

# letters & comment

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, *Excalibur*, room III, Central Square. Please type letters, triple or double spaced, and keep them to around 250 words. Name, address and phone number must be included, but name will be withheld on request. *Excalibur* reserves the right to edit for grammar and length. Deadline Monday 4pm.

## "Why can't they leave if they want"

Anatoly Schransky is only 29. He graduated five years ago from the Moscow Physico-Technical Institute; his thesis was about computer chess and decision-making. He became one of the dissident group in the USSR monitoring Soviet compliance with the Helsinki Agreement. On March 5 *Izvestia* accused him, along with other computer scientists, of being a CIA agent. On March 15, the KGB carried him off to Lefortovo, a special prison.

He has not been heard from since; neither his mother, his colleagues, nor his "refusenik" associates, have been permitted contact. Attempts to deliver clothes, books, and writing materials to the prison authorities have been harshly rejected. He has no lawyer; his supporters have been told he must plead guilty before counsel can accept his case. The charge is treason. The penalty can be death.

This is just one of many countless abuses of human rights and major infringements of the Helsinki Accords which was signed by the Soviet Union. The performance of Russia in observance of these limited minimal freedoms provides little ground for optimism in the future.

What can we do? Specifically, we can write to our MPs and inform them of our deeply rooted feelings in this sensitive and urgent area.

Hopefully, the Western powers, individually or collectively, can develop their own criteria for evaluating Soviet adherence to the Helsinki Accords. These would include steps to monitor the following: increases in Western scholars, newsmen, students, books, newspapers, and broadcasts permitted to enter, and to travel more fully within, the Soviet Union; the treatment by the Soviet Union of dissidents, including arrests, and permission to emigrate.

Lack of religious freedom, not being allowed to follow a type or way of life preferred, only illustrates the injustices occurring in Russia.

WHY CAN'T THE ONES WHO WANT TO LEAVE?????

Steven Muchnik

## Would you pay interest of 10,000%

By an unfortunate mistake in bookkeeping, I have overdrawn 47 cents from my chequing-saving account on October 19, 1977. The Toronto-Dominion Bank (York University Campus Branch) hits me with a \$2.50 Debit Memo (some sort of service charge) on the same day and a \$1.00 overdraft interest on October 27.

When I checked with the Bank about this 200% interest in one week and the extravagant service charge, I was told that it is the Bank's policy for overdrafting regardless of the amount of over-draft. It would be the same if the overdrafting is merely 1 cent.

This is just another example of making unfair profit in business. Instead of setting the interest and service charge in proportion to the amount overdrafted, the Bank chooses to charge a fixed amount which could be 10,000% if the amount owing is 1 cent. Such an unreasonable practice could only induce disrespect for business establishment whose image is already tainted by starting the cycle of inflation.

Siu-kay Luke



## Pinder proposes petition

# Bucks for booze, but not books

Well, I see that the heavenly world of budgets, finances, crises, and so on has materialized in the shape of shorter library hours, fewer service personnel when it is open, and fewer books purchased. While I was intimately aware of the cutbacks which were lurking like vultures in the skies over York, it was very hard to concretize them in a form which would compel your attention. As a governor I have heard the reports get worse at each succeeding meeting this fall. The embargo began at \$1 million and went up 50 per cent while the drop in enrolment began at 300 and ended at 800.

But, even if we accept the smaller university budget as a point to start from, (temporarily ignoring the social context of the university, the tax concessions, grants, and so on that go to corporations) do we have to accept the specific cuts which are being made? Must we accept the cutback in library hours as an unavoidable necessity dictated by the ninth floor of Ross?

No, we cannot accept the cutback in library hours. The university has the money. It is being spent on frivolous and unnecessary things, such as tens of thousands of dollars on free liquor and food.

One example is the Chancellors' Luncheon (or Dinner) which occurs at each Convocation. Only top administrators, top academics, Governors, and so on are invited. I attended the most recent one due to my position as Governor. There was a free and unlimited bar, with two bartenders (for about fifty people) to serve Canadian Club and similar liquors. Then there was a buffet dinner (served by about ten people) of shrimp paella, a hot beef dish (I forget if it was Beef Bourguignone), cold salmon, very

nice salads, and so on. At the same time, the Atkinson people who had just collected their diplomas had small sandwiches, cookies, coffee, and a pay bar.

I have asked the President's Office for the cost of Chancellors' Luncheons. A very rough estimate can be made now. Taking a figure of \$15 per person, this particular affair cost \$750. But the attendance was low due to it being a rainy Saturday afternoon. Since there are 11 Convocations, I think I would be safe to say that it costs at least \$8500 to supply free food and liquor to the rulers of York, and I would not be surprised if it exceeded \$10,000.

At the same time the administration wishes to save \$18,300 by reducing hours of operation of the libraries. I would be astounded if there were one student at York who feels it more valuable to provide free food and liquor to the bigwigs than to maintain the hours of the library.

What can we do about it? I will protest at the Board of Governors

at every opportunity I have, but I am one voice on a BOG of corporate spokesman. It is futile as long as I am only one person. It is concerted opposition by the students as a body which will save the library hours.

I suggest a petition as the first step. A petition with thousands of names would compel reconsideration by the administration. Anyone interested in helping please leave a note for me at the CYSF message box, or phone me at 653-5546. Hopefully within a week everyone will have the opportunity to sign a petition against free food and booze and in favour of saving the library.

Harvey Pinder  
Student rep on BOG



## A library lament

I submit the following verse. I am not a student at York. My husband has been attending Atkinson for several years and I have been attempting to read my way through the Frost library unofficially (as I accompany him to keep him awake on the drive from Oshawa!)

I think the whole thing about the library is a disgrace. This year my husband is taking a Saturday morning class. There is no way he would drive in twice a week just to get to the library. The car is now at 100,000 miles and the cost of the gas is the other consideration.

P.S. I think this year's *Excalibur* is the best I've seen. Keep up the good work!

### THE \$9,000 EASY SOLUTION

Close the library!  
Burn the books!  
Davis likes the way it looks!  
Softly...  
Softly...  
Close the schools.  
Too many educated fools  
Already.

Marjorie Neveroff  
Oshawa

# Hassled in Stong, say Third World students

## Statement from T.W.S.U.

The Third World Students Union TWSU is a bonafide student organization of York University. It was founded in 1974 out of the recognition of the need for such an organization to serve the political, cultural and educational interests of Third World students.

A series of difficulties have however confronted us in executing these programmes. Problems which have since developed and progressed to such an extent that the status of TWSU has come into question. Specifically, TWSU's present problems developed out of attempts to put on its annual orientation party, held on Saturday, October 22.

The problems are as follows:

1. Refusal by Orange Snail to cater for TWSU at that party because of previous violations of LLBO and University regulations by Third World Students Union.

Ensuing discussions with Orange Snail and Stong College representatives suggest that Orange Snail had no previous misunderstanding with TWSU but instead their concerns stemmed from a previous incident regarding the Jamaica Study Group - a group totally independent of the Third World Students Union. Further, if any difficulties did arise during the last three years, TWSU was never made aware of them.

2. Letter of complaint by Saga

(caterers) regarding violation by Third World Students Union of LLBO and University regulations after having catered for that party.

Discussions with Saga, Stong and Third World Students Union representatives on October 25 also suggest that these allegations were unfounded especially when Saga bar manager informed TWSU general co-ordinator that no problems were experienced on the evening in question.

That very same day (Oct. 25), a letter to TWSU from Stong College retracted Saga's allegations and rescinded the decision to refuse Third World Students Union use of Stong College facilities.

From the events outlined above it

## Xcal graphic called Anti-Catholic

What a pity to see a useful column like Sue Kaiser's (Oct. 27) marred by the inclusion of an aggressively Anti-Catholic cartoon parodying the Eucharist.

We do not feel that the Church's stand on the Pill, however reprehensible, justifies the expression of religious prejudice.

Paul Truster  
Annette Goldsmith

My initial reaction to your October 27 Harbinger Column was of SHOCK in seeing a sketch of a nun swallowing The Pill. I was prepared for an account of some sex scandal. However, after reading the article completely, I see no connection whatsoever to the sketch. It is evident that this article shows total lack of responsibility on the part of the editing staff of *Excalibur* in not weeding out derogatory visual concepts attached to some articles.

What exactly is Harbinger trying to tell us?

What are you going to do about this?

Moral conscience.

L. Kahnert

### Editor's note:

Besides these letters, *Excalibur* received several phone and verbal complaints about the graphic in question. The *Excalibur* editors apologize to Harbinger for printing the graphic with their column (it had indeed, little to do with the column's content). We apologize for any embarrassment this may have caused Harbinger. The choice of the graphic was *Excalibur's* and not Harbinger's.

## Stedman student bitten by Frost

I am writing to report a series of cases of frobsite that have broken out over at Stedman Lecture Hall A. I have been informed that the severe winter conditions have prevailed for quite a long time, and that things do not improve until the thaw arrives. Lately, however, climatic conditions have worsened and are becoming highly intolerable. It is very difficult to take legible notes when you're in the process of freezing to death. I wish to bring this matter to the attention of administration before the masses start taking this problem into their own hands. I have already witnessed more than one occasion where people have attempted to build fires beneath the NO SMOKING signs. Thank You.

M-MM-Mike Rechtshaffen

Further developments on this matter will be brought to your attention at a later date. TWSU