

Reader questions response of faculty to violent crime

The recent assault suffered by the master of Bethune College was a most tragic incident, one to be deplored by every member of the university. A cynic cannot help but comment, however, that faculty members seem to clamour for increased campus security only when one of their own becomes a victim. They have been notably silent as students and non-academic employees have been assaulted or robbed.

Indeed, the York University Faculty Association has been most insistent in recent years that the "non-academic" side of the university budget be cut before any reductions are made in the "academic" budget. YUFA has, in effect, called for the very cuts that have led to the present sorry state of campus security.

One hopes that the Davies beating will at least instill in faculty members a greater concern for these so-called "non-academic" matters. Only by working together can we create a better community.

Michael Wesson,
Alumni Founders '75

Spectral racism

I was present at a meeting sponsored by the York Alliance Against Racism centering on fascism which was held in Curtis Lecture Hall A on Thursday, March 4. A number of interesting points were raised, which provoked me to write this letter. Present at the meeting was the master of Bethune College, Ioan Davies, who was recently attacked by two individuals reputedly associated with the National Socialist Underground.

I was impressed by Professor Davies's calm, level-headed approach to the problem of racism at York. I agree whole-heartedly with his belief that, rather than bringing in the police to tighten security, the student body must be called upon to police itself.

The question of whether or not fascists should be allowed to freely express their racist views was raised. At present, groups

such as the Western Guard and the National Socialist Underground exist as underground groups, and consequently, have thrived. To deny any group the right to express its views, however peculiar, is to drive it underground in the hope that its views will be suppressed once and for all.

However, this is not the case. By granting fascists the right to freely express their beliefs, we can deal more effectively with the problem of racism at York. I am not condoning fascism; far from it. However, the problem we at York face, as Professor Davies mentioned, is cowardice, both on the part of fascists and on the part of the student body.

The fascists are cowards, for they refuse to show their faces. The students in general are cowards, for they refuse to believe that fascism exists in Canada. It is time people stopped labelling Canada as "immune" to racism; it never has been and it never will be.

Racism is not something which can be met by fear or gut emotions; it must be rationally dealt with as the product of warped minds which thrive on fear.

The meeting conveyed the impression that racism, and in particular facism, are limited to "right-wing" groups. This is absurd.

It was also implied at the meeting that racism is a concept which would appeal more readily to a conservative than to a socialist. This is to say that socialism, since it is a "left-wing" philosophy, is not cursed by the stigma of racism, which is not true. Those people who insist on using the terms "right-wing" and "left-wing" must realize that racism is not confined to "right-wing" politics alone.

Kerry Johnston,
Winters College

ULS is weak

Either the United Left Slate's eventual "strong student union that will fight" will be strong and

not need to fight, or it will fight because it lacks any other sort of influence. Only the weak resort to fighting.

A commitment to fighting is indigenous to the ULS election platform. The ULS will fight the cutbacks, fight for women's rights, fight for a student union, fight the Board of Governors, and fight racism. It will fight if it means expending its final earthly breath. The ULS monopolizes the market in determination and have earned my respect. But its commitment to fighting, which surpasses any other candidate's, means it is the least influential or authoritative.

Is there value in electing a weak student government? Even if the ULS platform is necessary and viable, and I find certain portions of its policies to be that way, what value is there in electing the ULS if it lacks the authoritative but unforceful persuasiveness necessary to achieve its professed goals? If it will fight more vehemently than anyone else, then I lament the inherent weakness of the ULS's determination.

Howard Crosner
Philosophy
Students' Association
Executive Member

Silzer cartoon was sexist

The sexist cartoon on the editorial page of the last issue may be granted the justification that all such cartoons should be controversial and provocative. But this near-mindless criteria would rationalize away, for example, an anti-semitic caricature of Berry Edson. Sexism is no less degenerate a consciousness than racism and should be considered such.

The object of that attack on Gael Silzer was, of course, intended to portray her as a front for the ULS and since she is a woman that could more easily be done by emphasizing her femininity — as a sexist would conceive of her. One has only to speak to Gael Silzer to realize that she is an independent-minded and articulate person and any editor or cartoonist should

have taken the trouble to actually speak to her before protraying such a demeaning picture of her.

If they had spoken to her then they should have been honest enough to treat her fairly as a woman rather than attempting to use her sex to attack the United Left Slate.

Abie Weisfeld,
External Affairs
Vice-President, CYSF

Skirting issues

I am writing in regard to the cartoon in the last issue of Excalibur. I find your sexist portrayal of Gael Silzer as a mere prop insulting to Gael personally and to the ULS as a whole. Gael is a serious and conscientious member of the ULS. She has been chosen to represent the ULS in this election because she can competently present our programme.

The student newspaper has the responsibility of informing the students of the issues in the upcoming elections and, by printing this ridiculous cartoon, Excalibur is shirking this responsibility, and suggesting that the elections are a farse. This year, with the cutbacks threatening students, the elections are anything but a farse. I would suggest to you that Excalibur find out what Gael has to say about the issues and dispense with meaningless cartoons.

Jane Chisholm,
York Socialist League

SSA for ULS

During the past year the Science Students' Association has received, along with other course unions, financial help from CYSF, as part of a ULS policy to support faculty and department based unions. The ULS has always seen the value of course unions which serve to aggregate student concerns as they relate to their academic interests such as the rules, regulations and requirements of an academic unit. It is obvious that college councils are not appropriate vehicles for the expression of academic concerns as they relate to the

faculties or departments.

The ULS is proposing, as part of its platform in the current elections, a scheme by which a very small portion of a student's activity fee could revert to his or her course or faculty union. The other candidates either do not speak to this point or are opposed to any such scheme. The other candidates are more concerned in entrenching college control over all student run activities, a cocern which is quite irrelevant to the majority of students at this university.

It is for these reasons that we, the executive of the Science Students' Association endorse the ULS.

Alan Cox
Mike Cadesky
Murray Shaver
Esther Jacobson
Joyce Pickering
Rich Botte
Deena Milgram
Wojtek Markiewicz
Jackie Schaub

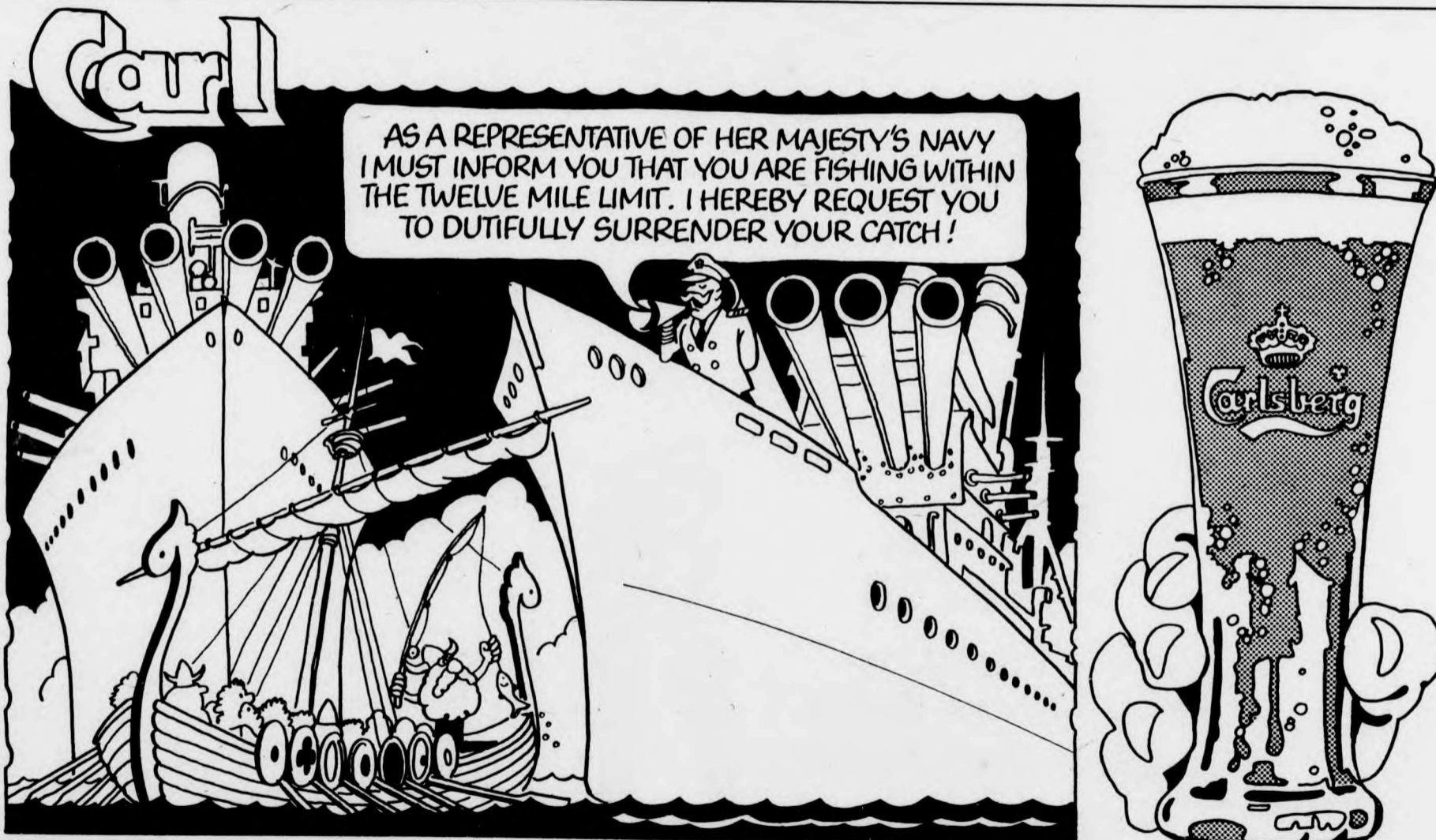
Cutbacks forum

On behalf of the York Anti-Cutback Committee, I would like to take this opportunity to extend an open invitation to all members of the York community (students, faculty and staff) to our meeting today at 1:00 p.m. in S167 Ross.

Of particular importance will be the discussion over the upcoming province-wide action tentatively scheduled for March 24 and what part York itself is to play in this effort. Sub-committees have been established to consider these various questions and to initiate preliminary proposals and programmes; however it is necessary to receive a certain amount of input from the community at large to help finalize these arrangements and to ensure that all interests are being represented.

Attendance for this as well as future meetings will be much appreciated and, for those with the inclination, there is always room for active participation.

Alan Uren,
York Anti-Cutback Committee



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