

# Tentanda agnus (The sheep must be tried)

York's financial difficulties show every sign of continuing in years to come. Therefore, we must look for unused resources and find innovative ways to cut costs and increase efficiency in all of the University's endeavours.

For this reason, *Excalibur* is strongly in favour of the proposal to raise sheep on campus.

Now, gentle readers, before you say Bah, congratulate yourself on your wit, and dismiss the idea, think of the advantages.

The most obvious gain would be the abolition of the wastefully expensive maintenance of the grounds. We would, in effect, have self-cropping, self-fertilizing lawns.

Speaking of the self-fertilizing aspect, this would also eliminate the need for the yearly resodding of the paths which students wear in the grass by taking short-cuts across the lawns.

With our sheep on the job, you may be tempted to scamper across an inviting lawn on your bare feet some bright Spring day—but it just won't be worth the risk.

In the past Calumet College has expressed interest in starting its own farm. The proposed programme could be a step in this direction. It would provide practical vocational training for students as shepherds. Have you ever heard of an unemployed shepherd?

The saving of money by Physical Plant may be one of the main considerations in arguing

for the establishment of the York flock—about there are other spin-offs as well.

Most important would be the great quantity of wool which would be gathered. Administrators and professors will readily admit to frustration because of spending too much wasted time in committees. In committee meetings, you always have your hands free. But with sheep on campus, just imagine the President's Advisory Committee on University Policy: a room full of middle-aged men in three piece, blue pin-striped suits. One of them drones on and on while the others spin the wool into yarn, or work diligently with their hand looms while listening to the speaker.

Committee work would still get done and yet we would finally have a measurable benefit from our bureaucrats as well as occupational therapy for them. This is not a new suggestion, of course. Gandhi tried a similar proposal in India.

It has been suggested that the product could be misused by the administration to make thousands of extra-large toques as a compulsory uniform for undergraduates. We think it unlikely, however, that even York's administration would expect the students to pull the wool over their own eyes.

There have been more whimsical suggestions, of course. Because rats are expensive, Psychology students might be encouraged to

think on a large scale. Experiments running rats through mazes pale in comparison to a ram in Complex 1.

It has been suggested that residence oil bills could be reduced if room temperatures were lowered to 60 degrees Fahrenheit and a warm, snugly sheep assigned to each residence room for warmth.

There are two disadvantages to this proposal: first, in most colleges, this would result in three in a bed which is against health regulations. Second, in one college, which shall remain nameless, there would be some danger

to the ewes. This may calm some of the Stong students down but it is definitely illegal.

The only real danger will come if the administrators realize that sheep are more profitable than students. They will rub their hands with glee as enrollment drops but the flock increases. Would anyone notice if the lecture halls were turned into sheep pens? It may not be educational, but the York sheep station is a good, sound, business proposition.

January 31, 1980

Hugh Westrup/Mark Monfette

## Keep bleating sheep faculty out of our Student Centre-to-be

It seems it was only yesterday that York's architects and planners were building a ramp outside the Ross building that some historians maintain was intended to aid tanks in quelling student outbreaks of violence.

The times they are a changin'. Last week nary a word of protest, not even a Molotov cocktail to be heard whistling across campus as the Faculty Club was officially declared off limits to students.

While days of sit-ins and riots are now mere memories, and briefcases and flannel have replaced yesterday's frisbees and denim, how could the student body put up with this blow to their freedom? It seems we have forgotten Kent State.

In its obnoxious quest for 'excellence' yet another barrier of elitism has been raised by the University and no one seems to care.

We demand a call to arms. Storm the bastille Faculty Club. Bring knives, forks, and yes, even spoons.

"Let them eat fettuccine" one hears emanating through the marble walls of the Faculty

Club as professors enter their oasis of quiet and escape. The Club's managers say the pesky students don't have enough money to deserve this privilege. We may be swarms of locusts, but we can afford the cannelloni.

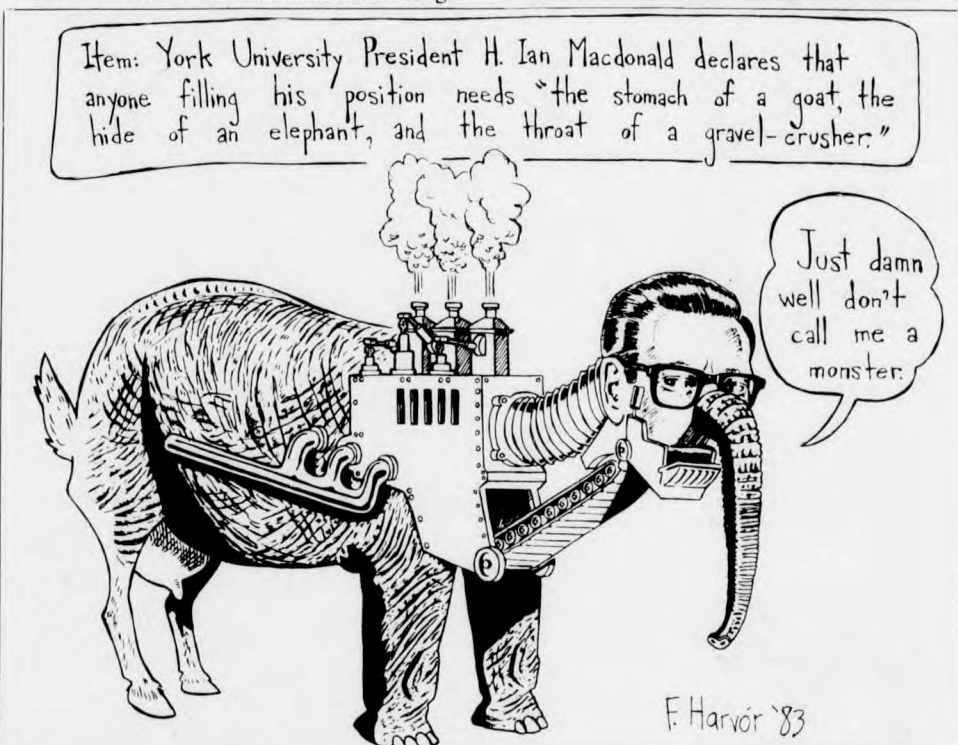
Revenge will be ours. When the Student Centre is erected we will not forget. The doors of our building will be guarded against vapid professorial drivell.

There will be no exceptions. If we let even one frisbee toting purveyor of knowledge in, other less savory types will follow like bleating sheep, polluting our environment with tweed dust and malodorous pipe fumes. Once they are allowed into the Student Centre they will then mount an incursion into other student lairs. Everything we hold dear to our existence will soon be in danger of being swept away as domino after domino topples.

We've already lost the Faculty Club. What's next? The tanning salon?

April 3, 1986

Elliott Shiff/David Byrnes



## Reflections of an Excalibur Editor

It's not always easy to fulfill the two essential functions of a campus newspaper, that of encouraging participation from the campus community and at the same time producing an end product that is journalistically and technically competent. For the past two years *Excalibur* has, therefore, hired two full-time editors to handle these functions.

This year the editor and managing editor spent most of their time training new staff and co-ordinating the basic production (layout, etc.) of the paper. For a number of reasons the results of our efforts became most apparent in the second term.

Of first significance was the fact that a hard core of staff had become fully trained at this point. News editors, Barry Lerner and David Chud, for instance, who started the year as cub reporters, were now competently organizing and editing the news. This was undoubtedly one reason why 65 percent of our news copy this term was on York events. (We have done a content breakdown of *Excalibur* copy for the issues running January 8 to March 11.)

Also instrumental in increasing the quality of the paper this term was our success in improving layout techniques. This added greatly to the overall appearance of the newspaper.

But the most important factor in the general improvement of the paper's second term was student utilization of *Excalibur*. For some reason students started using the paper more frequently. This influx of "viewpoints" and other small features enabled us to create the "University Forum" page, which is now set aside exclusively for opinions from York community members.

Increased submissions by students also helped boost our number or original features to a point where they represented almost 60 percent of feature content.

Also of interest is the fact that original *Excalibur* features this year have been reprinted in other campus newspapers across the country, including universities in Montreal, Winnipeg, Calgary and St. Catherines.

This year *Excalibur* attempted to break down its hierarchy and allow more staff participation. The creation of the two news editor positions is a structural indication of this. In addition, a loosely organized editorial board composed of all editors is now responsible for writing editorials. If the staff as a whole disagree with an editorial policy it can be discussed and altered at the next regular weekly staff meeting.

Discussion of staff participation also brings up the question of "bias" in the newspaper. In terms of news coverage we have always insisted that reporters make their stories factually correct. As in any newspaper, reporters pick their own "angle", that part of an event which they

feel is most important to emphasize.

We have not been able to cover every event we wanted to. Reporters pick stories to cover according to their interests. (They're not getting paid and you can't force volunteer workers to cover something they don't want to.) If some of our readers feel that different events should be covered, we encourage them to come in and work on the staff next year. We'll take all the help we can get.

In a discussion on bias a frequently asked question is: Do you feel you represent the campus? (Implicit in this question is a suggestion that the newspaper's editorial policy should represent the mood of the campus.)

In answering this question I can only recall a personal experience I had in my first year at York, 1967. It was then that I joined a very small group called the Committee to End the War in Vietnam; hardly a radical group, at best a small "I" liberal organization. But we were despised. Scarcely a day went by at our literature table when people didn't stop and tell us how we were "dupes of the communists", how the Americans were "fighting for democracy," and we should be supporting them. I think it's safe to say that our group did not represent the campus mood over the years has, of course, changed—changed to such an extent that last year's Vietnam moratorium drew 2,000 students.

My point is that there are people working on *Excalibur* who feel it is more important to adhere to a set of principles, which they believe to be honest, than it is to sway with every campus wind.

In short, some of us feel that the role of *Excalibur* is to raise issues, stimulate discussion and, in cases, to change—not reflect—the mood of the campus.

The important feature about *Excalibur* is not whether we do or do not represent "the campus" but rather whether or not the paper is open. And, in that regard, our policy has always been one of printing all articles regardless of their political points of view.

Next year the campus will be larger and our information gathering and reporting job will be even more difficult. Consequently, we'll be looking for recruits. Even if you don't always agree with everything we say don't think you can't work for the paper. Some of the most vocal critics of *Excalibur* (i.e. Edwin Rothschild) ended up writing for us. No experience is necessary and, as Barry Lerner and David Chud will assure you, it's easy to move up into a position of responsibility. So when you come back next year drop in and see us. There'll be an opening waiting for you.

March 25, 1971

Bob Roth (signed)

