

More letters

Reader dispels myths of American politics

Dan Andreae's cynical, patronizing "Viewpoint" in your paper of October 28 showed a basic misunderstanding of American politics. His piece was also laced with enough inaccuracies and generalizations to embarrass even Excalibur. Here are just a few examples:

"Under Tricky Dicky, inflation rose about 400 per cent, unemployment increased . . . and crime flourished."

Actually, during President Nixon's first year of office, serious

crime dropped by three per cent, the first decrease in crime since 1960. The inflation and unemployment were caused, not by the President, but by the inflationary policies of the Democrat-controlled Congress. Naturally, Congress is not once mentioned in the entire article.

"The Pentagon Papers . . . indicate that the US deliberately got involved in the Viet Nam war primarily for economic reasons."

That is simply not true. The Pentagon Papers indicated that the

US got involved primarily for strategic reasons.

"(President Johnson in 1964) repeatedly stated that no American boy's blood would ever fall in Southeast Asia. It seems that during the day he was campaigning for peace, but at night was planning with the Pentagon a bombing strategy for North Vietnam."

Johnson would never have said that no American would die in Southeast Asia, because Americans had already been dying there since 1961. By 1964, a firm

commitment had been made to the South Vietnamese to help defend their country, a decision which was supported by the American electorate as well as President Johnson. Incidentally, in Andreae's paragraphs on Johnson, there is no mention of the many civil rights bills he introduced.

"Even those out of power will blatantly compromise for political gain. Remember . . . when ultra-conservative Ronnie Reagan chose ultra-liberal Richard Schweiker as his potential running mate?"

potential running mate?"

Politicians are human beings too, they make mistakes. But for Andreae, no politician is well-meaning, no politician's decision is well-intentioned. It seems to me that Andreae demonstrates none of the compassion or insight that he demands from others.

Michael Proudlock,
McLaughlin College.

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Blood, sweat, tears for York bus tickets

Warning: beware of buying more York University bus tickets than you need.

You can't get a refund. If you quit school, graduate, buy a car, win a car, start hitch-hiking — it makes no difference.

Unlike nasty profit-making corporate giants like Simpson's and Eaton's, where you can always return unwanted goods and get your money back with a smile, the benevolent university serves students with a policy of not paying for turned back bus tickets.

It's not that they're damaged goods. And certainly they're not stamped "non-refundable". It's just that a rule is a golden rule.

When Gail graduated and we moved off campus forever last September 8, I had 15 bus tickets left. So last October 8, I dropped in on the ticket office, never doubting for a moment they'd gladly refund the tickets that had cost me 33 cents each to buy.

The little green cardboard tickets weren't even creased. I was sure they could resell them, no sweat.

Alas it was, yes, sweat. The lady at the ticket wicket said no way could the university oblige. So in wrath and ill-feeling I left that sticky wicket and presented my case in a slightly raised voice to Robert Tobin, assistant director of York's physical plant. The wicket lady said he runs the York bus service.

Tobin was very sympathetic, but pointed out he didn't make policy.

He suggested a chat with head accountant J.A. Heber or manager of general accounting C.R. Deschamps.

Not a bad idea, I said, and went to perch on a chair by the accountants' offices. I perched for about half an hour. Weber was in a meeting, Deschamps was constantly on the phone.

Eventually, Deschamps invited me in. We didn't shake hands. We got straight down to business. "I'm going to refund your tickets," he said, "although it's against our policy."

I didn't like to push my luck too far and ask why he was breaking the golden rule for one such as I.

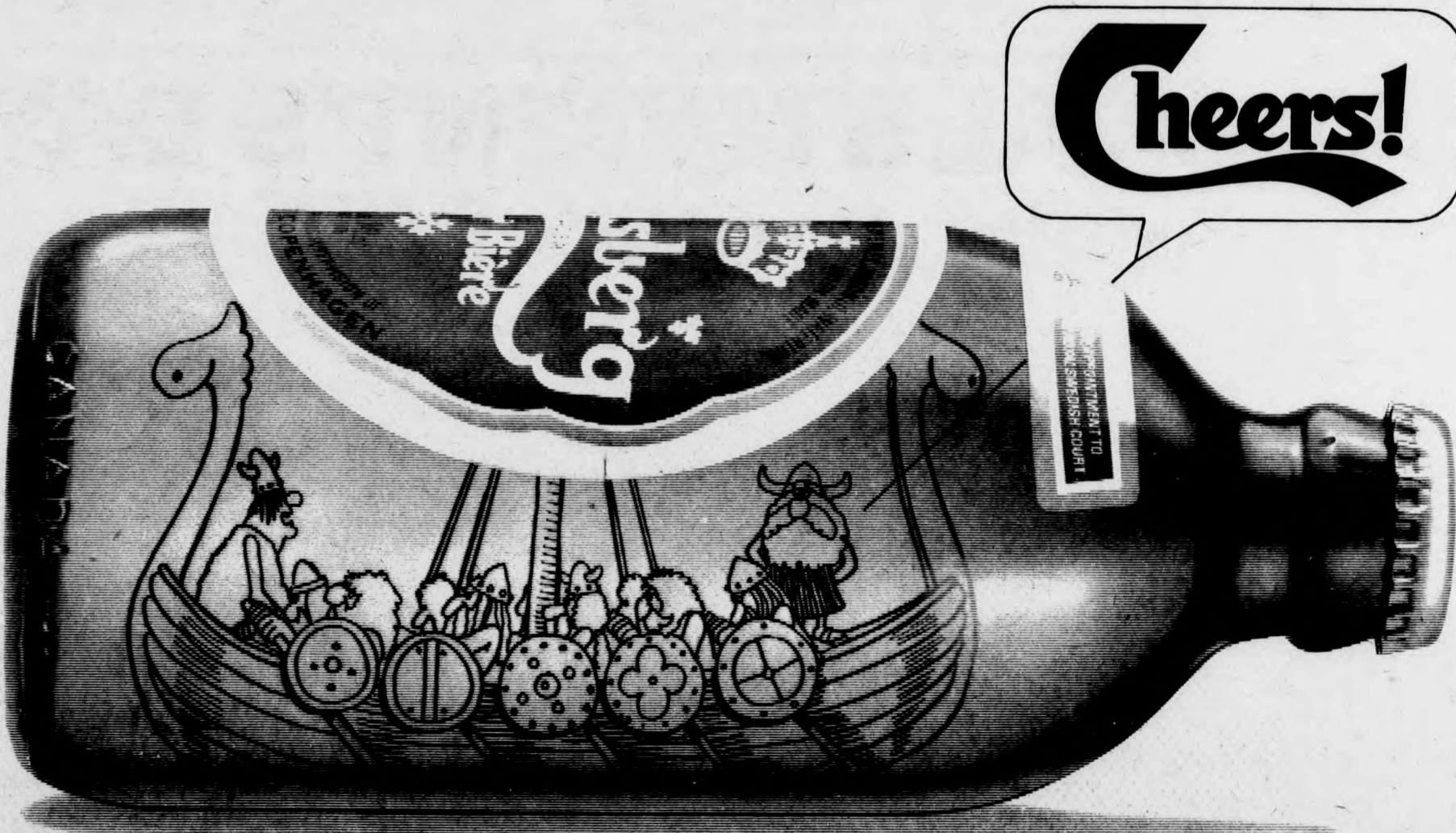
It had taken 45 minutes so far to get my money back. It was going to take another week yet.

Rather than do it simply by giving me five dollars cash for my 15 tickets, Deschamps wrote out a receipt saying "received from David Kendall 15 bus tickets." The whole transaction was to be processed through the university's expensive red tape system. I was to get my money in a cheque.

Well, by golly, that cheque arrived October 15, all decked out in York's red and white and blue colours.

But lo and behold, the cheque was for a lowly \$3.75, not the \$5.00 I paid for the tickets. The bureaucracy at York apparently haven't realized yet that tickets that used to cost 25 cents apiece jumped to 33 cents six months ago.

David Kendall
Toronto Sun



THE GLORIOUS BEER OF COPENHAGEN