

Excalibur

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

NEW YORK (Guardian) — Some 500 demonstrators marched outside the New York Hilton Oct. 20 while inside business and church leaders gave U.S. president Richard Nixon the Gold Metal Award for "his massive and untiring efforts for world peace."



Apathy to action: the Canadian struggle

On Tuesday, Radio York public affairs resurrected — perhaps not wrongly — the issue of student apathy at York.

It was a program remarkable for its fairly original presentation — talk interspersed with relevant music — and lack of depth or systematic analysis — too short interviews with various York people and references to a number of examples of involvement in the United States (eg. Chicago).

The main problem with the program was not particularly the things said, but rather how they were said. At the end of the hour, one was left with rather a non-feeling and a big question of "so what; how does that relate to me at York?"

The producers of the program neglected to place the lack of apathy

in places like Chicago in the context of the worldwide struggle for change which many students, especially those in the Third World, are participating in.

Furthermore, it should have been pointed out that although there were particular issues which sparked the specific actions at the Democratic convention last year, (frustration with the sameness of the presidential candidates, racism, Vietnam), the activism of the thousands there did not develop merely out of reaction to any of those particular issues, but rather was based, generally speaking, in an awareness of the necessity to question what was going on around them; that is, to question rigorously, sometimes in the streets, the ideology of their country — the

wealthiest and most powerful — which perpetuated racism at home and perpetrated economic wars around the world under the guise of preserving freedom.

This was not brought out in Radio York's program; that is, that many students have shaken their apathy after taking a hard look at the society they are living in.

One of the unfortunate consequences of the Radio York program was that people could say afterwards: "What if U.S. students are being active in constructively criticizing their society. Take a look at the States; what kids are doing there is needed, what with the tremendous oppression of the blacks and the war. I'm not really concerned, though. Here in Canada, it's not like the States — it's quieter; the military-industrial complex doesn't exist, the Indian-white hassles are being worked out."

An attempt should have been made to answer these admittedly idealized questions. It might have been pointed out that although Canada has no home-grown military-industrial complex, the global one based in the south more than "adequately" does the job for/ to us. As an add to that it could have been shown very easily through published figures that Canada is the leading economic and cultural neo-colony of the United States.

The program could also have shown that the Indian-white hassles are not being worked out as amicably as federal and provincial spokesmen would have us believe. A five minute interview with almost any young Indian would have pointed that out — in specifics.

It would also have been necessary to bring up the Quebec struggles. As the articles on the opposite page and

the centerspread show, the situation is not, as prime minister Pierre Trudeau claims, a bothersome hassle between the Quebec people and a "small but vociferous minority" of militant separatists.

Rather, the situation is assuming the proportions of a mass independence struggle with growing numbers of Quebec workers and students allying against a provincial government which it appears is serving the interests of English-speaking capital (U.S.-owned in many cases) and an English-dominated parliament.

That could have been related to the specific environment of York, where there is a strong slant in courses dealing with Quebec to favor the Trudeau federalist analysis of the Quebec struggle (that word isn't used in the courses, by the way) to the exclusion of any independentist analysis.

More explicitly, it might have been pointed out that, generally speaking, this university — including the subtle propagandizing of course content — works in the interests of the same U.S.-owned English capital which is exploiting the people of Quebec, Canada's Indians, and the working classes in this country — in the name of greater profit.

Finally, it might have been mentioned that those of us at university, whether we like it or not, are being effectively trained to fill slots in that whole top-down oppressive system. That, by the way, means that all of us here — unless we think that the present system is the best possible — are also being exploited in order that the whole process may continue.

As The Seer proclaimed in a recent issue: "Let's turn off the shit machine" — and not just the one at York, but the nation-wide one.

Excalibur

November 6, 1969

editor-in-chief
managing editor
montage
cultural arts
sports editor
cup editor
director of photography

bob waller
john king
stewart simpson
david mccaughna
bruce clark
jerry owen
dave cooper

staff-at-large

bob roth, wendy dennis, paul axelrod, pat kutney, mike savage, ross howard, judy turner, greg mcconnell, martin laba, dan merkur, joan shirlow, nancy allerson, mike blumenthal, brian milner, howard gladstone, stevan jovanovich, peter budnick, rosemary king, tom lyons, tim clark, john stapleton, margie wolfe, lana mcMahon, harry kitz, monica wilde, gale campbell, john madden, pat bourque, vicki ingraham.

advertising secretary

rolly stroeter
jackie stroeter

editorial phone: 635-3201, 3202
advertising phone: 635-3800

excalibur, founded in 1966, is the official weekly of York University 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 Liberation News Service. printed at Newsweb, excalibur circulates to over 17,000 people. office: central square (southeast corner) behind the ministry of love, York University, Downsview, Ontario.

STOP pulling those fake fire alarms!!!