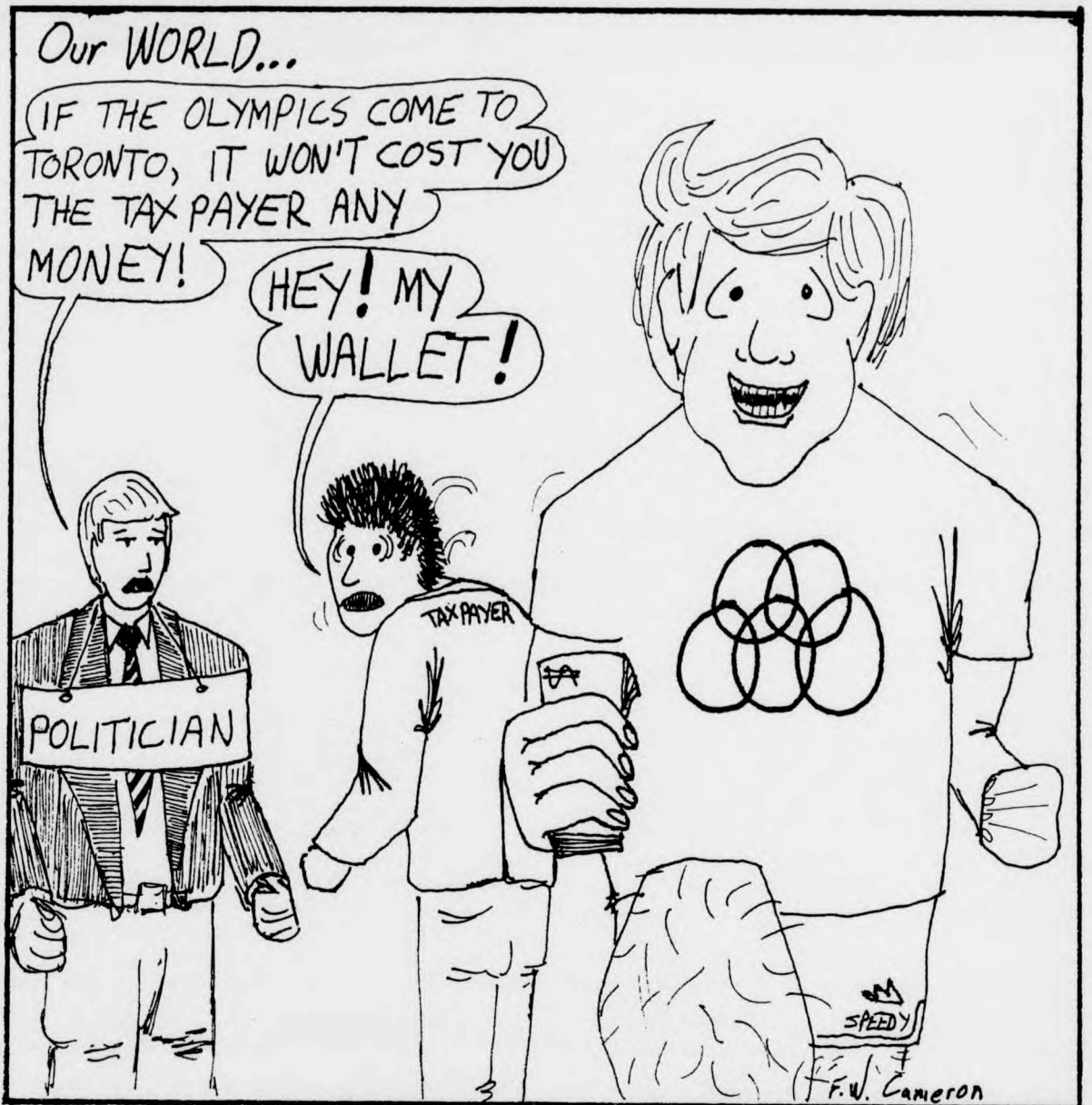
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Final editorial responsibility is retained by the Editor-in-Chief.

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LETTERS

Excalibur welcomes letters to the editor on all topics. We will publish, space permitting, letters up to 500 words in length. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name, signature and telephone number. The opinions expressed belong to the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of Excalibur staff or directors. However, letters judged to be racist, sexist or libellous by the editor will be refused. All material is subject to editing. All submissions must be addressed to the Editor-in-chief, Room 111, Central Square.

Excalibur stereotyped Natives

To the editor,

The front page story in the August 29 edition of Excalibur is all too representative of the well meaning, but simplistic and stereotypical approach taken toward Native people in Canada.

To say that "some people agree that aboriginal Canadians have been unfairly treated" easily qualifies as the understatement of the year. But to throw it into the same paragraph with hints that Mohawks at Kanasetake and Kanawake might be terrorists and statements about the violent reactions of non-Native Quebecois demonstrates an incredible naivete on the part of the writer about an extremely complex situation.

More amazingly, however, the story then switches to Manitoulin Island where, we are told, "Native North Americans from all over Canada and the United States held their annual pow-wow," as if the hundreds of different tribal and linguistic groups and thousands of Native communities could all be considered in one breath.

The pow-wow mentioned took place in Wikwemikong, an Ojibwa and Odawa First Nation, and is one of hundreds of pow-wows of several different types taking place annually. The importance to native communities of pow-wows varies considerably and

many do not hold them at all. But, as important as pow-wows and other cultural and spiritual events are, the "remedy for cultural assimilation" is more likely to come from actions like those at Kanasetake and Oldman River.

Tom Jewiss
Student
MES/LL.B. Programme

Bethune article "inaccurate"

To the editor,

I am responding to the article, "Bethune Handbook Censored," issue 8 volume 25. On behalf of Bethune College Council and the readers of the article, I would appreciate it if the Excalibur would correct the inaccuracies within the article and tell the real story.

The first error is seen in the title itself. Censorship, defined means "eliminated unauthorized material from writings" (Webster, 1986 ed). The article in the handbook was authorized, however it was later found to be libellous and so the dubious material was removed not "censored."

Secondly, Bethune College Council does not have its own lawyer. I'm not sure why you would think that we do.

Finally, if the students at Bethune and everywhere else on campus want to read the history of Norman Bethune College, they simply have to wait until September 26 when the Lexicon is

distributed including a history of the college.

Thank you for your time and I hope that we have both learned something.

Sarah Payne
President,
Bethune College Council

Reader sets the record straight

To the editor,

As a really big Bruce Cockburn fan, let me please point out to you a small error in Howard Kaman's review of Bruce Cockburn Live. In his review, Kaman implies that the live album representing Cockburn's earlier musical period was High Winds White Sky. This is not so. The album in question is the 1976 double-album Circles in the Stream.

As a matter of interest, it would have been really difficult for High Winds to be representative of earlier part of Cockburn's career, since the 1971 work was Cockburn's second album!

Hope you don't mind my pointing this out.

Yours truly,
Graeme Burk

«Assistant Editor's note: Howard Kaman brought the error to my attention, but, in the rush to get the newspaper out, it was not fixed. The fault lies entirely with me, not Howard.