

EXCALIBUR INTERVIEWS

from Bill Davis to Santa Claus

In the October 15 issue of *Excalibur* last fall, there was no *Excalibur* interview. We never repeated that mistake again.

Consistently one of the most widely read sections of the paper, every issue except that one on October 15 has carried an *Excalibur* interview.

We didn't get Rene Levesque, Ed Broadbent, Margaret Atwood or Margaret Trudeau.

But we did get Bill Davis. And Stokely Carmichael, Allan Sparrow, Grace Hartman, John Damien, Tommy Douglas, Bruce Kidd and Norm Penner.

And Henry Morgentaler. Many of the interviews have been reprinted in other Canadian university press (CUP) newspapers, but none more so than Alice Klein's exclusive interview with Morgentaler, the only interview he has granted for a year and a half. At last count, it had been picked up by almost 20 CUP papers.

This was the first year *Excalibur* has carried the interview page each issue, and it made *Excalibur* the only university newspaper to carry interviews as a regular feature. In fact, no other publication in Canada we know of carries interviews on as regular a basis, covering such a wide range of subjects and such a wide variety of personalities.

Except a magazine called *Maclean's*, and they only come out every two weeks, while we appear weekly.

Here then, from September to April, from Bill Davis to Santa Claus, is a year-end wrap-up of *Excalibur* interviews, year one.



Grace Hartman

September 16 1976, H. Ian Macdonald, president of York.

Ian Macdonald granted *Excalibur* its first interview of the year. In it, he proclaimed his distaste for differential fees for foreign students, saying that "I personally don't like artificial barriers between the movements of people and the traditional concept of the university as the universal institution which readily brought people in a common interest in their academic work and transcending national boundaries and so on."

September 23, Jerome Ch'en on China after Mao

On sabbatical this year Jerome Ch'en, a professor of history in the East Asian department at York, is considered to be one of the best biographers on Mao today.

Ch'en stated that the Chinese Communist leadership has been a collective for many years, and that Mao has not been overseeing daily matters for some years. "Succession to Mao is a problem grossly exaggerated by the western press."

September 30, Ontario Premier William Davis.

Ontario Premier William Davis was featured in *Excalibur's* third interview for the year. Among the issues he discussed were differential tuition fees for foreign



William Davis, premier of Ontario. students, higher fees for Canadian students, and cutbacks.

Concerning foreign students, Davis said that "we're not saying that you can't come. We're not establishing quotas. We're just saying to students outside Canada that you'll pay a greater share of the cost. ... There hasn't been a tuition increase since 1972."

He doesn't feel that the cutback situation is a grave a problem as what many students seem to feel.

October 7, Grace Hartman president of CUPE

The president of one of Canada's largest unions, Grace Hartman of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, CUPE talked about inflation, students, labour, and the NDP.

Hartman supports the idea of students working with labour because "what we are trying to do is clear up some of the problems that are going to be there when the students go into the workforce." Hartman said that CUPE opposes social service cutbacks as she feels that the cutbacks are affecting people who cannot speak up for themselves. "I hope that when I speak, people understand that I am trying to speak for those people who cannot speak for themselves".

October 21, John Saul on Southern Africa

York's resident expert on southern Africa, John Saul, is a professor of Social Science at Atkinson and a member of the Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa. He lived in Africa for many years and contributed numerous writings to the problems facing its people.

November 11, Stokely Carmichael on pan-Africanism

Carmichael, 60's leader in the American Black civil rights and anti-war movements and ex-honorary prime-minister of the Black Panthers, is currently a member of the All African People's Revolutionary Party.

October 28, Allan Sparrow on municipal reform.

Long time community activist and currently city alderman in Toronto's Ward 6, Allan Sparrow told *Excalibur* of the Reform Metro movement's chances in the upcoming municipal elections. He also described the nature of municipal politics: "When you get down to Metro social services budget, we (the reformers) can't even get enough money out of them (Metro Council) to take care of skid row and the drunks who are freezing to death, because that isn't of any interest to borough politicians because there aren't bums dying in North York or Scarborough or East York and so on."

"Part of the problem is that most of the borough politicians are elected without having to appeal to the electorate on the basis of programme. It usually ends up being an appeal based on personality and how many ivory teeth they have and how good looking their wife and kids and dogs are..."

November 18, With Ramsey Cook on the Quebec elections

Professor Ramsey Cook, author of several books on the history and politics of Quebec, gave his views on Quebec a week after the Part Quebecois government was elected.

November 25, with Murray Ross, first president of York — by Keith Nickson

Murray G. Ross, left more of a mark at York than his name on the Humanities building. He was creator of the college system and the compulsory first-year core curriculum, both of which have become controversial topics.

December 9, with Santa Claus

Excalibur's final interview for 1976 was with the season's most colorful character, old Santa himself. With the biggest Christmas list on the planet, Claus has been giving goodies to the children of the world for centuries. Among topics discussed were the CN Tower, apartment buildings, and his sex life.

January 6, 1977 Judy Hellman on the Jamaican elections.

Judy Hellman, York professor in the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program, kicks off a new year of interviews, commenting on the recently completed Jamaican elections.

According to Hellman, re-elected prime minister Michael Manley is a social-democrat, "interested in looking for a non-communist, reformist road to very substantial social, political and economic changes."

January 13, Murray Miskin, chairperson of OFS

Miskin is pessimistic about the present state of the student movement. "There is a great feeling of helplessness among students at present. They don't believe they can change the world. But we are making gains. It would be nice if we had more students reading the Ontario Student and contributing articles to it. It would be nice to have more active and politically aware students, but these are difficult times."



York professor William Head

January 20, Tommy Douglas, first leader of the NDP

Douglas described both his socialist philosophy and particular problems facing the Canadian people.

"Do you think that in Canada where the bottom 20 per cent of the population, according to the latest figures, get only four per cent of the national wealth, while the top 20 per cent get 42.5 per cent, that there is anything like a fair distribution of income?"

"The basic problem goes way back to the fact that under the market economy, the people who produce the wealth of the nation never get enough to buy it back. In other words, there is a surplus value in that production. That surplus value goes to the owner class. The owner class uses the surplus value as a cash flow and capital for further expansion. The more they invest it for expansion, the more of the country they own."

January 27, John Damien, fired by government for being a homosexual

John Damien was fired, February 6 1975 from his job as a racing steward (judge) with the Ontario Racing Commission. Only one reason was given: his homosexuality. He had

worked in racing for twenty years, five of those in the prestigious position as one of the three racing stewards in Ontario.

February 3, Bruce Kidd on the politics of sport

According to Bruce Kidd, marathon runner for Canada in the '64 Olympics "People who say politics and sport shouldn't mix are primarily rationalizing the status quo."

February 10, John Porter author of the Vertical Mosaic.

In 1965 John Porter's *The Vertical Mosaic* exploded the old myths that Canada is a classless society where any Horatio Alger can go from garbageman to the board of directors.

February 24, Norman Penner on Canada and Quebec.

Glendon political science professor and Canadian historian, Norman Penner discussed his view of the growing crisis with Confederation.

Penner said that English Canada should not have a say in whether or not Quebec becomes an independent nation state.

March 3, Dr. Henry Morgentaler

Only recently released from 10 months in prison in Quebec for his beliefs on abortion, Dr. Morgentaler granted an exclusive interview with *Excalibur* after he had remained out of the press for six months. He talked mainly about his future plans, the Badgley Commission report and the abortion laws in general.

He said "I think people should become more indignant about the continued victimization of women across Canada because of this cruel and unjust law and that they should make it known to the politicians that they're the majority and that it is cruel and barbarous that a law should remain on the books that victimizes women. I think people should really get involved."

March 10, James Laxer on Canadian Energy Policy

Chairman of the Atkinson Political science department and former leader of the Waffle, a left-wing formation in the NDP James Laxer revealed some rather interesting facts about energy management and policy in Canada.

March 17, Wilson Head on racism

Wilson Head, a professor at York, wrote a report on racism for the Ontario Human Rights' Commission.

Head recalled his first personal encounter with racial prejudice in his home town, Atlanta Georgia.

"I was walking down the street and I was around ten years of age. A little girl who was crippled and was on crutches fell down in front of me. I stopped to help her up. Then people gathered around and they were hostile. And I remember talking to my uncle at home and he said, "Was it a white girl?" and I said yes. And he said, "Don't you touch a white girl. No black man or black boy in Atlanta touches a white girl."

March 24, Esther Greenglass on abortion

"When women have an abortion in a social climate that still regards it as a deviant thing, they internalize this kind of reaction and punish themselves," said professor Esther Greenglass.

Dr. Greenglass is the author of *After Abortion*, the first book of its kind in Canada to deal with the psychological consequences of abortion.

March 31, Dale Posgate on the Indian elections.

York professor, Dale Posgate, analyzed the results of the recent elections in India, and what they might mean for India's future.

Said Posgate, "If you've got the choice between non-benevolent autocracy and non-benevolent democracy, you may as well go for the democracy".