

LETTERS

McRAE OBFUSCATED ISSUES

Regarding the letter entitled, people to distort and evade issues presented to them in a clear and logical manner.

Lorna McRae pointed out the brilliant conclusion that if people were not willing to help two thousand earthquake victims, they would die. While I give McRae credit for her ability to realize this fact, her portrayal of Professor Ridpath as a selfish, slithering gargoyle sitting back and giggling while people die is such a grandiose misrepresentation of his morality that I felt it necessary to untangle her mess of obfuscating verbiage.

The point is, in a free society, there is nothing stopping McRae from aiding earthquake victims. McRae expounds her view that earthquake victims should be helped. How? Somehow! She should question her own morality if she is willing to force other people to help earthquake victims, but not willing to help them herself.

Professor Ridpath stated clearly that his morality values human life, and anyone holding that value would be willing to aid someone in a disaster. This is not in contradiction with his views on "rational selfishness".

McRae's cop-out argument that Professor Ripath is living off the taxes which he claims immoral, is a monumental example of a person not being able to see past their array of superficial slogans.

Taxes are forced from taxpayers, it is their money, and the payment of these dollars to professors is not a gift from the government. The education of some children has been paid for many times over their parents.

As far as McRae's concluding remarks on Ayn Rand, I can only quote Professor Ridpath's statement that appeared in his article in the Toronto Sun, March 22, 1982.

"The power of her discovering is, in an ugly way, revealed by the fact that the misrepresentation, snide slurs and vicious attacks on her have not ended, but have intensified, with her death."

Ian Shaw
Economics Student

RIDPATH IS RIGHT

Re: Ridpath lacking morality by Lorna G. McRae, Thursday, March 25, 1982.

In considering a lack of aid for victims of an earthquake Miss McRae asks "where is the morality in a society that would allow the possibility of inhumanity to man?" Implicit in this argument is the notion that individuals have a moral duty to provide such aid, and that the failure to do so constitutes inhuman negligence. From this endorsement of altruism it is logical to conclude that Miss McRae would support state relief financed by taxation.

From the standpoint of Objectivism the moral issue here is not relief itself, but rather the way in which such relief is obtained. The truly immoral position is one which asserts that individuals do not have the right to freely dispose of their own property as each sees fit. The inhumanity does not lie in a possible lack of aid, but in its acquisition through the rise of the coercive power of the state.

By virtue of the fact that "every man is an island" the only moral response to this issue is that offered by Professor Ridpath. Simply the decision of whether to supply aid or not, should be the free choice of every individual.

Tim Breen

FLETCHER CLAIMS

The article by P.J. Todd in your March 4th edition setting out my views on the Maclean-Hunter takeover of the Toronto Sun calls for a little clarification. While Ms. Todd did not misquote me, the brevity of our conversation and the complexity of the issue produced a report that is in some ways misleading.

Although I am the principal author of one of the research reports published by the Royal Commission on Newspapers, I was not a member of the Commission and am only indirectly responsible for its recommendations (insofar as the Commission took my advice).

Nevertheless, I am in general, supportive of the Commission's analysis and recommendations. My reservations involve the practicability of some of the recommendations.

While the work of the Commission was done in haste, as I suggested, the Commissioners had little choice, not only because the cabinet had set a firm deadline for the report, but also because the trend to concentration of ownership appeared to be accelerating rapidly. Relatively quick action was called for.

My remark about haste was made about my own work. Like all authors, I am acutely aware of how much better my analysis could have been had I been given more time and resources. Public policy research is almost inevitably too hasty to meet the highest academic standards. Finding the antidote after the patient has died is not much help.

With respect to content analysis, I was able to summarize the results of existing studies for the Commission, but a large-scale contemporary study would have been desirable. The Commission apparently ruled this out on grounds of time and cost, though it did fund a small-scale study.

As far as the Maclean-Hunter move into the daily newspaper field is concerned, I share Tom Kent's general concern about the growth of conglomerate ownership of newspapers, mainly on the grounds of excessive concentration of power. There are, however, some potentially positive aspects of the takeover, as noted in the article. Where one stands on the issue depends upon the weight one gives to the possible costs and benefits (and one's predictions about what Maclean-Hunter will do).

Politics aside, I do read the Sun whenever I ride the subway, especially the sports news, selected columns and the stereo ads. After all, it only takes about 10 minutes.

Thank you for the opportunity to clarify my position. I hope you will continue to seek out faculty views on current issues.

Fred Fletcher
Department of Political Science

STEINBERG EDITORIAL OFF-BASE

I find the editorial article of your 25 March 1982 publication regarding the David Steinberg concert, off-base, ill-informed and misleading.

These are the facts:

1. The financial success of the Steinberg concert goes well beyond commending the York Student Fund. If it had not been for the combined and coordinated efforts of numerous faculty, staff and students within the Faculty of Fine Arts the event would never have been realized.

2. Formal contractual negotiations were between C.Y.S.F. and Global T.V. York University (Burton Auditorium) acted in an advisory capacity to both parties in terms of a formal contract and was the "booked" house for the event.

3. The York Student Fund approached the Faculty of Fine Arts in February seeking a March/April date in Burton Auditorium as a fund raising activity. After considerable juggling and co-operation between several Fine Arts departments the date of 23 March was agreed upon. Following the booking, discussions took place with the Fund representative regarding potential attractions for the evening. Unfortunately, due to time pressures and costs it was reported that difficulties were occurring in securing an appropriate attraction but the search was continuing.

In March, by sheer coincidence, Global T.V. approached the Burton Office concerning booking the Auditorium for a live taping of two (2) David Steinberg specials — the date requested 23 March!

The Burton Office took the initiative of contacting the York Student Fund representative to establish the status of their success in booking an event (or not) and to inquire if they might be receptive to using the Steinberg Show as the fund raising event. The response was a definite YES.

Normally, Global, like CBC, CFTO and others would use their own facilities for tapings and give all tickets away free of charge in order to have a "controlled" audience. However, in this case Global was seeking a "live" University/College audience and ambience.

My office hosted one large meeting with the principals from Global, the York Student Fund, Burton and Fine Arts technical staff and the topic of a benefit concert was thoroughly discussed, all problems (technical, staffing, parking, scheduling, costs, profits etc.) were resolved and agreed upon by all attending parties. The negotiations were open, cordial, to the point and most businesslike.

The salient terms were:

- a) the fund raising event would be the David Steinberg special with CYSF and Global entering into a contract.
- b) Burton will be the "booked" house by the York Student Fund.
- c) Global would assume all technical, staffing and other relevant production costs.
- d) the student fund was free to charge a fair ticket price for both performances and retain all profits. Global requested that every effort be made to have full houses.

Had the student fund contracted Steinberg or any other artist(s) the Fund would have had to pay the artist(s) and absorb a portion of the Burton staffing costs. The contract as agreed was beneficial to all parties especially given that had Global booked the Auditorium directly, approximately \$1,000.00 would have been realized (rental and technical/staff costs) with free ticket distribution.

The Steinberg concerts

netted the Student Fund approximately \$3,000.00 including a number of tickets purchased by Global. (By the way Steinberg's fee for two (2) concerts would have been at least this amount.)

4. As described in No. 3 the administration did not give thousands away — just the opposite. It assisted greatly in obtaining the event and securing a reasonable profit for the Student Fund. Given more time for promotion and a better idea of the program (John Candy's status was never clearly known until the last minute) the profits would have been \$5,000-\$6,000.

5. The Dean of Fine Arts, Professor or Lionel Lawrence, has already submitted a plan to the President and his Executive to appoint a full-time Manager and supporting staff for a cultural events office which includes Burton Auditorium. However, until all budgetary matters are settled for 82/83 the question of staffing and servicing the cultural needs of the campus in an integrated fashion will remain open. I should also draw your attention to the Senate's planning document, specifically item no.44 which was designed and proposed by this Faculty and approved by the Senate body (attached).

You propose that there is mismanagement of the Burton operation, yet as its Manager (a part-time responsibility for me) I was not offered the opportunity of discussing the facts or the story prior to print. WHY? I believe a formal apology is required to all who made this event a reality.

However, the real story lies ahead. If a Cultural Events Office is created, then Burton and many other facilities on campus will be energized with exciting and enriching cultural activities. This proposal warrants support and encouragement.

Temple W. Harris
Assistant Dean
General Manager - Burton

GETTING CLEARER ON CLASP

I was very pleased to see the article on Community and Legal Aid Services Programme (CLASP) in Excalibur on March 18. There are two inaccuracies in the article which occurred because I was not specific when I spoke with reporter Marcia Johnson.

First, since C.L.A.S.P. is a legal aid clinic for people with limited incomes and assets, most but not all students qualify under our financial guidelines. However, our practice is to examine a potential client's household income, hence if a student lives with his or her parents, or is married, his or her eligibility may be affected.

Second, it is our staff, not our clientele which is restricted to law students. In the past, many students who weren't in law expressed a desire to become involved at the clinic. While C.L.A.S.P. would welcome them, our liability insurers would not.

Sean Dewart
CLASP Board of Management

APPRECIATIVE CORRESPONDENT

I would like to take this opportunity to express through your publication my appreciation for the well-written article by Michael Guy in the disappearance of Computer equipment from Calumet college (Vol. 16, No. 26).

C.M.D. Becksted
Staff Supervisor

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