

Editorial

SupRESSION

The Atkinson College Students' Association's decision to censure the editor of the Balloon, and their threat to dismiss him, would be laughable if it wasn't so frightening. All this fuss over a tiny editorial which concludes that the council is not representing Atkinson students in the most democratic fashion.

The issue that frightens us is one that obviously reaches beyond the myopic view of the Atkinson council members—freedom of the press. The issue does not concern the accuracy of the editor's perceptions, but rather his right to print them.

Without a free press—which includes small, college papers—there would be no public access to information about those who wield power—in this case the Atkinson council—and therefore no democracy. How can a constituency make decisions if they are ignorant of what goes on in the upper echelons of business and government? How else but through a free York press could you know that the Atkinson College Students' Association Executive spent \$150 of council money on a luncheon meeting at the Inn on the Park last spring; that a dance held last February by the ACSA cost \$2,200.

In a university supposedly committed to democratic ideals, it is distressing to see this occur—especially in the light of recent events. In the past two years a number of publications in North America have been challenged by the courts: The New York Times for refusing to reveal a news source; The Toronto Sun for publishing classified documents; Toronto's Body Politic for "using the mails for the distribution of obscene materials"; The Progressive for printing supposed government secrets—instructions for making an H-bomb.

What the threat to Editor Roman Smilka demonstrates is that the Atkinson College Students' Association is exactly as he described it—a mini-dictatorship. Their motion bypassed any consultation with the ACSA Publications Board which oversees the Balloon's operations. Their action is indicative of a cliqueish college government unresponsive to its students. It seems the greater the concentration of power, the more paranoid a government becomes and the greater its inclination to ignore those it would represent. It brings to mind words spoken long ago by Lord Acton: "Absolute power corrupts absolutely."

The Atkinson council couldn't have exposed themselves more efficiently. But we must remember it was a free Balloon that prompted this. Now that the Atkinson constituents are aware, are they going to let their council carry through with the threat?

rather than to exercise any real leadership. I was especially struck by the total ignorance of Management of the day-to-day operation of the store.

The employees are generally disgruntled, and not without cause, but as a result they give the impression of being lazy, incompetent, and obsessed with petty internal jealousies. I have worked in other bookstores and York is by far the worst.

The attitude of the employees to the University community is one of hostility and contempt.

My personal view of the place of a University bookstore in the community is that it should reflect flexibly the academic environment in which it exists. In particular, sections of books devoted to some of the major interest-groups at York should be introduced, on the model of the Feminist Studies section already in existence (which I

understand the Director now wants to eliminate). Jewish Studies, African, Middle Eastern, Caribbean, Marxist Studies, etc., in addition to the so-called "classical" divisions. Profits in one year should be applied to the reduction of prices in the next, especially in the form of a general discount on textbooks. But the principal problem seems to be one of leadership and direction.

Until management acquires a vision and a sense of direction other than its own aggrandisement and gratification, the York University Bookstore will move precisely—nowhere.

Alexander Duncan

All letters should be addressed to the editor, Excalibur, Room 111 Central Square. Letters must be typed, triple-spaced, on a 66 stroke line. Letters are limited to 300 words (seven column inches). Name, address, or phone number must be included or the letter will not be published. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for grammar and length. Deadline Monday 5 pm.



Correspondence

Jane-Finch

After reading your article "Nightmare in North York" two weeks ago, I concluded that the Government should have done something to rectify the problems in the Jane-Finch community. I wouldn't support the idea that Government should recommend cancellation of building more Ontario Housing projects. In fact, subsidized renting for low income families is one of the methods of redistributing income. The new interest mortgage deductibility plan introduced by the Federal Government benefits the rich only. More precisely, the mortgage deductibility plan is a kind of welfare for the rich.

The low income families who cannot afford to own a house can only benefit through subsidized rents by the Ontario Government. The problem now is how could more public housing be built and yet avoid the social unrest which arises in an area like Jane/Finch? The answers are obvious, the Government will have to introduce a 'mixed housing policy'. New projects will have to be rented out to middle class families at the

market rate. Also the projects will have to be rented out to low income families at subsidized rents. By this method the low income families will emulate the middle class families who will be their next door neighbours. Ghettos can only be formed when low income families are deeply concentrated in a project.

Secondly, a new by-law which will hold parents responsible for any damages to the building by the children should be promulgated, ie parents have to pay part of the fees for the repair of the damages. This will definitely reduce the acts of vandalism. Thirdly, playgrounds should be built next to each project. The Government should remodel the Jane/Finch projects. Some families presently resident at Jane and Finch should be relocated to other projects across the city under the 'mixed housing policy'.

David Agbo Esho
Founders College

Hurrah For Us

Please accept my thanks for your excellent coverage of the York Yeomen football season. In particular, please convey my

appreciation to writers Walter Weigel, Lawrence Knox and Bruce Gates, and photographers Gary Hershorn and Bryon Johnson for the quality of their coverage. Our student athletes make a sizeable time commitment to their sport and it's nice to see Excalibur recognize that.

Frank Cosentino

Bookstore Mismanaged

I would like to second Iain Davies' criticism of York services in Maureen Brown's article entitled "Prof peeved at York services," especially his attitude to the York University Bookstore. I am especially qualified to speak about this as I was employed by the Bookstore for half a year. (I am now a graduate student in English.)

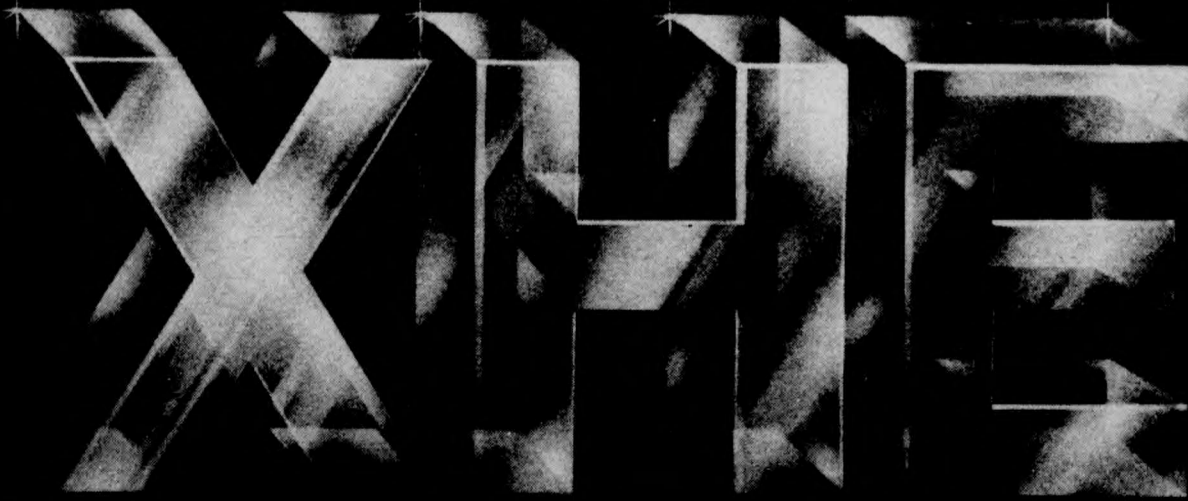
The principal problem in the Bookstore is a lack of personnel, and the unwillingness of Management to exercise any leadership and to restructure its organization. In particular, the filing system is too cumbersome for the number of employees and should be streamlined.

My perception of Management is that it prefers to enjoy the "cosmetic" prerogatives of p.r.

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