

Excalibur

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

Excalibur, founded in 1966, is the York University weekly and is independent politically. Opinions expressed are the writer's and those unsigned are the responsibility of the editor. Excalibur is a member of Canadian University Press and attempts to be an agent of social change. Printed at Daison's, Excalibur is published by Excalibur Publications.

News 667-3201

Advertising 667-3800

Gambling on CYSF: the only game in town

Last year at this time, Stong College, the lone member of CYSF in the second college complex, threatened to drop out of the Council of the York Student Federation.

Its reasons were simple. The activities complex, seemed to be centred around the first college complex, consisting of Winters, Founders, Vanier and McLaughlin. The central Council used roughly 30 per cent of its funds for salaries and administrative costs. And Stong wanted to see essential student services like Harbinger, Excalibur and Radio York receiving more money.

In the end, the CYSF president held a meeting with Stong representatives and the issue died unceremoniously.

Bethune College, the second member of college complex two and not member of CYSF, is currently debating the same issue Strong failed to resolve is it worth being a member of CYSF?

Apart from political and social pros and cons, the basic issue is money.

Despite a recent flurry of administrative memos, which insisted that student council funds come from a general pool of university resources to which students just happen to contribute, each student at York pays what amounts to a \$27 student council fee.

Of this, \$17 goes into the coffers of the student's college, to be managed by a (generally) unpaid, elected council. The other \$10 reaches the vault of the central council, CYSF,

to be managed by a paid business manager, a paid president and an unpaid, elected council.

In Bethune's case, this \$10 rests in limbo, or, more accurately, in the university's trust. Negotiations between CYSF and Bethune last year freed \$3,375 for Bethune's own use, with the remainder going to Harbinger, Excalibur, the daycare centre and two others.

The question before the 1,400 students of Bethune, to be asked on a college-wide referendum on October 16, is whether this annual figure of \$14,000 should be released to CYSF upon Bethune's entry into that body; or whether the money should continue to be held in trust.

The main argument in favour of Bethune's joining CYSF is that for better or for worse, the central council is the spokesman for a unified student voice, and can throw whatever weight York students possess in directions where individual college councils can not.

In external affairs, through membership in the National Union of Students and the Ontario Federation of Students, CYSF can keep tabs on issues affecting students.

Concerning the issue of off-campus housing in North York, for instance, and the ludicrous by-law against more than two unrelated persons living in the same residence — a law which makes three or more students' sharing a townhouse illegal — CYSF is the logical mouthpiece for student constituents.

There is a more specific example: while OSAP, the student assistance programme, is governed by a formula, not all of that formula is determined by the government. Regional groups, including a Toronto-based group of colleges and universities of which York is a member, have the discretion within limits to set a weekly cost allowance for room and board for students, a sum included in the OSAP grants.

Despite the fact that the cost of living has skyrocketed over the past two years, the amount of this allowance has not even attempted to keep pace. Once again, student

thrust and impact could be channelled effectively only through the central body of CYSF.

If every CYSF attribute held as much potential as its political strength, the Bethune referendum would be no contest. But in the intenal working of the council within the university, CYSF's performance record, at least over the past few years, has been dismal.

Socially CYSF has been a bust. Apart from the Greaseball Boogie Band, which is not a particularly 'big' group, there has been no major concert activity since the Chilliwack-Robert Charlebois-Perth County Conspiracy bill a couple of years back.

Granted, York has no adequate facilities for hosting rock concerts — the Tail McKenzie people aren't crazy enough to let thousands of visitors destroy their gymnasium — but CYSF has never shown any inclination toward social life.

It has been the prerogative of the college to hold events like Winters' Cosmicon, Bethune's and Winters' film series, Bethune's Tap and Keg productions and Vanier's Encounter Canada, not to mention several college-sponsored symposia on everything from Irish literature to women's films.

In internal academic affairs, CYSF has been similarly unspectacular. A course evaluation book compiled a couple of years ago by an outside firm was ludicrously unhelpful. The future looks more promising. A new course evaluation book is in the works this year, which looks as though it may be on more solid ground.

Student handbooks have been unexciting at best; one yearbook-style ad-packed Winter Carnival handbook (for a rushed weekend which gave carnivals a bad name) alienated every advertiser in the city. Again in contrast this year's council is compiling a timely and helpful telephone directory.

There is no denying that the arguments that Bethune is doing more for its students' immediate needs than CYSF are well-founded.

CYSF's only response to charges of sluggishness in the areas of on-campus student services and social leadership could be to improve and attempt to regain some semblance of competence in those areas.

But despite frequent signs of inaction and folly, CYSF is still the most effective means of dealing with many campus-wide student issues, and Bethune would have a hard time justifying their reliance on these CYSF services while at the same time letting the other colleges foot the bill.

Bethune will still have its \$17 per

member student, and we in no way suggest that it should curtail its current services, which rank among the best of the colleges on this campus.

But as a York professor has said in another context, "we believe that a university is a university, and not a loose federation of banana republics." The republics, while handling the social and daily life of their constituents, should be prepared to pay for the responsibility of looking out for those constituents on the larger view.

Bethune should join CYSF.



NEWS ITEM: "Following the dramatic increase in construction costs since 1964, the design for the proposed York chapel has been slightly altered..."

Staff
meeting

Today
at 2 p.m.

Editor-in-chief
Warren Clements
Managing editor
Doug Tindal
News editor
Michael Hollett
Entertainment editor
Agnes Kruchio
Photo editor
Carlo Sguassero
Graphics
Peter Hsu
CUP editor
Gord Graham

Staff at large — Alan Risen, Ted Mumford, Garfield M. Payne, Steve Hain, Sue Cooper, Peter Matlainen, Ian Balfour, Kevin Richer, Chris Gates, Shelley Rabinovitch, Julian Beltrame, Norma Yeomanson, Bonnie Sandison, Mira Friedlander, Jim Omura, Jim McCall, Anna Vaitiekunas, Dale Ritch, Paul Stuart, Marg Poste, Frank Giorno, Alan Shalon, Thomas McKerr, Greg Martin, Robin Beckwith.

Business and Advertising
Jurgen Lindhorst

Opinion

Fund shows need for financing

BY ANTHONY GIZZIE

This past summer an ambitious undertaking was established by the Board of Governors of York University.

The anticipated result is a fund-raising campaign providing \$10 million for a newly established endowment fund. For those wondering, an endowment fund is defined by the fund-raisers as monies used in 'scientific research, the development of library resources, scholarship and bursary funds, academic and career counselling, special equipment and space redesign, areas essential for attracting outstanding staff and students.'

It is clear that these needs are sorely felt at York and that this fund is essential in future operations.

However, certain aspects raised by this campaign must be examined. The first deals with the issue of government financing.

York, believe it or not, is the third largest university in Ontario with 22,000 full and part-time degree students; yet York's average per student operating grant is a paltry \$2,756.

Compare this with the \$3,942 per student received at U of T; or the \$3,376 at McMaster or

\$3,121 at Ottawa.

For some bewildering reason — namely a lab costs more to maintain than a lecture hall — York lies close to the bottom in respect to government financing.

Can this explain the absence of bookstore discounts, ridiculous library fines, inadequate athletic facilities, and miserable meal plans?

Or is it because 'science and engineering' students have been granted more relevance in our blessed society by the provincial government than sociologists, psychologists, or historians?

Surely, the very existence of an endowment fund must tell the public that their taxes are not being put to full use by the government. Could it be that the public is unaware or is apathetic to such a calling? This possibility brings forth a second issue.

Who are the main contributors to such a fund? Ian Macdonald writes 'the campaign will be directed primarily at major corporations who brought about the success of the Founders Fund in 1965, and other corporations and individuals who are leaders in the community.'

If one considers that these men donate the

majority of funds to such a campaign it must also be understood that they benefit the most in the long run. This obviously should not be.

For years the universities have been controlled and manipulated by men of science, corporations and technocracy.

The common person, the taxpayer, has lost touch with the relevance of the university in society and subsequently the university has little contact with the 'community at large'.

It is truly the time to rectify such a situation. The university must lower itself from its pedestal, and go plead to the people for the funds it so desperately needs instead of packaging a nifty public relations brochure for the corporations.

Maybe then bridges can be constructed and the yield produced from the university can be directed towards the betterment of our society. It is this society which gives us our greatest financial support rather than an elitist few who control such power and influence.

At any rate, all York students hope the Board can fulfil its goal — but that in the future other means of support can be devised, for the benefit of all.