

Editorial

A question of "fairness"

Although the Marge Mackenzie case has been 'officially' settled, its broader implications remain unresolved. While it is true that Mackenzie had more judicious ways of handling the informal ban than continuously entering Stong residence and ignoring its residence rules, the circumstances behind the imposition of the ban help to explain her actions.

Mackenzie was banned from Stong residence by College Master Hedi Bourouai following complaints from an unnamed group of Stong residents that Mackenzie had been walking around naked, coming on to all the male residents on the fourth floor, and generally making a nuisance of herself. Yet instead of confirming these allegations, Bourouai promptly banned Mackenzie on the basis of hearsay. It seems rather odd, however, that Bourouai then found the time and energy to send letters to all Stong residents informing them of the ban, but meanwhile did not even attempt to contact Mackenzie about it.

These circumstances make it hard to accept Bourouai's assurances that Mackenzie was dealt with fairly and raises questions about what exactly his definition of fairness is. Is banning someone "informally" from residence without a hearing, fair? Is accepting at face value a "general comment" of 44 residence students without making any attempt whatsoever to ascertain the other side's position, fair? It is a deeply troubling situation when a member of the Administration takes in rumours instead of evidence, and is then content to let the matter ride.

If Bourouai thinks that he and the Administration were "more than fair, in fact we bent over backward to help her," then perhaps the Master of Stong College's ideas of justice and fairness are severely misconstrued. This statement simply doesn't square with the facts.

Why was it that, as of January 31, Mackenzie was worth banning according to the Administration, but following the launching of a defamation of character lawsuit and the entrance of lawyers and the Human Rights Commission into the fray, the Administration was suddenly willing to be "nice?" There is a serious lack of checks on the power of an Administration official, such as Bourouai, if he is allowed to impose a ban on people without giving them a chance to defend themselves.

The Mackenzie incident dramatically points out this flaw in the University's administrative structure and steps should be taken, as quickly as possible, to protect students from future abuses of authority.



Problems with the new York phone system: J.J.'s Typing Service keep getting Johnny Cash songs

Letters

excalibur

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"Lunch-ins" called for to protest Faculty Club ban

Editor:

While our attention has been focused on acts of oppression elsewhere in the world, we have overlooked the oppression we ourselves as students experience every day. Jerry Farber said in 1967 that, "student is nigger." This statement rings true today as it did back then. We as students have always been subordinated by faculty members and by the administration. Recent events have highlighted this fact. The "FACULTY CLUB," or "SunCity" as we like to call it, has barred students from entering its doors. They fear that students would "take over," they fear that students may socialize with faculty members. Heaven forbid! Where will it end? Perhaps there should be segregated hallways so that faculty members would not have to associate with students. How about segregated classrooms? Faculty members could pre-record their lectures and have them sent to classrooms. This way professors would not have to encounter students nor answer questions. We are tired of being treated as second rate citizens. We are not the plague, we are human just like faculty members. Frankly, I do not think they have the legal right to bar us from the restaurant. Beyond legalities, I do not think they have the ethical right to do so. It is time that we stood up for our rights and stopped being so apathetic or soon we will have no rights at all! In response to the recent actions by the Faculty Club, perhaps we can stage "lunch-ins" in which we bring our lunches and eat them in front of the "Club." Or perhaps a hunger strike would be in better order. But whatever course of action we choose, we should act quickly and united otherwise we will lose the few rights we have as students.

—Cervello Rosso

Closing nuclear reactors will condemn millions to death

Editor:

The world has had about 4000

gigawatt-years experience with commercial nuclear reactors before experiencing the first serious accident (that is, we have had at least 200 reactors running for about 20 years). If the worst estimates are believed, 10,000 people will die as a result, over the next 10 years.

However, before we start closing down our power reactors, etc., we should consider that the same amount of energy, if produced by coal or oil, would have killed about a quarter of a million people. Thus, even if we assume Western reactors are as unsafe as Soviet ones, we see that fossil fuels are 24 times as dangerous as nuclear. But in fact Western reactors, which have 5 foot thick containment domes, and use water as a moderator instead of graphite, are a great deal safer than Soviet ones. We know this is so because the Three Mile Island reactor, which suffered a very similar accident to the Chernobyl reactor, released almost no radiation in comparison.

If we close down our nuclear power programs, we will not be saving lives. But condemning millions to death by pollution from coal and oil, which are the only economically viable alternatives to nuclear.

Worse still, in a few generations the coal and oil will be exhausted. Then, if the world has forgotten how to use nuclear energy, billions will die of cold and hunger through lack of any form of energy.

—J.M. McNamee

Lessons for world leaders from U.S. raid on Libya

Editor:

We wish to point out to President Ghadaffy that terrorism shows no sign of achieving justice for the Palestinian people; to President Reagan that bombing Libya will only increase terrorism, as it has already done; and to Mr. Gorbachev that local conflicts should not interfere with discussions on disarmament between the superpowers.

—Prof. J.M. McNamee

Prof. P. Gray

Co-Chairmen,

York Association for Peace

York visitor "disgusted" by parking office treatment

Editor:

It is with regret that I feel compelled to draw your attention to the way York University treats its visitors. What does it take for a one-time visitor who paid for parking, who had to spend 20 minutes to find directions on your campus, who was heavily loaded down with equipment to be forgiven for parking in an empty lot?

On October 23, 1985, I was invited to conduct a workshop for Women Plan Toronto at the Faculty of Environmental Studies. I paid my parking fee at the gate and started my search for the new FES building, which was unknown to me, the parking attendants, several staff and pedestrians I consulted. Thus delayed by almost 20 minutes I ended up having to rush and parked in a practically empty lot adjacent to the Faculty. I was extremely heavily loaded with my camera, tape recorders, 4 ft long paper rolls, literature and other presentation materials. Several years ago when I attended FES at its old location I always paid at the gate and parked in the lot behind Scott Library. So this seemed the proper procedure.

To my total shock upon my return after the workshop, my car was tagged with a \$10.00 ticket. Only after a further search did I discover a sign indicating the lot was reserved for cars with special stickers. While I could understand that the car would be tagged, for the tagging officer did not know my circumstances I certainly did expect that with my explanation the ticket would be withdrawn.

Not only was I asked to pay the fine before my appeal was heard and therefore assumed guilty before my side of the story could even be considered. But I was not even invited to be present when my case was heard. Since then I have received threats of being persecuted by collection agencies, one of them without even a signature.

I am so utterly disgusted with this inconsiderate treatment by your parking administration that I put a stop payment on my cheque, ready to face a legal suit and jail, assuming this is the way you wish people to be treated.

—Regula Modlich