

Response

ULC objects to Excalibur's "cheap shots"

The following are letters to the editor from members of the United Left Coalition which, this year, holds a majority of seats on the Council of the York Student Federation.

I must register a strong protest against the editorial in last week's Excalibur entitled, "A Philosopher-King or Just Plain King?"

With regard to my unjustified expulsion from the senate, the editorial quite correctly points out that, "Ritch is within his rights to demand that he be given a seat in the senate." Apparently, even the Excalibur editors can perceive that the elected President of the majority of the student body at York should be allowed to sit on the senate.

However, the intent of the editorial was not to protest the arbitrary decision of the senate hierarchy to exclude me from the senate but instead to launch another unprincipled and unjustified attack on me. The latest in a series of cheap shots.

The editorial suggests quite openly that I do not have a right to represent York students or be CYSF president because the university bureaucracy has seen fit to bar me from classes for two years.

Excalibur's editors, in fact, go so far as to suggest that "a commitment to education" is a necessary pre-requisite for a CYSF president. Unfortunately, the editors do not define what they consider to be a "commitment to education". It is obvious, however, that what they are referring to is "good grades". What, may I ask, do good grades have to do with a "commitment to education"?

Furthermore, the editors subtly suggest that I have spent more effort on politics than on attaining good marks. So what! What right do the editors have to determine what constitutes a "commitment to education"? My four years at York have been spent in exactly

that pursuit, perhaps not by contesting with my classmates for A's or suck-holing up to professors to ensure good marks, but by organizing students to preserve the equality of education through political action.

If, in fact, good grades were made a pre-requisite to involvement in student politics, then the administration and faculty would gain a tremendous amount of control over the student political process, because, of course, students have no say whatsoever in the grading process. And why stop at passing grades? Why not insist on good grades as administrators do in most high schools? Why not just allow the administration to decide who the student council president will be?

There is only one body that the CYSF president is responsible to — not the administration, not the faculty, certainly not the tiny clique that currently runs Excalibur. That body is composed of the students at York, the students who vote every spring, democratically and fairly, to determine who will represent them for the next 12 months.

I would also strongly support the idea that the CYSF president be a full-time organizer for the students. Doing the job properly requires a minimum work-week of 50 to 60 hours including a regular eight hour day, evening meetings and many weekend conferences and functions.

Only a CYSF president who is not burdened with the worry and time-commitment of courses can function effectively.

I would also like to clear up some misrepresentations made by the Excalibur editors concerning my academic record. In fact, contrary to the implications, I took many of my academic courses seriously. The Bs, B+'s and even an A I have received in many courses will attest to that.

It is true that I failed a course last year and was barred from study for two years. The failure resulted because I did not hand in

my final essay or write a final exam. On March 14, I was involved in a head-on car crash which nearly killed me, my wife and two friends. I was in a state of physical and mental shock for at least six weeks after the accident.

I could not end this article without commenting on the headline on page one of last week's paper ("Ritch barred from study, expelled by senate"). This head is of course contrived to make it look as though the expulsion from senate and the debarment were directly connected actions.

In fact, the debarment occurred several months ago. The senate expulsion was not based on the debarment but on the fact that I am no longer a student. I would have been expelled from the senate regardless of the debarment because I had no intention of taking courses this year.

Dale Ritch

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Last week's Excalibur saw fit to judge Dale Ritch, the hardest working CYSF president that CYSF has ever had, as one who doesn't care about education and who came to York solely for the purpose of gaining political power.

The editorial included the ridiculous sentence: "Ritch may have been a student for four years, but that hardly counts for much if those years were never taken seriously".

Presumably, an administrative decision on Ritch's academic performance, is all that the editor's of this deteriorating paper need to pass judgement on Ritch's attitude towards his own education for a period of four years; and then without discussing the matter with the staff, they place this judgement on the editorial page.

I would have been outraged at this but for the amusement it caused me. I find the thing hilarious because the authors of the piece, Julian Beltrame and

Oakland Ross, have been doing such a terrible job that it is fair to ask the question, do they take their own jobs seriously?

An example of this editorial bumbling would be the inflammatory and misleading headline over my article on last week's front page, "York and Track Association battle over stadium site", which bears no relation to the content of the article.

I hope that Mr. Orville McKeough, York's Director of Development will accept my apology for any misunderstandings the head caused.

It would seem to me that the editors of this rag should concentrate on improving their editorial abilities; their assumption of the Jehovah-like ability to pass judgement on four-year periods of other people's personal lives, is indicative of a chicken-shit mentality incapable of dealing with real issues.

Paul Stuart

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Last week's issue of Excalibur brought to mind images of the editors charging after windmills down the halls of Central Square. In their relentless pursuit of irresponsible sensationalism, last week Beltrame and Ross tried to make an issue of Dale Ritch's academic suspension.

In Excalibur's editorial a number of questions were posed concerning Ritch's ability to serve as CYSF president in light of his academic suspension. I think the record shows that Dale Ritch has, at the very least, been the hardest working president the student council has ever had. Regarding Ritch's concern for the academic nature of the university, I think it's significant to note that while last year the CYSF didn't even have an academic vice-president, major work has been done by this year's council to organize student

unions in every faculty and department.

In a front page story, Beltrame uses words such as "disclosure" and "admitted" to imply that Ritch's suspension is a big scandal just leaked to him last week. In fact, both editors admit they have known of the suspension since the summer and they also admit there has been no attempt on anyone's part to keep this suspension secret.

So why all the noise? Simple, Beltrame and Ross needed a story, so they made one. This is in keeping with the unscrupulous, cynical and irresponsible nature of the entire newspaper this year and it might explain why fewer people are reading and writing for this year's Excalibur.

What Beltrame and his cohort Oakland Ross don't seem to realize is that a "hard-hitting" newspaper doesn't come about easily and involves digging and investigation on the part of the editors and writers (one and the same this year). Instead Beltrame and Ross wait for "scandals" and "hot news" to fall in their laps. I'm sorry to say this doesn't happen and so, instead, the two editors are content to leap on insignificant details and sometimes totally wrong information and whip it into a "hot" newstory.

So instead they've turned their sights on the CYSF, a student council which this year prides itself on openness and availability of information.

I hope Beltrame and Ross will finally become more interested in producing a responsible, fair newspaper, in the interests of the York community, rather than the sensationalist trash they've been churning out. If they don't, they might find that not only will they further alienate their already shrinking staff but, finally, they will lose any interest and respect the York community still has for Excalibur.

Michael Hollett
co-editor, The Stong Flyer**On Campus**

Events for On Campus should be sent to the Communications Department, S802 Ross. Deadline is Monday, 12 noon.

SPECIAL LECTURES

Today, 11 a.m. — Development of Teaching Skills Seminar — "Contracting and the Keller Plan" with Dr. Kjell Rudestam, York's Department of Psychology — 108, Behavioural Science.

12 noon - 2 p.m. — Lunch-Hour Discussion (Y.U.F.A.) "University Governance" with Alex Murray, Environmental Studies Representative, Sub-Committee on Collective Bargaining — Senior Common Room, Vanier.

4 p.m. - 6 p.m. — Student/Faculty Fortnightly Seminar (Graduate Programme in Philosophy) "Lifeboat Ethics" with graduate student Gunar Saulitis; commentator: Peter Danielson — Senior Common Room, Founders.

4-30 p.m. — Chemistry Seminar Series — "Reactions of Polyamines with Hydrogen Ions — Electrostatic and Covalent Contributions" by Dr. Luigi Fabbrizzi, Università di Firenze — 320, Farquharson.

7:30 p.m. — Guest Speaker, "Rudolf Steiner, One of the Spiritual Impulses of our Time"; first of two lectures on who and what Steiner was, together with his basic idea of reincarnation, by Alan Howard — for further information call Holdine Mueller at 661-4059 - S167, Ross.

7:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. — Innovative Approaches to the Helping Relationship (Centre for Continuing Education) "Movement" with Gitta Sturmwind — general admission \$6; \$4 for students — 107, Stedman.

Monday, 4:30 p.m. — Biology Department Research Seminar — "Recent Studies on the Mechanism and Regulation of Microtubule Assembly" by Dr. Marc Kirschner, Princeton University — 320, Farquharson.

8 p.m. — Winters College Fellows' Series — "The Writer as Exile" with Brian Moore — Senior Common Room, Winters.

Tuesday, 1 p.m. — Guest Speaker (Foreign Literature, Latin American and Caribbean Studies) Professor German Bleiberg of Vassar College will speak about the significance of the poetry of Pablo Neruda and will read several of his works — S105, Ross.

4 p.m. — Physics Seminar Series — "Accurate Calculations of Transition Moments in Atoms" by Dr. Carl Moser, Director, Centre Europeen de Calcul Atomique et

Moleculaire, Université de Paris XI (Orsay, France) — 317, Petrie.

8 p.m. — Winters College Fellows' Series — featuring Seamus Heaney reading his poetry — Senior Common Room, Winters.

8 p.m. - 10 p.m. — Parapsychology and Altered States of Consciousness (Centre for Continuing Education) "Hypnosis" with Howard Eisenberg — general admission \$1 — D, Stedman.

Wednesday, 4 p.m. — C.R.E.S.S. Fall-Winter Seminar Series — "W-3 (OH) - a Runaway Neutron Star?" by Dr. Victor Hughes, Queen's University — 317, Petrie.

7:30 p.m. — International Women's Year: Lecture Series — (Arts, York Colleges) first of nine lectures based on the theme, Theoretical and Household Perspectives — "Origins of the Modern Family" by York Professor Cynthia Dent — Junior Common Room, Bethune.

FILMS, ENTERTAINMENT

Today, 9 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. — Cabaret — presents "Passionella" (a musical fable) — no admission charged; licenced — Open End Coffee Shop (004), Vanier.

Friday, 8 p.m. — Maple Sugar Performance Series (Fine Arts) an inter-media performance of dance, art and music — F, Curtis.

8 p.m. — Science Students Dance — free pizza, disc jockey and cash bar; admission \$1 — Bethune College Dining Hall.

8:30 p.m. — Film (Bethune) Francis Ford Coppola's "Godfather, Part II" — general admission \$1.50 — L, Curtis.

8:30 p.m. — Films (Winters) "Five Easy Pieces" and "Last Detail" — general admission \$1.25 — I, Curtis.

Saturday, 8:30 p.m. — Film (Bethune) see Saturday's listing at 8:30.

8:30 p.m. — Film (Jewish Student Federation) "Chariots of the Gods" — general admission \$1.50 — Faculty Lounge (8th floor), Ross.

Sunday, 8 p.m. — Concert (Bethune), featuring Shanna and Shooter — general admission at door is \$6; \$5 for members of community with York identification — Main Gym, Tait McKenzie.

8:30 p.m. — Film (Bethune) "The Conversation" (Gene Hackman) — general admission \$1.50 — L, Curtis.

8:30 p.m. — Films (Winters) see Friday at 8:30 p.m.

Monday, 3 p.m. — Natural Science Film — "The Harvest of the Seasons" from the Ascent of Man series — I, Curtis.

CLUBS, MEETINGS

Today, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. — A.I.E.S.E.C. — office is open Monday through Friday at this time — 020, Administrative Studies.

12 noon — Integrity Group — "The Secret Life of Plants" by Grant Clarke — 107, Stedman.

4 p.m. — York Ukrainian Club — second general meeting — Student Club Room (24), Central Square.

4 p.m. — N.D.P. Club — general meeting; new members welcome — S172, Ross.

Friday, 7 p.m. - 10 p.m. — Badminton Club — Upper Gym, Tait McKenzie.

Monday, 7, 8 & 9 p.m. — Hatha Yoga — 202, Vanier.

7:30 p.m. — York Bridge Club — Founders Dining Hall.

Tuesday, 4 p.m. — General Meeting — of the York University chapter of CARAL (Canadian Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws) — all interested persons welcome — Faculty Lounge (S872), Ross.

7 p.m. — Self-Defense for Women — 106, Stong.

8 p.m. — York University Homophile Association — 215, Bethune.

MISCELLANEOUS

Sunday, 7:30 p.m. — Roman Catholic Mass — 107, Stedman.

Monday, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. — President of the University at Glendon — for appointment call Mrs. Goodman at 667-2223, President's Office, York Hall, Glendon College.

Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. — Christian Counselling & Religious Consultation — call Chaplain J. Judt at 661-9015 or 633-2158 — 143, Founders.

COFFEE HOUSES, PUBS

Absinthe Coffee House — 930, Winters College (2349)

Ainger Coffee Shop — North Entrance, Atkinson (3544)

Argh Coffee Shop — 051, McLaughlin College (3606)

Atkinson Coffee House — 024, Atkinson (2488)