

Excalibur

Everything secret degenerates; nothing is safe that does not show it can bear discussion and publicity
—Lord Acton

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Harbinger once again at the end of its tether

While the need at York for a clinic providing abortion referral, birth control information and sex counselling soars frighteningly through the eastern sky, Harbinger (the one place at York which provides exactly those services) is sinking ever more rapidly into the west.

This may be the last time.

Ever since Harbinger first appeared on the York scene in 1970 (in its earliest incarnation, it was called the York student clinic), it has been forced to divide its time more or less equally between providing the services it was designed to provide and scraping together the money it needed to go on providing those services. Always on a shoe-string budget.

This year, however, the situation is especially severe. Harbinger has budgeted expenditures for the year of \$20,639. So far, it has managed to collect only \$11,150. That'll hold the ship together until February 15. After that, it's all begging, pleading, hoping and finger-crossing.

The villain of the story, once again, is the university administration. Once upon a time, the university provided a substantial portion of Harbinger's funds. Not any more. The figure has descended from well over \$5,000 in 1970 to a mere \$2,500 this year. The college councils and the CYSF have gamely gone on, plugging up the holes in Harbinger's balance sheets — but that can't go on forever. The councils simply cannot afford it.

Abortion referrals at Harbinger are up by 100 per cent this year. And where there's a need for abortion referral there is obviously a chronic need for birth control information. Harbinger provides both, as well as a variety of other services including sex counselling, housing information and liaison with a wide range of social agencies in the city.

Dr. James Wheler, medical director of health services at York, has expressed little interest in providing similar services. The counselling and development centre doesn't fill the bill. If Harbinger goes, it will leave a great gaping hole.

It must not be allowed to happen.

In the fall of 1974, the university set up an advisory committee to report on health services at York. It was chaired by the then CYSF president Anne Scotton. The committee was to report in June; then it was to report in September. It has still not uttered so much as a peep. Why? Because the university, no doubt, wants to see Harbinger sink limply into the western horizon. Dr. Wheler has referred to Harbinger's clientele as those "sexually non-aligned, anti-establishment types". "Essentially un-touchable," he calls them.

Anyone who gets pregnant is a pervert?

Really? It's high time the university administrators stopped quivering in their sanitized shoes and provided Harbinger with sufficient money to tide it through this year. It's high time, as well, that an ongoing and adequate funding formula for Harbinger was established. Because the need is there.

Best of both worlds

Three cheers. The do nothing administration has done something - they've convinced Commercial Caterers that only through the termination of their contract can the university begin to pacify some of the complaints about food in Stong and Bethune colleges.

It is a small step, but it was a crucial one.

One cannot help but feel, however, that the administration is about to make the same mistake once again. There is no doubt that the multi-caterer posture tried this year has, if not met with total success, generally improved the quality and service of dining at York.

Yet one of the three caterers, Commercial Caterers, has from the beginning drawn the wrath of the community. Is there any guarantee that Commercial's replacement will be any better?

What is needed is a thorough, all-embracing study of the feasibility of a non-profit food service operated by the university. Norman Crandles of ancillary services has stated that it would result in institutionalized feeding, similar to that of Commercial and Versafood before it.

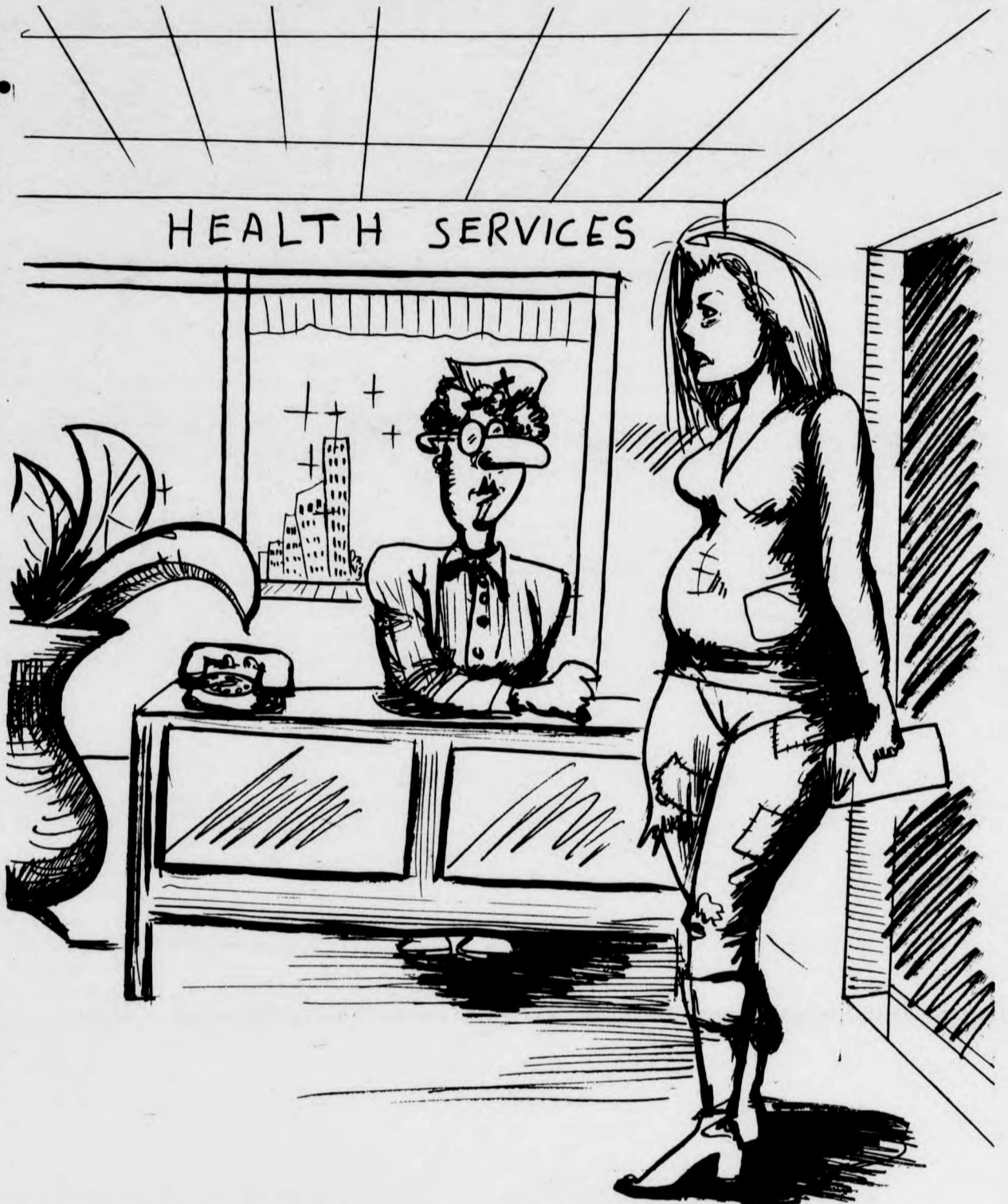
Perhaps so, but it occurs to us that if the university could resist going whole-hog and swamping the campus with its operation, a university-run food service might work. The university should concentrate its operation in one or two cafeterias, giving students the best of both worlds (non-profit and private catering.)

We would still have a multi-caterer posture at York, only one of the caterers would be run by the university at cost. It might just work. Well, we can dream anyway.

EXCALIBUR

staff meeting
room 111

today 1 p.m.
Central Square



"I'm sorry Miss, but we treat only sexually-aligned, pro-establishment, touchable types here. You'll have to go across the hall to, er, Harbinger. They'll be able to take care of you, I'm sure."

No student is an island

Skeptical pundits to the contrary, last Wednesday's mass rally and march protesting education cutbacks in funding brought together between 2,000 and 3,000 students, who gave palpable evidence of the fears of many students in this province.

It was a meeting of minds and of voices, and, from all accounts, a great time was had by all. The real danger is that the rally and the cutbacks will leap from the front pages of student newspapers to the back of students' minds, and remain as only a fond memory of some fussing and cussing on a cold, winter's day.

Aside from being a show of strength, which will be of dubious value at the next PC caucus meeting, the rally brought forward some worthwhile points.

Ryerson president Walter Pitman impressed with his oratory as well as his grasp of ideas. In effect, he told students not to stick their heads in the sand and ignore everything around them.

The Henderson report, after all, did a little more than just recommend tuition increases of 65 per cent over three years and an eventual phasing out of

government grants. It also called for a trimming of medical services and civil service.

For students to try to satisfy their selfish requirements to the exclusion of some of the other groups directly affected by the Henderson report, would be tantamount to demanding more money for their needs at the expense of health and welfare and the civil service.

Not only would this be a suicidal strategy, it would also represent a gross miscalculation of the political climate in Ontario at this time. One need only look to the Ontario Liberal leadership convention of last weekend, in which none of the six candidates ever publicly mentioned the words "post-

secondary school education", for a reaffirmation of the position students occupy in the government's list of priorities.

It is not enough to just march to Queen's park, box lunches in one hand and placards in the other, screaming "bullshit" and "down with cutbacks". Protest marches only have an affect when broad public sentiment backs the marchers. Students are not in that luxurious position.

If they are to succeed in burying the Henderson report, student leaders must align themselves with the civil service, and with citizen and hospital groups for a mellowing of all cutbacks.

We need them, more than they need us.

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