

Excalibur

Everything secret degenerates; nothing is safe that does not show it can bear discussion and publicity
—Lord Acton

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Barry Edson may be the best of a bad lot

Each year at about this time, we pause to consider: what makes a student council great? And each year we are forced to admit that, not having had much experience with great student councils, we don't really know.

But as election time draws near and as we once again confront that imposing question, we can take heart from the fact that we do know a great deal about what makes a student council stink.

For years, we have had CYSF administrations that have been introverted, laissez-faire and overly-fond of closed doors and private jokes. And those administrations stank.

This year, the CYSF has been dominated by the United Left Coalition (which magically transforms itself into the United Left *State* at election time). It has been clamorously extroverted, raucously activist; it has broken down doors in its manic efforts to keep them open; it has cracked not a single joke, private or otherwise, all year. And it, too, has stunk.

As different from each other as these administrations may have been, they have had one crucial failing in common: they have been unable to fully involve students in the life and affairs of the university.

Such do-nothing councils as those of Anne Scotton, Mike Mouritsen and John Theobald failed because they scorned students.

This year's ULC-dominated council has failed because, at heart, the ULC is afraid of students. Its members thrive on the same sort of persecution complex that besets so many radical fringes. The ULC has spent so much of its time this year fancying itself an oppressed minority and glancing over its various shoulders to check for malevolent monsters, that it has managed to do little else.

With its bristling, you're-either-with-us-or-against-us mentality, the ULC has alienated nine-tenths of the students who have ever wandered into the CYSF offices or watched one of Dale Ritch's foaming performances in the Bearpit this year.

This time around, the ULC may be presenting a glamorous front page image with Gael Silzer, but behind her crouches the same old band of ruffians, all of whom love nothing better than crying, "Persecution!" at every possible juncture — as they have in the past and as they will no doubt do ad nauseum during the course of this year's campaign.

The central problem with the United Left Coalition is its vision of itself as a "democratic elite". The CYSF offices have been turned into a sort of revolutionary's Noah's ark — only those who are politically acceptable are welcome aboard.

Although the issues which the ULC addresses (equal rights for women, student unionism, student-staff-faculty control of the university) are vitally important ones, they are presented as non-negotiable demands. There is no air space allowed for discussion or reflection. You either accept the ULC in toto, or not at all.

That is certainly not our idea of participatory democracy.

We are left, then, with a choice between two candidates: Izidore Musallam and Barry Edson.

Both Edson and Musallam have reservations about the ponderously political tone of the ULC, and both favour greater emphasis on the colleges but that is about the extent of their similarity.

Thus far, Musallam has offered very little of substance to the voters, aside from a Vaudevillian campaign slogan ("Izo believes; Izo perceives") and repeated avowals of his opposition to the ULC.

For the most part, his platform is innocuous enough to be nonexistent. It is reminiscent, in fact, of the caretaker platforms of such CYSF luminaries of the past as Anne Scotton or Mike Mouritsen.

That leaves Edson. His platform is far more in touch with the needs of the students than that of the ULC; it is far tougher and broader than that of Musallam.

Whereas Musallam dismisses outright the thought of students organizing to contest education cutbacks and whereas the ULC speaks of little else, Edson's approach is realistic, yet firm. Fight the cutbacks, he says, but recognize that some concessions will have to be made to Ontario's and Canada's economic ills.

Whereas the ULC virtually ignores social and cultural programmes, and whereas Musallam's proposals are merely tentative, Edson plans a wide range of dances, ethnic club activities and multi-cultural events involving, not merely the university, but the surrounding community as well.

Edson is not the most impressive politician ever to have mounted a soapbox, but he is by no means the worst and, in this election, he happens to be the best.

In determining Excalibur's position on the CYSF elections, staff writers who were also candidates for political office were not permitted to vote.



Item: U.S. sociologist says that "once you let one Canadian in, they'll all want to get in."

Guess who's coming to dinner?

So some U.S. sociologists have come to Canada and, practicing their profession (some sociologists can't go home without doing a sociological study on wives of sociologists), have unearthed some peculiar racial traits in the local inhabitants.

"Once you hire a few Canadians, then they will be pushing for more and more," noticed some U.S. sociologists.

No doubt this trait comes about from overexposure to the long, bitter Canadian winters. It conditions the natives to clamour for shelter, indoors, from the cold. This conditioning permeates every aspect of living, so that Canadians are now, by nature, forever clamouring to get into everything around them.

Such a state of affairs could be tolerated so long as they don't attempt enter the sphere of academia. Now is the time for U.S. sociologists working in Canadian universities to draw the line.

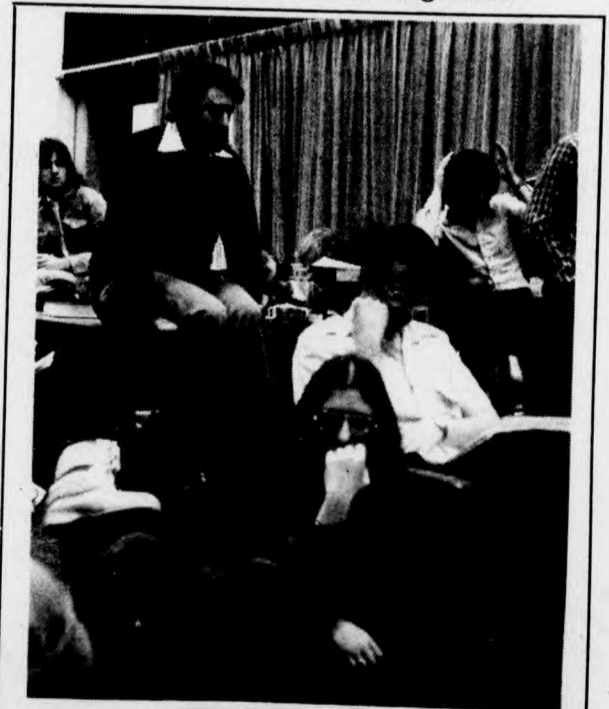
You let one in, and there goes the neigh-

bourhood.

Pretty soon there's two in the department, talking to your wife at faculty cocktail parties. Their sons might even start dating your daughters.

Worse, the Canadians might insist on the faculty hiring more Canadians and pretty soon the department will be inundated with Canadians.

Where would students be then if Canadians are doing the teaching in Canadian universities? Where would U.S. sociologists be?



EXCALIBUR
staff meeting

2 p.m. today
room 111 Central Square

Presumed guilt

We note that Bethune master Ioan Davies was charged last week with public mischief.

The charge rose from Davies's report to Metro Police that he had been physically assaulted by two men who claimed membership in the Nationalist Socialist Underground (NAZI). The police do not believe Davies's story and hence have charged him for, in essence, making a nuisance of himself.

Already there have been many a gleeful snicker, guffaw and sneer from York community members about the turn of events.

The case against Professor Davies has not yet been made in a court of law, and he should be given the courtesy of being presumed innocent until the time comes that he is proven guilty.