

Editorial

CYSF charter in dire need of an overhaul

An advertisement appeared in the pages of last week's *Excalibur* inviting applications for the position of Director of Social and Cultural Affairs on the executive of the Council of the York Student Federation (CYSF). (The position recently became vacant when Jackie Cabildo, the winner in April's student elections, fell ill and was unable to continue in that post.)

It may seem strange that a position subject to the election process five months ago can now be had by submitting a resume. But if one is dealing with CYSF's official Charter this occurrence is perfectly normal.

Where one would expect a by-election, the Charter calls for an appointment. In fact, the Charter does not even require the position to be elected in the first place. Only the office of the President and the directorships of Internal, External, and Women's Affairs are bound by CYSF statute to be contested through a general student election. Whether or not the other directorships (Social and Cultural, Academic, Finance, and Services and Communications) are determined through an election depends on the whim of that year's edition of Council.

Why CYSF's own official document should deem a portfolio such as Social and Cultural Affairs less important than these other ones is unfathomable, especially in the multicultural context of York University. The student population, despite its widespread apathy, must never be removed from the decision-making process; a Charter that forces arbitrary measures such as this is a disgrace and in desperate need of an overhaul.

This episode also demonstrates the urgency of a much more financially healthy student government. A by-election for this vacant position would cost \$1,500, according to CYSF President Gerard Blink. Given CYSF's precarious financial position (an operating budget of about \$235,000), Blink and the rest of the executive had no recourse but to follow the Charter.

Hopefully, changes to the Charter will be instituted in the near future. The perfect opportunity to effect these alterations will soon arrive; they can be implemented the same time as are the recommendations of Guelph Provost Paul Gilmor's review of student government. If his discussion paper released last month is any indication, CYSF may gain this much-needed financial security and never have to face a similar situation again.



NEW FOOD MARKETING AT CENTRAL SQUARE CAF.

excalibur

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Letters

CYSF aware of slogan's vulgar connotations, Blink says, so 'Up York, *Excalibur*'

Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to respond to your comments in last week's (September 4, 1986) edition of *Excalibur*.

As you put it "The CYSF Way: . . . is promoting their new slogan 'Up York,' seemingly oblivious to its vulgar connotations." When we decided to use this fine slogan we were absolutely aware of the vulgar connotations that could be inter-

preted from it. We also felt that, taken in the positive sense, it is a phrase which might increase the rather low York spirit.

York has a great deal to offer its students and once we believe this, others will believe it too.

In closing I have only one thing to say; Up York, *Excalibur*.

—Gerard Blink
President, CYSF

By PAULETTE PEIROL

Is the quality of food and service in the Central Square cafeteria worth the \$200,000 that Elite Food Services and York spent last summer on its structural and aesthetic renovations? Norman Crandles, President of Food, Housing and Ancillary Services, thinks that it is.

"We're spending a lot of money on our image," Crandles said in response to last week's *Excalibur* editorial, which criticized the cafeteria for spending valuable money on aesthetic considerations rather than lowering food prices and/or improving food quality.

"The renovations were meant to solve logistical problems," Crandles later stated, "so that people can get in and out faster." Crandles also noted that the cafeteria and its kitchen equipment had become worn after 20 years of constant use. "We're in the process of rebuilding everything," he said.

Obsolescence is to be expected. But now that the rust has been scoured from our coffee urns, the question still remains: are the barely consumable products that York's cafeterias churn out worth the price students must pay for them?

"We're not subsidized," Crandles defended. "Laws preclude universities from subsidizing subsidiary services, so business operations must be self-sustaining." Yet Elite Food Services, which just renewed its five-year contract for Central Square

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with the University Food and Beverage Services Committee (UFBSC), must be more than merely "self-sustaining" to be willing to fork out such funds for renovations.

York's cafeterias are operated by seven different food company services, and every five years the food areas are put up for tender. Elite Food Services offered the UFBSC a higher percentage of their gross profits than other bidders, plus to pay the bulk of the renovation costs, in exchange for a renewed five year contract.

Next year, the food areas in Complex I (Vanier, Winters, Founders, and McLaughlin Colleges) will be put up for tender, and Crandles said that renovation proposals will be a primary consideration of the UFBSC. York receives between 10 and 22 percent of the net profit of its food company services. (Crandles refused to disclose exact percentages.)

Although Crandles stated that the university's cafeterias are not subsidized, he earlier said that Complex I, Complex II (Stong and Norman Bethune Colleges), and Glendon cafeterias, all run by Rills food services, are subsidized insofar as "the university gets a return percentage but then also pays overhead prices." York loses over \$250,000 on these "residence cafeterias," according to Crandles.

To compensate for this quarter of a million dollar deficit, York receives a higher return on its other cafeterias such as those in Central Square and

Osgoode Hall. While residence students receive discount food prices in the form of tax-free scrip payments, the rest of the York community must pay inflated prices for food.

"Essentially, the residence students are subsidized by commuter students, faculty, and staff," Crandles admitted.

Yet Crandles also claims that "the university has full supervision of (cafeteria) prices," as each caterer must submit price increase proposals to each UFBSC users committee. Central Square cafeteria prices have increased "only three percent," said Crandles.

So how is it that college pubs and coffee shops manage to keep their prices more equitable? According to Crandles, they pay less in overhead costs, are not open as many hours, and make most of their profit in alcohol sales.

If the UFBSC users committees are unwilling or unable to find food service companies offering lower food prices, perhaps the students' only solution is to live off bagels and chili, in college pubs and coffee shops, to protest cafeteria prices. Although selection may be more limited, the pubs and coffee shops' ambience and better food will make your meals much more readily digestible. And you won't be accosted with signs proclaiming that "this dining facility is no longer able to accommodate lounging, studying, tables games, etc."