

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, c/o Excalibur, room 111 Central Square. They must be double-spaced, typed and limited to 250 words. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for length and grammar. Name and address must be included for legal purposes but the name will be withheld upon request. Deadline: Mon. 4 p.m.

## War of the letter writers

Here we go again. Ever since I read Mr. Ed Luberdink's letter in the November 11 issue of Excalibur I have been trying to get a reply printed in the paper. Those responsible simply neglected to print it for a few issues, then lost it over Christmas.

The problem arose over a letter in which I waxed wrathful over a mistake made in a previous letter of mine concerning abortion, itself an attack on an article in Excalibur. The mistake changed "life begins at conception" to "life begins at contraception". I think I was quite justified in being angry. Mr. Luberdink thinks not. I am afraid that I cannot share his remarkable tolerance and sweet temper. Without pardoning carelessness, I do not really hate the Excalibur staff. I was treated with courtesy on the occasions that I visited the office.

Mr. Luberdink says that my article was "ill researched and devastatingly dull". Considering that the letter as printed was reduced from 600 to 300 words and then cut to 250 words by Excalibur, my effort was not too bad; certainly at least as good as other contributions. Of course he is angry because I have not placed myself on the abortionist side of the Life Question. As for research, he asks whether, when I cut myself, I am upset because I feel pain or because thousands of cells have died. If he cannot distinguish between the union of sperm and egg, which is a new human being, and a blood or skin cell, his beliefs are both morally evil and incredibly stupid.

Edmund Thomas  
McLaughlin College

## Learning for leisure

Re: your January 6 issue, page 8, Roy Laberge, "Dismal job prospects for 'the class of '77'", column 2, paragraph 5; Three cheers for Carleton University MSc, Michael Oliver, plumbing his way through apprenticeship and thinking clean about his years spent in Academia. I sincerely hope that his wisdom is not lost on the future first year students of 1981— These now high school adolescents should be enabled to familiarize themselves with Oliver's line of thought.

After all, *scholé* is the Greek word for "leisure", and indeed Cicer should, and, as I venture to hope, may be right once more: *Non vitae sed scholae discimus* (i.e., We learn, not for the necessities of practical, material life, but for the benefit of leisure).

We might one day become a university in the process, a place for the pursuit of truth, wherever it hides itself.

I for one wish I had accomplished a hard-core apprenticeship before sitting down and Think.

A.G. Dekker  
McLaughlin College

## "Informal security at Scott"

This is a short comment on my experience at York's Scott Library. Several times within the last week, I have checked through the "out" turnstile at the library and the security guard did little more than look up, and essentially ignored the library books that I was carrying.

I mention this not as a personal

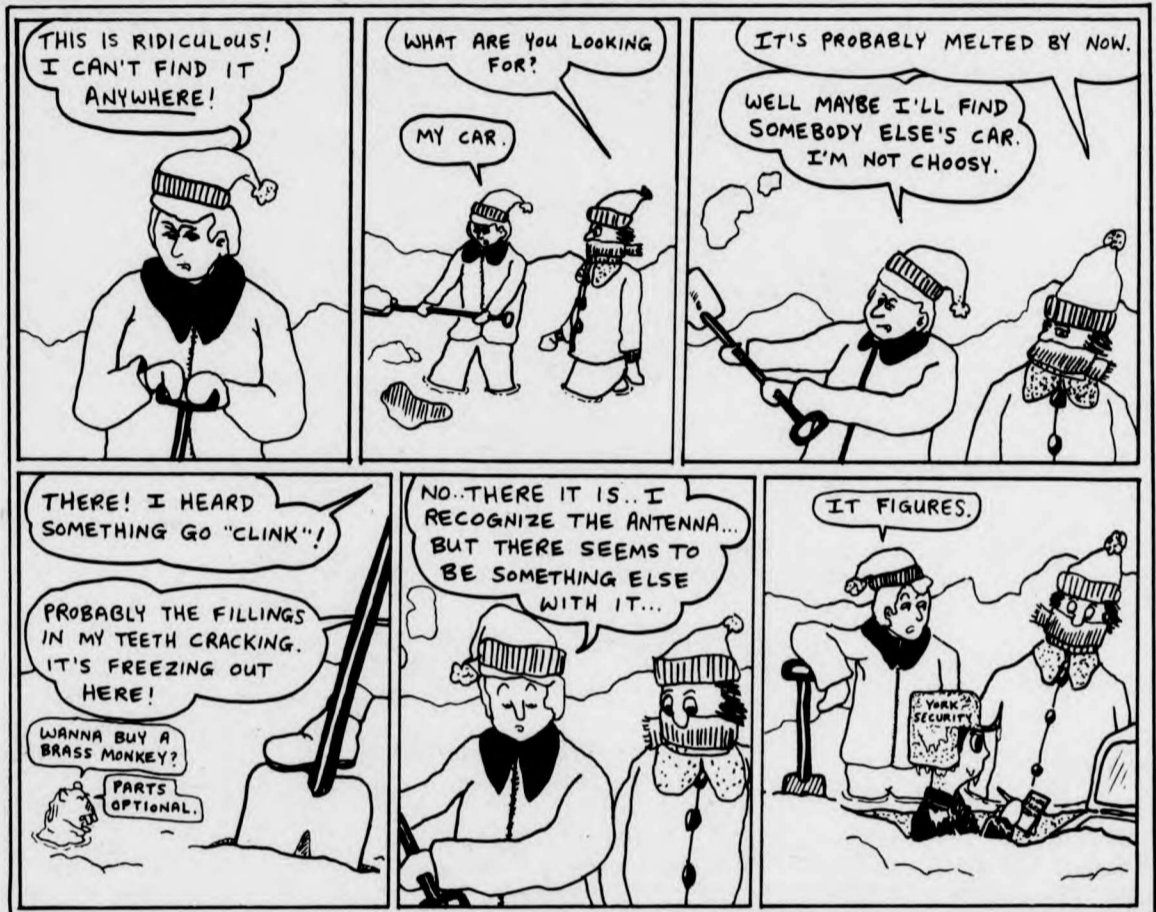
slight against the library staff as a whole or just one individual. My point arises out of the need to find books for my own use and find out that they are missing from the library and have not been officially checked out. It appears to me that one might easily remove a book from the library due to the informal

security situation at the Scott Library. I think it would be in the interest of both students and faculty if a more efficient method of theft prevention was installed or pursued at the library.

Norman Keith  
Winters College

## AS THE CAMPUS TURNS

WARREN CLEMENTS



## ...and other tales of "privatization"

# What happens when they sell all the provincial parks?

By PAUL KELLOGG

If you're still thinking about taking that little weekend bus trip to Own Sound, or Penetanguishene, Waterloo or Niagara Falls, you'd better act now. These may be the last few months the publicly-owned Gray Coach Lines will service these and other "out of the way" communities in Ontario.

The cutbacks are being forced upon Gray Coach in response to a November 22 decision by the Ontario Highway Transport Board to allow Greyhound of Canada, a US-owned corporation, to compete with Gray Coach on its most profitable runs; Toronto-Buffalo and Toronto-Sudbury. Gray Coach makes 37 per cent of its profits from these runs, although they account for only 4 per cent of its business.

The decision to let the US corporate giant compete with the publicly-owned bus line is, according to New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Stephen Lewis, the latest

example in the new but unannounced provincial Tories' strategy of "privatization" or "reprivatization" of publicly-owned enterprises.

Privatization means turning over a government function to private enterprise, with the goal of saving the government money. It is part of the government's overall restraint policy, a policy heralded last year by the publication of the "Special Program Review".

A committee of three (led by Maxwell Henderson, former federal auditor-general) somehow managed, in just over three months, to examine programs costing billions of dollars and submit 184 recommendations "on the theme on government is the best government", according to Harold Greer in the *Brantford Expositor*.

"The exercise was so ludicrous, that not even the Conservatives took it seriously," said Greer.

However, with the NDP as the official opposition and the Conservatives in a

hastily patched together review has emerged as the basis of the Tories' electoral strategy to regain their majority in the legislature and, incidentally, to bury the NDP.

The electoral scenario, as the Tories see it, is for a showdown between free-enterprise conservatism and more-government socialism.

Thus we see Health Minister Frank Miller's clumsy (and illegal) closing of hospitals last spring. University and Colleges Minister Harry Parrott's announcement of across-the-board tuition fee increases for next year, and Natural Resources Minister Leo Bernier's embarrassing announcement of a government plan to privatize and phase out public campsites.

Within 24 hours, Bernier attempted to deny the announcement, presumably realizing somewhat belatedly the vast number of Ontario voters with tents and trailers. Unfortunately for Leo, his statement had been taped.

Canadian Pacific Railways (CRP) tipped its hand to the attitude free enterprise has to government intervention in the economy in the conclusion to their official response to "The Railway Game". A recent book by Carleton University professor Julius Lukasiewicz. It calls for the unification of CPR and CNR into a fully nationalized rail system, the opposite of privatization.

CPR proposes that the railways continue to operate on a "normal" business basis, but with the government paying for "certain uneconomical but socially desirable services."

In other words, "where we can make a buck, you government boys had better clear out."

That explains the lack of clamour for the privatization of the TTC, a well-known money loser. Private enterprise needs

to transit ferry workers to and from work, but since it is an unprofitable business, is quite content to let the public sector pick up the tab.

For TTC's subsidiary, Gray Coach, it's a different story, with at least three different private firms (Greyhound, Voyager Colonial, and Travelways) waiting in the wings for an opportunity to take some of its profitable market.

As a publicly-owned corporation, Gray Coach can service the "out of the way" communities which a private firm would avoid as money-losers. Any step towards privatizing Gray Coach is a step backwards.

It's easy to imagine life in the new "privatized" world of the provincial Tories. The family decides to go camping for the weekend, packs supplies in knapsacks, and trudges out to hitch-hike up Yonge Street. (They can't afford the \$1.50 price for a ticket on Toronto's new, profit-making bus service, recently privatized to "free" enterprise.)

In Willowdale, they stop in at a Tilden car rental lot and pick up a Chevette for their trip to Owen Sound (The old Gray Coach bus route has been phased out in face of stiff competition from "free" enterprise Grayhound).

And in Osen Sound, they spend a quite weekend with their tent pitched on the shoulder of the highway, just down the road from the old provincial campsite, recently "privatized" by the Tories and turned into a gravel pit.

Back at work on Monday, the mother receives a phone call that her son has appendicitis and needs an immediate operation. Nothing to worry about medically — except medicare too, has been privatized and the hospital bills have to come out of the pay cheque.

Funny how expensive "free" enterprise can be.

