

CYSF quiescence charged in face of cutbacks

In case you missed her, Miriam Edelson, Chairperson of the Ontario Federation of Students, representative of over 100,000 university and college students, spoke on our campus last week.

Why didn't we know Miriam was here? Why didn't we know what she was speaking about?

Because our CYSF did not bother to tell us, although they knew two weeks in advance that Miriam was making this the "York stop" on a cross province speaking tour. She had taken three weeks away from her studies in order to speak in each university and college with the rank & file membership of OFS concerning OSAP and the changes which endanger our ability to obtain a university education. OFS depended

on CYSF to publicize the meeting.

They knew all this, and yet they did nothing. They did not put up one notice in the university. They did not contact *Excalibur*, either to carry an article before the meeting or even a simple notice. They did not put up one notice in the university. A fieldworker from OFS, up here on other matters, managed to put up 15 notices in Central Square, two school days before the meeting.

In comparison, at University of Toronto, the Students Administrative Council managed to pass out 8,000 leaflets and post 1,000 large posters for a meeting with Parrot. The attendance at U. of T. was 800 to a 1,000, while at York's Parrot meeting it was in the 20 to 30 range.

Aside from the insult to Miriam Edelson, we must ask why CYSF continues to, in effect, sabotage OFS even though in last spring's election we overwhelmingly voted to stay in OFS. Paul Hayden and friends had campaigned against OFS and lost. At that time he said he would respect the students' desires and work with OFS, but since then he has observed his pledge more in the breach than the observance.

This inaction by CYSF is intolerable; for, by default, they are allowing the provincial government and university administration to run rampant without regard to the best interests of students.

The CYSF does not attempt to actively distribute the OFS and NUS newspapers. Instead they set a few copies out on a table at their office entrance. When the library hours were chopped, the CYSF had no public presence. When dangerous changes in OSAP were announced, their activity had to be measured by a

micrometer. They did get Parrot, Minister in charge of OSAP, to come to York, but let him do it on a Friday morning, the last day of classes in the fall, just before exams and when our essays were due. Combining this with poor publicity and a lack of previous organizing, together with a snowstorm, the attendance was abysmal. This may have discouraged CYSF, for they haven't held a public meeting concerning OSAP since then; but is it permissible for our elected representatives to give up so easily? When elected they claimed that quiet politicking, lobbying and negotiation would serve us the best. They have been so quiet that most of us have lost sight of them; but more damaging, most of us have had to rely on the reports in the big press and university press for information essential to constructing our own opinions. The CYSF abandoned us. They did not give us information. They did not campaign amongst

us. And then they claim we are apathetic.

Their quiet lobbying and negotiation have turned out to be the farce and dead-end which some of us had predicted.

A continuation of CYSF inaction, quiescence, and lack of initiative is intolerable. The coming cut-back protest week, organized initially by the GAA and now supported by CYSF, presents an opportunity for redemption. Let's hope that they seize upon it and work like hell. Remember, a CYSF election is due in 6 weeks and if one of them wants to be Hayden's successor he'll have to get his face known. Ten months of anonymity is difficult to dispel, but, undoubtedly, one of them will realize what their old-style politics necessitates, and that is the appearance of activity.

Harvey Pinder
Student rep
on York's Board of Governors

Bryant story justified

Last week's letter from Osgoode student Michael Rende, raised some serious questions on *Excalibur's* January 19 coverage of Anita Bryant, and I think it deserves a reply — but not the apology he demanded.

Before I go on, I must admit that the headline in which Bryant was described as a "juice peddler", was both childish and snarky. We should have tried to do better. But I can't go along with Rende's other comments.

He attacked editor Paul Kellogg, who covered the anti-Bryant demonstration, for not mentioning that a woman had been knocked down for commenting on a demonstrator's sign. Kellogg did not mention it because he did not see it, nor did it come to his attention in the *Globe and Mail*. I missed this as well and I've talked it over with an *Excalibur* staffer who is sympathetic to Rende's views, and he was also unaware of the incident.

I believe Rende to be off the mark in criticizing my review of Bryant's appearance for being biased. For it was a review of a singer, who made only brief allusions to her political beliefs. We labelled the entire page "Feature," to warn readers not to expect objective reporting of "straight news." This paper has long permitted writers to express their own opinions in magazine-style articles, particularly on off-campus events.

But had Bryant appeared at York, or had a York group brought her to town, I would have done my best to play it straight.

Furthermore, the decision to do a slanted piece on Bryant was not determined simply by the whims of the editors. *Excalibur* came out four days after Bryant appeared to the accompaniment of a massive media blitz, capped off the next week by the telecast of one of her Peoples Church services and her appearance on Global TV's *Point Blank*. It would have been absolutely pointless for a small student paper to attempt to compete with all that coverage: A subjective view was all we had to offer.

This explains why I did not report that Rev. Paul Smith got a pie in the face (Rende was wrong in blaming Kellogg for this). I had left the church before the pie found its mark, and could not give my impression of the incident. It is absurd to charge that I could seriously have hoped to distort anyone's picture of the service, by carefully omitting such a widely reported event.

And I do not agree that my article "smacked of intolerance", as Rende charges. Criticism, no matter how vehement, is not a synonym for intolerance. I was no more intolerant of Bryant than Don Hunter is intolerant of me in today's letter, where he calls my review "coarse, disgusting" and "garbage."

If Bryant has the right to preach her form of religion, to convey a distorted impression of gay people and to make a fat buck doing it — then I have the right to portray her so-called "testimony" as the crafty psychological manipulation I believe it to be. Even if others find it intolerable.

Excalibur could only have been accused of intolerance if it had refused to publish critical letters, or if it had closed the door to an anti-gay rights or pro-Bryant piece. No one has expressed an interest in writing such an article, but the door is open.

Paul Stuart
News Editor

Let the cowards be counted says reader

Although Eric Walberg's concepts may be sincere, his information is nonetheless misguided.

The first point of reference is where he states that "open immigration would give free reign to the CIA and other anti-communist organizations." It is a widely held contention that the leaders of the USSR are afraid to show the Soviet people capitalism and high standards of living, simply for the fear of a mass defection to the tune of tens of millions. Is it really conceivable that given free choice, any sensible human being could select a lower standard of living, a repressive government, and communism, rather than the democratic capitalist lifestyle that so many Canadians have learned to love and die for?

Mr. Walberg's ideas on racism, Zionism, and antisemitism seem to be the same as those of the Russian Government. He agrees that the Soviet Union does repress militant Zionists, but also adds that the antisemitism seems to stem from the fact that The Jews of Russia are Zionistic. (Did he? - ed.) Are the

Jews of Russia also racist by the same definition? I was under the impression that it was the Zionist-racists who were supposed to be the repressive types.

This year has marked the first time in modern history that the Arabs and Jews have finally dropped their weapons to sit down and talk peace. It is just unfortunate that the anti-semites who espouse and laud the merits of Marxism and Leninism are afraid to come out of the woodwork to answer for themselves. Rather than put swastikas on toilet walls or stand up behind simple-minded women who have memorized communist propaganda and carry clubs to emphasize their points, let the cowards be counted.

Maybe it's time that people just left each other alone on this campus. I believe that harmonious co-existence can be a possibility, but if there are amongst us groups of racists, anti-semites, or anybody who wishes to persecute another "equal-paying" member of the human race let them beware . . . never again.

Robert Gasner



Anita unnecessarily disparaged? Article was coarse, disgusting

As a relatively frequent reader of *Excalibur*, I have a reasonable amount of respect for the paper.

However, with regard to the January 19 edition, I have a complaint to voice!

I realize Anita Bryant's visit to Toronto was big news for some people, particularly the religious community at People's Church. I also realize that because *Excalibur* desires to keep students informed, some staff covered Bryant's illustrious visit.

It is to Paul Stuart, who wrote the article about her "testimony", that my complaint is directed.

Despite her beliefs and stands on certain societal conditions, Stuart is tremendously deficient of tact, and

even half-decent reporting ability. His unnecessary, coarse and disgusting article is perfectly good material, if it is filed under "garbage."

In my opinion there was absolutely no need for his vivid discussion about her "testimonial" message. Possibly Stuart has no respect for religious faith (if he does, it certainly did not show). There was no reason for the in-depth coverage of her "near-death" experience. It was totally unrelated to the major issue to which she has directed her voice and opinion in recent months.

Stuart displayed a very inarticulate and poor report on the facts about her visit. Possibly if the

article had dealt with the pertinent "facts," it might have been worth reading, but as it appeared, and as I said earlier, it was coarse and disgusting.

I have no personal interest in the "homosexual" issue, but I feel that Anita Bryant was unjustly ridiculed in the *Excalibur* report. I hope that in the future, this reporter will stick to the real issue, and not get sidetracked into writing an article which seems to be a personal attack on Bryant's religious convictions. A testimony is a very personal thing, and should not be treated in such an off-the-cuff, callous manner.

I hope to see more competently written articles in the future.

Don Hunter

Thanks expressed to Zionist critic

I would like to thank Eric Walberg for a few things.

To begin with, I am glad that Eric considers me to be a well meaning Zionist. This makes me feel so much better. I would also wish to thank him for making my task of refuting his letter so much easier. This he has done by refuting and contradicting earlier remarks.

It was stated earlier that there was open immigration as well as open and free travel and in his second letter, Eric comments that open immigration cannot be allowed since it would grant access to the CIA for penetration into the Soviet Union. What nonsense? We are talking about people leaving the Soviet Union, not people going into the country as spies. Who would want to go there to live? Not even Eric and other fellows have gone to this promised land.

Regarding students going to Moscow, the International Student

Centre of the World, where Eric got this idea is beyond me! I wonder if myself, a "Zionist militant," would be allowed to further my education in the Soviet Union. Would I be allowed to write Pro-West letters in the Moscow University's newspaper? See, Eric, I am trying to tell you that you don't know how well off you are!

My last thank you is perhaps the most important. In Eric's letter, he states that he is not involved in any movement since his life is not at risk. Now the obvious question which enters my mind is how can he tell us to work for other minorities when my life is not risked by this mistreatment. To me, this is hypocrisy on Eric's behalf. I am willing to put forth other rights.

But, Eric, to me, my life is at risk and you made me realize this even more. Perhaps you need a history lesson to show you how anti-semitism has a "habit" of

spreading. To me and many others, the mistreatment of Soviet Jews is the same as myself being ill-treated. How can you question my behaviour, when you already stated that one should not get involved if his/her life is not at risk.

I think that if I tell you that I feel my life as a person and Jew is at risk, should stop your criticism. I am willing to help other minorities, but I still maintain that if Anti-Semitism is destroyed, then the rights of others will be bettered. Perhaps, Eric is not on campus enough to see the many anti-semitic slogans; one does not see other anti-minority comments. Don't get me wrong. I believe that all people should have their Rights as free individuals!

Name Withheld

(Ed. note: The letters by E.W. did not refer to "open immigration." The letter by N. Pterros et. al. spoke of free emigration.