

CYSF has yet to define "political" clubs

In the debate concerning CYSF's recent ruling to deny any financial assistance to York clubs viewed to be "political", no one has yet provided a clear definition of a "political club". This definition is essential to the students' efforts to form a sound opinion on the subject. I spoke to members of CYSF in an attempt to clarify my understanding of their position and the rationale behind it.

One might view "political" in the broadest sense as referring to clubs who take an interest in and engage in activities with a specific political orientation. This, however, would seem to admit the political nature of such groups as the Third World Students' Union, who recently sponsored a lecture by the leader of a political party and one-time Prime Minister of Guyana, Cheddi Jagan. This was an event with obvious political importance.

But no, political consciousness as exhibited by the TWSU does not constitute a political club. What then does? The CYSF 1976-77 resolution governing the financing and operation of student clubs was sent to all club presidents by CYSF President Paul Hayden. The memorandum states that the guide-

lines set forth are for this year also. In it, a political club is defined as "the affiliate of a political party engaged in the activity of running candidates in elections outside the university area".

To the best of my knowledge the Trotskyist League is not formally aligned to any such parent association. The United Left Slate is, by definition, a solely on-campus group.

Although it's the only one available on the books, even the CYSF admits that the latter definition does not stand up. Both President Hayden and executive member Gary Empey suggested

that, in fact, this year's council agrees upon a very different working definition.

They told me that a political club is one which states in its constitution, that the purpose of the club is to advocate a defined political ideology and that one must adhere to such ideology in order to be a member. Supposedly, the rationale for cutting funds lies in the assumption that these become groups that are closed to the majority of students on campus.

Perhaps the political club would do well to follow the example of different religious groups on campus. Paul Hayden suggested

that since the York Christian Fellowship brings together Christians of different denominations, although all Christian, they cannot be viewed as closed in the same manner as political clubs. The fact that the United Left Slate has members of different political lines or tendencies, though granted they all accept a general Marxist perspective, must escape him.

A second parallel with the religious groups may be drawn. As stated in this year's *Manus*, the membership of the Catholic Community at York "is open to all Roman Catholics and those interested in the aims and activities of the community (p.28. my emphasis). In this way one need not strictly adhere to a specific religious belief and surely council does not wish to suggest that those holding political beliefs can be discriminated against while those adhering to religious creeds are not. Where then would their definition stand if groups with specific political ideologies admitted sympathizers? CYSF seems to be searching for a definition of the "political club" that attributes characteristics to

political groups which are uniquely different from the characteristics of any other campus club to which they are willing to allot funds. I have challenged their ability to find one.

Without such a definition the council's actions to discriminate against political clubs contradicts the democratic principles that it, and our society are based on. Remember the old adage, "I may disagree with what he says, but I'll defend with my life his right to say it?"

Admittedly concerns of budget constraints and representative distribution of funds must be considered. But let us not forget the principles in question.

Speaking of which, I'd like to, in conclusion, bring to your attention another principle relevant to the discussion; participatory democracy. Let me quote from CYSF President Paul Hayden's comments in the *Manus*:

"Student politics or all politics for that matter, tend to turn a lot of students off and this is one problem the President is concerned with... Politics have always been controversial and will always remain so, but involvement in it allows a student to understand the process and serve the community. This can be one of the most valuable experiences of your university life". (p.20).

You figure out the logic inherent in Hayden's subsequent stand on political clubs - I can't.

Jane Karpenko



Can this omission be accidental?

By Harvey Pinder

Excalibur has extended an invitation to me to report on the Board of Governors. This column will not be a news report of BOG meetings; nor, hopefully, will it degenerate into name-calling.

But one thing should be clear; this column will be partisan, it will take sides, and it will suggest solutions and actions to be taken.

I was elected on an explicit platform advocating fundamental change of the BOG and the un-

Excalibur saying the University was spending tens of thousands of dollars providing free food and liquor to the elite of York at Chancellors Dinners.

He explained that there was a Chairmans' Fund, to which Governors donate money, and which pays for functions of this type.

I asked directly whether any University money is used to pay for these events. I was assured that none was, but since the meeting I have received information that this may not be the situation.

In order to find out I will have to make a formal written request for the information, then wait for a reply. The case of "who pays for the booze?" continues.

Out of that case came another one when the administration refused to tell me how much the Chancellors' Dinners cost. (Why they didn't tell me at that time about the Chairmans' Fund is a mystery.)

In any case I was assured that financial information would be available in future, but I suppose, with some technical strings attached.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 and we moved to the residence of Glendon's Principal for drinks and dinner with the Deans. I felt compelled to remain sober for the subsequent discussion, bypassing

the temptation of all that whiskey, rum, and gin for the asking.

This column will appear when

necessity dictates, hopefully not weekly since it takes so long to compose.

BOG report

versity. In addition this year has seen the worsening of York's financial position, and the prospect next year of drastic cutbacks. Since the BOG is the ultimate financial decision-making body of York, it will be one of the battlegrounds on which the future of York is decided, and is the motivating force for this column.

The most recent meeting was partially reported on in last week's *Excalibur*. My motion for the mandatory presence of at least one student and one faculty member on the executive was defeated. It leaves the ludicrous situation where 18 out of 30 BOG members belong to its executive.

This is equivalent to 60%; and which of us can think it accidental that not one student or faculty member was included?

What was left out, presumably due to lack of space, was the Chairman's response to my letters in

TA thanks Federation

I am ex-graduate student in the department of mathematics, and had returned this year as a teaching assistant on a student visa. But due to a sudden receipt of information about the critical condition of my mother back home, I could not continue my studies and withdrew from the university in the middle of the first term, on November 18.

I had not enough money to go back home. However, the York Muslim Student Federation and some other Muslim friends came to my rescue and they helped me a lot in buying my ticket allowing me to return home to see my ailing mother. I am very grateful to the Federation for this help and pray to Allah that they have success in their endeavour to run the Federation properly and smoothly.

I would also request the York University authorities to give their full cooperation to the York Muslim Student Federation so that they will be able to do even more in the future to help needy students.

M. Shakil

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<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">FOLK AND BLUES</p> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: 0.8em;">Amateur folk and blues artists are welcome to perform every Thursday night in the Cafe. 8:30 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">LA CREPERIE</p> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: 0.8em;">Reasonably-priced crepes, salads, quiche and cider every Sunday from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. ATA Building, 435 Queen's Quay West. For information, call Centre Francophone at 368-1772.</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">STEAL THIS SHOW...PLEASE</p> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: 0.8em;">A multimedia satirical revue of the TV generation, presented by Change Channels Theatre in the Theatre at 8:30 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">POETRY EVENING</p> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: 0.8em;">Tonight (Nov. 29) it's an open reading, featuring members of the audience. 8:30 p.m. in the Cafe.</p>
<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">OPEN SING IN CONCERT</p> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: 0.8em;">Country-folk performers Mark Barrett and Jane Ripley, Bill Clint, Bob Miller, Hank Roy and Carl Gilbert and Crabgrass in concert on Sunday, November 27 in the Theatre, beginning at 2 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">WEDNESDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES</p> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: 0.8em;">The program for November 30 looks at India in four films: In India the Sun Rises in the East, Amjad Ali Khan, Food for a Hungry World: The Grains of Conflict and Indira Gandhi: The State of India 8:30 p.m. in the Cafe.</p>

Free admission unless otherwise stated. Free parking. For more information on these and other programs during the week, call us at 364-5665.

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