

EXCALIBUR

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

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Bad moves from CYSF

Looking at the record of Council of the York Student Federation this year, one can only hope that next year is better. Although there is a new constitution, the rest of the achievements claimed are indeed rather slim.

There's the \$9,200 business manager whose job wasn't advertised and then when hired, wasn't used by the president, Michael Fletcher for the winter carnival.

There's the counter calendar which is a pretty fair job despite some of the courses it lacked.

But the other achievements claimed are absolutely ludicrous because they are strictly office management which

anybody with any sort of sense would have come up with. It's a sign of pretty bad management when your laurels rest on simply organizing yourself.

The winter carnival fiasco is an important lesson because it shows that for all the rhetoric Fletcher gave about organization, he left one bank account open for him and Neil Staff to handle monies outside the business office: Not that we'd dare think there was some money going under the table to various friends but . . .

The distinct possibility is there. And now business manager Doug Wise and CYSF have to pick up the pieces after Fletcher and company have finished.



Some rambling thoughts on the year's events

This is a rambling piece of self-indulgence from the editor's desk after one year at York main. My apologies are extended to those who expect something much better and more positive.

By ANDY MICHALSKI

Trying to recap the major events at York is very much like trying to put an octopus back in the jar once it's escaped. No matter what happens, you'll never get all of it in.

Perhaps one of the biggest stories of the year would be the resurgence of unionism within York's structure. The 200 plus cleaners under Canadian Union of Public Employees gained not only a reasonable wage increase, but also a new sense of togetherness that it always lacked.

The administration was its predictable self in a "let's wring them dry" attitude. The settlement reflected York's unpreparedness to sit through a November strike. Too much garbage and too much bad publicity would tarnish York's liberal image.

With some workers earning more than secretaries, the old blue versus white collar prejudices have started flowing. The secretaries still don't want to unionize and still prefer their York University Staff Association. It's too bad. They could learn about the Quebec civil service in unionizing and fighting for decent salaries.

The student political scene will probably remain as debauched as ever so long as the present Council of the York Student Federation stays tied in any way with the college councils over budgetary matters. When Excalibur came out twice a week in November and December, its impact over CYSF — college council politics tripled. Unfortunately, York president David Slater decided he didn't want to make a decision on the legality of the referendum. "The college councils charged it wasn't legal. So Slater got his hatchet man, student services director John Becker to get the two sides together over some bottles of wine. The end result was a new constitution which only one man will ever really be able to decipher: John Becker.

If anything the entire scenario proved the absolute powerlessness of student politics. CYSF is tied to the college councils who in turn report directly to college masters (administrators).

It's like a souped-up kindergarten game. For CYSF, it's been a wasted year with one piece of political sham after the other. Its credibility with students is nil, especially after the past election when so many election irregularities occurred, when 1,526 signed a petition calling for a rebalot and none was held. The petty bureaucrats want to hold their jobs at all costs. John Theobald as president-elect wants the job so badly that one can only ask "What for?"

As usual, Excalibur itself has come under a great deal of attack. Everyone has his or her own conception of what a student newspaper should be. It's comforting to note that nobody really questioned the report on mass media by federal senator Keith Davey stating, "Canada's best student newspapers are still unprofessional, shrill, scurrilous, radical, tasteless, inaccurate, obscene and wildly unrepresentative of their campus audience."

One might question just why any newspaper should be hung up on professionalism, low-key reporting, conservatism, taste, respectability and representation of a campus audience. Just how well — we might ask — does the Toronto Star represent Torontonians? It's interesting to note that the only stories it considered reporting about York was the charges of anti-semitism against the new academic vice-president, the killing of pigeons and Atkinson student Gar Mahood's fight against board of governor Leonard Lumbers over \$10.

Although we have been charged with looking too much like the Globe and Mail in covering all that "dull political crap" around York, the only guideline that any newspaper can operate under is a policy determined by those who work for the paper. Just how do we speak for York? Take weekly surveys?

What people don't realize, is that the more professional a paper gets, the more exclusive of York students it becomes. The only thing

any editor is assured of no matter what he does, is putting his name on the line and criticism from there on in. Because York lacks any sense of community, there is a natural skepticism to disbelieve what one reads. Besides, most students and professors are still caught in the high school syndrome of "after all, the establishment must know what it's doing."

The same academic issues are up again this year — natural science and social science. Chronically the worst student-rated, they are filled by compulsion and suitable rapport goes downward from that point. York is still unwilling to experiment, unwilling to drop its fallacious arguments for the whole man that never comes about through compulsion and still even more unwilling to drop its holy cause of the college system.

If it's anything that York has shown this reporter, it's the hopeless alienation that one environment can superimpose on anyone's character. Huge piles of concrete, every ill of

suburbia on the doorstep, no sense of community commitment, a drive-in mentality of its faculty and pervading fear of despair about York's future, has brought a rather frightening cynicism about every philosophical aspect about life in general.

To say something positive about York is like trying to wring blood out of the proverbial stone. To get nostalgic about alienation is to induce shock treatment on the mind.

Perhaps one bright spot, is that maybe someone may have learned by now how not to build a university. Like any burgeoning town, York's crime is on the upswing. Its sense of humanity is on the wane.

My thanks go to all of Excalibur's informed sources who — though not brave enough to be named — fed us information this year. Bigger thanks go to those who did name themselves.

Special thoughts go to the Excalibur staff who slaved endless hours over a quality product and to those who helped me keep my sanity and faith in the darkest hours.

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Plus: Sandra Souchotte, Paul Bourque, Sandy Cormack, John Oughton, David Leach, Brian Milner, Brenda Gray, Trish Hardman, Jackie Stroeter, Rolly Stroeter, and a cast of thousands. Photos by Tim Clark