

The Sex Pistols and Talking Heads and programs like Saturday afternoon's Reggae in the Fields, I must point out that the landmark station is ours, not theirs. In fairness, however, it should be noted that students of both universities (and much of the listening public in Ottawa generally) were consistently generous during the station's annual fundraisers. Long live campus radio.

Jeff Keay

## Library is not a laughing matter

Dear Editor,

We are taking this opportunity to unleash our anger at the farcical manner in which the Scott Library is operated. There is nothing (we repeat - nothing!) more aggravating than to stand in that infinite line in the photocopying room, with only three photocopiers in full operation! When we are lucky enough to catch a glimpse of these almost extinct attendants and bring the matter to their attention, we are always told the same thing - someone will soon come along and fix it. Well, what we'd like to know (and we believe every other member of the student body would too) is when?! The same thing happens every day. Doesn't the library staff realize that students have classes to rush to, essays to write and tests to study for? Or do they think we just love to photocopy in our spare time and have nothing else better to do? We are even more disgusted by that ridiculous line-up at the circulation desk. There are over 50,000 students who attend this educational institution and only three (if we're lucky four) employees working a shift! Someone please explain this to us! We also cannot seem to grasp how long it takes for a book to be put back on the shelf after it has been charged out. We've been waiting one week for a book and there is still no sign of it on the shelf! Come on guys, finish your coffee break and get serious! As things stand now, Scott Library isn't an efficient, post-secondary and academic library... it's a joke.

Lisa Ranieri, and Pat Stefanuto

Two angry second year students

## Croatia should learn from Irish

Dear Editor,

The United Nations will hopefully soon be involved in keeping the peace in Croatia and perhaps other places where ethnic rivalries run red-hot.

In doing so it should bear in mind the principle of self-determination. This means that the wishes of the actual inhabitants of a given area should decide which country their district should belong to, and not some remote historical claim.

So for example the Croats have every right to set up an independent state, but by the same token the Serbs who have lived for many years in parts of "Croatia" have a right to their own independence, or to join Serbia if they wish.

A precedent exists in the case of Ireland: in 1922, Ireland was given its independence from Britain, but the inhabitants of Northern Ireland wished to remain part of the United Kingdom, and this wish was granted, quite rightly. But the principle of self-determination was not taken far enough, for many areas were forcibly incorporated into "Northern Ireland" whose inhabitants wished to become part of the Free State (Southern Ireland). It was from this mistake that many of the present troubles stem.

Yours sincerely,  
J. M. McNamee.

## Be wary of evil tenured profs

Dear Editor,

Thank you for Gerry Tomany's Bearpit column (Mar. 18). His analysis of David McNally's letter (Jan. 29) was bang on. While Tomany's piece escaped the ire of another marginalized group of the York University community: namely, the students. My intention is to partially correct the oversight.

As Tomany points out, it is interesting to see how McNally twisted an anti-establishment leftist viewpoint (to which many students subscribe), into a rationalization for maintaining his own personal privileges, and those of the established intellectual class, at the expense of not only his pseudo-colleagues but also the university as a whole, and thus, the students. The notion that faculty unionism has anything to do with the fight against the traditional political structures is insidious and offensive. As professors are required to teach less and less, are granted such benefits as having their children attend tuition-free the university at which the professors are tenured, have institution-supported consulting businesses as a sideline, complain about "burn-out" after having been teaching for too long, are given monetary incentives to retire after the age of 65, and still attempt to maintain the facade of marching shoulder to shoulder with the working class on the road to Karl-Marx-Stadt, students should be wary of anyone who seems not to realize that universities exist for students, even if he does bash Brian Mulroney. The measure of a person in the university community is not his leftist or rightist rhetoric. Rather, it is what the person does to help in the education of the students.

In almost every issue of *Excilbur*, we are shown examples of the administration's abandonment of this ideal (eg. allowing security officers to harass students for no reason, wasting money on spying on parking lot attendants, not allowing students to use Vari Hall as anything more than a passageway). While I am heartened by the recent student activism against the fascist actions of the security department, I fear that the newspaper and all students must widen their scope of vigilance. Even professors cloaked in a shroud of leftism or political correctness can have forgotten the rightful supremacy in a university of educating students.

Sincerely,  
Hans Christian Connor

# Messiahs and democracy

By Sam Putinja

Despite all the talk about "democracy" how much of it do we actually have and how much do we need?

Since the collapse of communism in Europe the media has gone to great lengths to explain how nations around the world are turning to democratic forms of government.

According to the Western media machine it is Western liberal democracy that is now in vogue. The overdue revolutions and revolts in the former Soviet bloc and elsewhere are seen as vindications of this.

How ironic that just when the rest of the world looks to the liberal democratic system, that very system seems to be on increasingly shaky foundations in the very countries it first took root.

Can it be said that the Western model is now the only viable alternative for the world? Do we not have crises that are shaking the foundations of our political and social structures?

The West in fact is in economic and political crisis. The West has been in a period of economic uncertainty for the last twenty years. Unemployment rates have been steadily increasing despite the alleged "expansions" that took place in between the "recessions." Governments have been unable to find cures for economic stagnation.

Propaganda to the contrary, the policies of Reagan, Thatcher *et al.* have exacerbated the crisis instead of providing a way out.

Inequalities in income and social rights have sharpened as have conflicts between different groups. Apathy and pessimism have increased. Political leaders formerly popular have seen their popularity vanish.

Bush, Mitterrand, Kohl and Mulroney are falling into disfavor as the economic and social conditions in their respective countries deteriorate. New figures pop up claiming they will set things back on track.

Thus we see people like Jean-Marie Le Pen, David Duke, Patrick Buchanan and Preston Manning coming forth with "New Visions" for their respective countries.

Unfortunately, the "New Visions" are nothing more than baggage from the past which toss democracy to the wayside.

The politics of these figures are based on exclusion. They set out to scapegoat certain groups as being the causes of trouble and misfortune.

Welfare recipients and the unemployed are blamed for burgeoning government deficits. Trade unions are blamed for plant shut-downs. Japan and Quebec are labeled as trouble-makers. Women and ethnic minorities are singled out as special groups who get favoured treatment from the government because they have the nerve to complain.

In other words, there is a feeling that too many people are getting privileged access to government and this is throwing the government off track from what it should really be doing - whatever that might be and who it may be for. The argument here is that there seems to be too much democracy. Too many people are getting a piece of an ever smaller pie.

In actuality, however, there has not been enough democracy.

We allow leaders to decide our future with only vaguely articulated platforms and conceptions of whose interests they will serve.

In the 1988 election the Conservatives received 43 percent of the popular vote, yet govern with a majority of the seats in parliament. Is this democratic?

The massive social and economic disruptions that free trade and other policies of the government have caused have played into the hands of politicians such as Preston

Manning.

What will Manning do if he is elected? Will he bring forth the agenda of the people? Will he introduce more popular participation into government policy making? Has the NDP in Ontario done so?

Is it not time to ask ourselves what about our system allows politicians to ignore the wishes of the people once in office and then lie to us to be re-elected?

The fact that governments are unable to deal with economic decline does not mean that democracy is not working or that democracy is an impediment to "restructuring."

If anything our economic decline shows the need for more democracy. It shows a need for more direct participation.

Having the right to vote once every four or five years alone can hardly be the basis for democracy.

The problem at this late stage is that people tend to be impatient for change - yet passive. We believe messiahs

# bearpit

like Manning will take us back to the promised land. This was the case with Mulroney in 1984. He promised everything but in the end disappointed most everyone except the corporate business lobby which pushed for Free Trade with the United States.

Some of those disappointed by the Conservatives have moved on to the new high lords of the church of politics. Many others, I fear, have lost faith in the political process much the same as has half the American population which will not cast a vote in the election this November.

The feeling that democracy is not working is a dangerous one. It is this type of apathy which leads to the rise of figures with personality cults: the Yeltsins, the Buchanans and the Louis Bonapartes.

We must extend democracy to as-yet-untried areas. Democratic control of economic structures and decision-making should be on the agenda.

Why is our government secretly negotiating a North American Free Trade deal? Was this part of their platform during the last election? Let's open up the important economic decisions of this country to a democratic process.

Why are the Campeaus and Trumps of this world allowed to build debts of billions of dollars to satisfy their personal casino fetishes while industrial sectors are allowed to rust into oblivion?

Democracy must move out of parliament and into our immediate communities, workplaces, homes and universities. We must move beyond the current patriarchal form of representative democracy.

The messiahs can walk by themselves to their Promised Land. We, instead, will take the road, that until now, has been less traveled!



## TOM by MCAN



## Odyssey by PINC



Dear Editor:

I think you are some kind of Communist. Where do you get off saying sexism, racism, oppression and war are bad things?

