

Letters

We will publish, space permitting, any letters up to 400 words. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name and telephone number. Material deemed libelous or discriminatory by the staff of *Excalibur* will be rejected. Letters may be mailed or delivered to *Excalibur* • 111 Central Square • York University • 4700 Keele Street • North York • Ontario • M3J 1P3

Supporting Reformers

Dear Editor,
I read with amusement David Camfield's ravings about the Reform Party in the "Bearpit," May 29, 1991.
The Reform Party is the fastest growing popular movement in Canada. We now count 80,000 members — hard-working, self-supporting Canadians who care deeply about their country. Every time we are attacked by the left-wing rabble in CARP [Coalition Against the Reform Party], we get another 500 members. Please keep it up!

Would you have the courage.

Sincerely,
Thomas E. Flanagan
Director of Policy, Planning and Communications
Reform Party of Canada, Edmonton.

Exposed and opposed

Dear Editor,
In his letter in the June 26th issue of *Excalibur*, Bob Pieroway Jr. of the York North Reform Party claims my article "The Reform Party's nasty secrets" in the May 29th *Excalibur* is fraught with "misconceptions and falsehoods."

In fact, his letter tends to confirm my article's argument that the Reform Party is trying hard to use ambiguous populist language to hide its racist right-wing policies.

Mr. Pieroway doubts that I referred to any Reform Party literature before writing my article. He can rest assured that I read copies of *The Reformer* and the *Principles and Policies of the Reform Party of Canada* (and attended a party meeting).

In the latter publication I found the pleasant-sounding (and never-implemented) environmental policies which are now indispensable for all political parties, and many other Tory-like policies. I also found these five revealing statements:

"Confederation... can only be maintained by a clear commitment to Canada as one nation". This completely ignores the fact that within the borders of Canada are the First Nations and Quebec, which are nations oppressed through the suppression of their right to self-determination.



Ontario Reform Party's Michael Dean

"The Reform Party supports the harmonization of labour management relations, and rejects the view that labour and management must constitute warring camps." This tries to wish away the reality of class struggle, and labour militants know that "harmonized relations" lead straight to lower wages, worse conditions of work and the loss of benefits and rights.

"The Reform Party supports requiring the Government of Canada to balance the budget in each three year period." Another distinctive pro-business goal, this would require the truly massive cuts in the federal budget which are hinted at by the statement that "The Reform Party opposes the increasing use of the spending powers of the federal government in areas of provincial jurisdiction, such as medicare, education and the like."

"The Reform Party opposes... multiculturalism and hyphenated Canadianism... and would end funding of the multiculturalism program."

Mr. Pieroway denies the Reform Party is racist. One needs look no further than the policy quoted above for evidence of racism, while another telling clue is the Reform Party's association with racist author William Gairdner.

Gairdner, a wealthy financier, was a guest speaker at the Reform Party's convention in Saskatoon in April and has been a popular speaker at party meetings in Ontario. His book *The Trouble With Canada* is full of anti-Quebecois racism, calls for a complete end to welfare and is virulently anti-feminist and anti-gay.

As Gairdner himself says, "There is a remarkable similarity between the notions in my book and the Reform Party." That is precisely why the Reform Party must be exposed and opposed.

David Camfield

Political correctness is a political choice

Dear Editor,

We are writing in support of *Excalibur's* May 29, 1991 editorial, "Just who are these thought police?"

The attempts of the New Right to delegitimize antisexist and antiracist activism, under the guise of protecting "freedom of speech" from "political correctness," has been the focus of many mainstream magazine and newspaper articles in the while (including in *Time*, *Newsweek*, *New York*, *Maclean's*, the *Globe and Mail* and the *Star*) along with a number of student newspapers. In a recent attack on "the notion of political correctness" in a speech on May 4 at the University of Michigan, George Bush was quoted as follows: "political extremists roam the land, abusing the privilege of free speech, setting citizens against one another on the basis of their class or race." Some commentators have rightly linked Bush's stance (in gearing up for the 1992 elections) to his use of the Willy Horton case to promote racial intolerance and privilege (and of course his own election) during the 1988 election campaign.

This is representative of the mainstream media's position in

both Canada and the United States as well. Sensationalized reporting of "political correctness" battles on university campuses, which do not equally represent the two positions, leads to faulty generalizations and misinformation which creates convenient scapegoats (that is, members of disempowered groups) during times of economic recession. The picture currently presented of university campuses is one in which disempowered groups have taken over and are now victimizing straight white middle-class males. This is not only a distortion of current reality but it is intellectually dishonest.

We wish to make the following specific points:

1. The people still being censored on university campuses are women professors whose proposals for courses on women writers are routinely rejected on the grounds that women are not good writers; minority faculty and students whose experiences, knowledge and history are routinely absent from the curriculum; students whose race, class, and/or gender analyses are dismissed as "crap" by certain professors; students who

take required courses in which homosexuality is treated under the topic of sexual deviance, etc.

2. White males cannot be the victims of racism or sexism. Discrimination results from systemic oppression.

3. White male supremacy is not moderation. To view the struggle against race and gender stereotypes which demean, distort and humiliate minority groups and women as morally outrageous is in itself morally outrageous.

In general, professors and mass media wield power, power to legitimize racism and sexism or to fight for its eradication. The choice to speak out for or against racism and sexism is a political choice.

Yours truly,
Ruth King
Advisor to the University on the Status of Women
Chet Singh
Advisor to the university on Race and Ethnic Relations

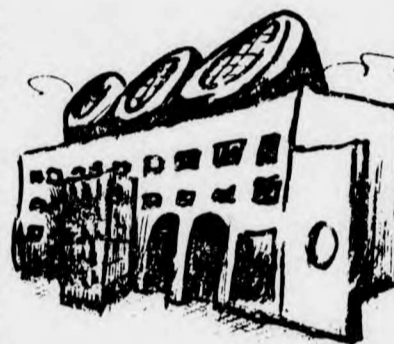
Ed. note: Some of the text of this letter appeared in the July 16 *Globe and Mail* under the title "Political Correctness and the New Right."

approval was sought and obtained. Therefore, if we agree that the SC were free of any improprieties, why should our current cleaners be unfairly termed "scabs?"

The club space issue is not new. This has been rehearsed in time past and the key players (the clubs) understand that the issue has been resolved and we should all move on. I would be the first to admit that we are not in an ideal situation but given the fact that the Clubs' Coalition (independent of the SC) has already democratically willed for space to be apportioned the way it is, there is not much left to do except to personally endeavour to make as much space available to user-groups as possible in the coming year.

Why you opt for strife-filled coverage of the SC in its opening days is absolutely bedeviling. Your photo caption that the SC "is not without problems" suffers from petty-mindedness.

Of course, there have been and will always be problems. The test is clearly our ability to gallantly overcome them in a collective fashion. Far be it for me, a mere student representative, to tell you what and how to write... I would not even dream of



treading on that sacrosanct sphere of journalistic freedom. But when the *Globe and Mail* is able to be excited about York because of the Student Centre, when students come up and say how happy they are with the food facilities and the depth of quality of the programming that we are bringing in, when previously disenfranchised groups like Osgoode announce that they now feel a sense of belonging here, I really have to question where your slant is coming from. Could it be that *Excal* is not comfortable with student groups doing it right?

Yours for a fair chance,
Chia-Yi Chua
Chairperson,
Student Centre Corporation

Not Castle's castle

Dear Editor,

I was perturbed to read the two Student Centre articles and the cartoon featured in your last issue (June 26). It was disappointing to see the central student newspaper refusing to be anything but negative in its coverage of what is the single most significant student project at York!

For starters, I am not sure how the SCC General Manager feels about the cartoon but I was singularly unimpressed when I saw it. To allude that the Student Centre is Rob's castle is not only inaccurate but downright insulting to our Board of Directors, the most representative student group on campus. While not denigrating the GM's important role in the project (both previous and current), I must also underscore the role of the Board and Executive... that of making and being responsible for all decisions at the SCC. The GM acts as the conduit between staff members and the Board, carrying out the resolutions of the Board.

Moving to the specific topic of the cleaning contract, it is unfortunate that CUPE did not get the SC contract and I certainly understand Mr. Lehto's concern. However, our desire to accommodate the University bid was unachievable simply because the bid was about \$100,000 higher, a whopping difference considering the financial constraints we are in. All that aside and more importantly, the Management Agreement that exists between the SCC and the Administration affords us the ability to contract outside groups if we had the consent of the Administration. In this case,

drop everything

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drop everything