

Letters To The Editor

GAA executive responds to accusations

It is difficult to know which of the untruths and misrepresentations of Excalibur's nameless letter writer from the Graduate Assistant Association to respond to first. But since the executive and the union are not guilty of any of the charges, we have decided to respond to them in the order they were presented.

The union is accused of attempting to shove "a contract down the university's throat". In fact, we have been engaged in bargaining on our first contract with representatives of the university for two months. D. Argyle, one of the university representatives in the negotiations has described the meeting as "optimistic, speedy, and expeditious" (Excalibur, February 26). These are hardly the words of someone whose mouth and throat are under the assault of a "hard hat 40 page proposal."

The writer of last week's letter asks, "where did these people think they are as qualified as a lecturer" (sic). Our criterion is simple. Many of our members have been hired by the university as lecturers. We therefore assume that they are qualified. Otherwise the university, in these days of high unemployment, could easily find replacements.

We are accused of being "no better than the people we are lecturing to". Finally an area of agreement. We are intellectual workers, with various skills, abilities, and areas of knowledge which we are trying to share — in an atmosphere which our contract will attempt to make more humane.

We are accused of demanding a "closed shop". Not true — the GAA demand, ratified in a general membership meeting is for a

union shop. A cursory glance at the labour legislation or attendance at our open, democratic membership meetings would have clarified this simple point for the writer of the letter.

We are informed that "virtually all of the physics, experimental space science, and chemistry departments, as well as the majority of the biology department are against the formation of a union". Unfortunately, the writer, perhaps because he or she clearly doesn't come to GAA meetings, hasn't noticed that a union is no longer being formed. Under the Ontario Labour Relations Act, the GAA was certified as a union on November 27, 1975.

More to the point, many of our members from the science departments have attended our meetings, and taken part in our discussions. Their contributions have been welcome and will continue to be.

The assertion that our executive members will be paid should there ever be a strike is just ludicrous and has no basis in fact. It appears to be a misreading of a clause in our contract proposal with deals with the unlikely effect of a bargaining committee member being forced to miss a class to bargain. Since our experience in this round of bargaining has been that this doesn't happen, the clause has already been dropped.

The writer asserts that "seniority is a joke". We can only answer that hiring procedures as they now exist for part-timers and TA's are one of the universities cruelest jokes. Our seniority proposals try, in part, to deal with this. They were approved at two general membership meetings.

The GAA holds general membership meetings the first Thur-

sdays of every month in CLH A at 4:00 p.m. All eligible members, including the letter writer are urged to attend. At each of these meetings, the Bargaining Committee reports on its progress in negotiations.

The bargaining process is a fluid one, and our positions will continue to change. They will be determined, as they always have been: in response to the desires of our membership as they are articulated and voted upon at membership meetings.

David Chud,
Executive and
Bargaining Committee,
GAA

Musallam wronged

Concerning the article in last week's story about the CYSF candidates, we feel Excalibur has printed misleading information about Founders College Student Council. It is true that the council did not endorse Izidore Musallam at the meeting of February 29, 1976 (as the council never entertained a motion to do so), but it was not pointed out in the article that Barry Edson was also present at that meeting to present his platform.

A motion was presented for Edson's endorsement. It was seconded and later dropped, following a motion to remain neutral, which ended in a vote of 8-1 in favour of neutrality.

Excalibur seems to have written the information in an obviously misleading manner. The statement that "Musallam was unable to win an endorsement from Founders college council, of which he is president" suggests a negative situation rather than one of neutrality.

Although Excalibur has printed some facts concerning the issue, we feel that in the future, the newspaper should print all the information to avoid suppositions of this kind.

Chuck Gaviller
Alan Rossman
Nora Goldlust
Brenda Stewart
Jill Barber
Trenholm Healy
Martin Walpert
Maurice Skivington
Joseph Montagnese
Stan White
Barry Springgay,
members,
Founders College Student Council

Tactics slammed

At 4:30 on Monday, March 1, I received a call from Mary Marrone, who announced that she represented "the Anti-Cutbacks Committee" and that she wanted to know what might be the impact of cutbacks on Calumet College.

Because I did not know who Ms. Marrone represented, because I have only a partial knowledge of college finances, and because I feared giving her imprecise information, I offered to set up a meeting between her and the college staff. I was told that there was "not enough time" for such a meeting.

Again, on Tuesday, Ms. Marrone called to ask the same question. When I answered (perhaps somewhat impatiently) that I could not give her, at that moment, the information she wanted, she said that all she was after were "general impressions."

I consider this sort of canvassing of college staff highly irresponsible, since all of us are

deeply concerned about reductions in our budgets and are therefore liable to sound off with prophecies of doom if asked for "impressions." But, as we all know, cutbacks are specific, not vaguely general, financial occasions; one can never know what the effects will be until the cutbacks are actually made and, to my knowledge, the 76-77 budgets have not yet been handed down; and, in the last analysis, a cutback is not necessarily a horrible thing.

It is, however, an opportunity (if unasked-for) to make decisions about the life of our college and community which, perhaps, we would not otherwise make; it can be a goal to think about what is important about or life together.

Because Ms. Marrone, and presumably her Committee, are interested not in facts, but in "general impressions" — because more political mileage can be gotten out of anxiety than statistics — I'm afraid their work will ultimately come to nothing. But that's the best we can hope for. The worst that could happen is

that the Committee will spread mis-information and irresponsible predictions, and hence eclipse the real (and perhaps not-so-dramatic) significance of cutbacks in 76-77.

John B. Mays,
Student Liaison Officer,
Calumet College

Word of thanks

Just a word of thanks to the student who assisted me Tuesday, March 2 approximately 5 p.m. in Parking Lot D, in getting my car out of a snow drift.

I know there were quite a few people helping others get out of the parking lots that evening. It is especially rewarding to find that there are still gentlemen around in this day and age of Women's Lib, and so on.

I hope that the particular student who helped me reads this. Bouquets of flowers to you. Thanks again.

Janet Waisglass
Residence Secretary
Bethune College

Opinion

ULCers support ULC

The current United Left Slate election campaign marks the culmination of this year's ULC-led CYSF student union. Despite the lack of editorial support from Excalibur, the CYSF fought for the interests of students during its campaigns for;

1) university-run, non-profit food service as endorsed by the student referendum in November;

2) support of the NDP during the September provincial election on the basis of its programme in opposition to cutbacks in post-secondary education and its opposition to tuition fee hikes;

3) support of Dr. Henry Morgentaler in his struggles to uphold the jury system and for the free choice of woman to bear children;

4) an Ontario-wide student campaign against post-secondary cutbacks which won the support of the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS) in the form of the January 21 meeting and rally at U. of T.-Queen's Park of 2,500 students;

5) a province-wide OFS-initiated moratorium day of study against the cutbacks in social services on March 24;

6) building the Toronto-based Coalition Against Cutbacks which is organizing the March 11 protest at U. of T.'s Convocation Hall against cutbacks in hospital services, transit fare increases, etc.

With a record such as this, many will wonder why the Excalibur editorial this week supports the Edson electoral campaign. Despite the outright opposition of the editors of Excalibur to the policies of the United Left Coalition in the CYSF on the food campaign, the Excalibur staff might very well have endorsed the current ULS campaign. For that reason the staff meeting denied voting rights to candidates who are members of the staff.

Considering that six ULS staff members were purged from voting and the vote to endorse Edson passed by only eight to three (two abstentions), it makes it clear why Edson's supporters have to

resort to technical manoeuvres to win their support.

The decision itself to deny votes to the six ULSers was made by a very slim majority of 11 to nine despite the precedent set at a previous meeting of the staff when it was decided that a two-third majority was needed to disenfranchise any staff member, a rather drastic step to say the least. This is in consideration of the fact that members of the staff for up to three years such as Mike Hollett and Paul Kellogg were disenfranchised even though they voted during last year's decision on the CYSF election while they were members and candidates of the ULS.

This latest manoeuvre of the editors of Excalibur is not atypical of their general attitude to the CYSF which they regard as the local authority which they are obliged to attack. This is despite the obvious presence of the Board of Governors which even controls the entire budget of the CYSF.

Rather than speaking out for the interests of students throughout the year, the editors have led the attack on ULC, the only viable political force on campus fighting for the students against the current government's campaign of cutbacks. The editorial piece in this issue is only a continuation of that policy of not lining up with the interests of students, as a student newspaper should, but on the side of the opposition to those interests. At the present time that means giving support to the passive rhetoric of the Edson campaign.

The only alternative is still the United Left Slate, as proven by the CYSF's record and Edson's lack of any record.

Abie Weisfeld
Mike Hollett
Paul Kellogg
Paul Stuart
Frank Lento
Gord Graham
Ian Mulgrew
Ted Mumford
Robert Kasher,
members,
United Left Coalition

Lindy Bill
YOUNG & ROOT

IN CONCERT
THURSDAY MARCH 18, 1976

8:30 p.m.

BETHUNE JUNIOR COMMON ROOM

admission \$1.75

DO YOU KNOW THE PLATFORMS
OF
BARRY EDSON
IZIDORE MUSALLAM
GAEL SILZER



WE URGE YOU
TO FIND OUT AND
VOTE INTELLIGENTLY
The Jewish Student Federation