

How to stop worrying and learn to love the Reformers

Dear Editor,

Re: "Reform party agenda comes to campus," Bearpit, September 25.

When investigating the policies of any political party, it is always worthwhile to understand the platform as a whole. It makes no sense to label the Reform Party of Canada as "racist,

sexist, anti-gay, anti-poor and anti anything else which is seen as a threat to the 'traditional' family or to the glories of free market solutions"... that is certainly what the Reform Party is not!

The basic concerns of the Reform Party centre around the need to reform the constitution, to reform parliament and to reform the fiscal management of Canada. Out of these concerns

flow a number of solid reasons why we, as young Canadians, ought to support the Reform Party. Although I am not a present member of this party, I am hopeful that there will be dramatic reforms in their three main areas of concern.

In terms of constitutional reform, the Reform Party promotes a balanced, democratic federation of provinces which is not based on a federation of

founding races or ethnic groups and recommend that language and culture be provincial matters. Indeed, if the Province of Quebec is able to show a constitutional procedure for the equal treatment of anglophone and francophone residents within the "New Quebec", the Reform Party would encompass that same procedure in the "New Canada" constitution.

In terms of parliamentary reforms, there is little doubt that we need significant changes. If "imitation is the sincerest form of flattery", then the Reform Party should be flattered that the present government is now advocating an elected senate. Instead of patronage appointments for the party faithful who do not necessarily reflect regional views, the Reform Party endorses the Triple-E Senate concept: elected by the people, equal representation from each province and effective in safeguarding regional interests. And how refreshing to suggest that elected members of parliament should have a first duty to their constituents before their obligation to the party. It is time to have a bottom up government instead of top-down executive federalism.

Based upon years of financial mismanagement of our economy, by the two majority parties (and encouraged by the NDP during their short period of assistance to some \$400 billion; the current carrying costs in interest alone amount to almost 1 million dollars per hour! If we are to continue to finance any governmental programmes, pay interest and, hopefully, pay back our debt, we must change government spending habits which put us deeper and deeper into

debt. It hardly seems fair that, as soon-to-be-working graduates, we should be required to shoulder the heavy burden of debt and economic mismanagement, setting ourselves up as high margin taxpayers to offset the profligate spending of the previous generations.

The criticisms by Shawn Whitney of the Reform Party are caused by his or her lack of knowledge of the above three main platforms. It is hardly racist to admit that Canada can no longer afford the luxuries of multiculturalism and enforced bilingualism. In fact, basing present government grants and handouts on the basis of race, language, gender, culture or sexual preference is more racist, sexist, "anti-everything else", than the proposals of the Reform Party. As for immigration, the Reform Party supports an immigration policy that has Canada's economic needs as its focus and welcomes genuine refugees that seems to be highly responsible to immigrant, refugee and taxpayer alike. For example, the dependants of refugee and immigration claimants are able to come to our universities and have only to pay the subsidized fees! This policy is definitely not fair to residents and visa students.

The Reform Party may not have a perfect platform. However, it contains progressive thinking and many workable solutions for a number of the failures of our present political parties. It warrants full consideration and encouragement by York students and all other Canadian voters.

Susan Andrus

Labatt ad offensive to women

Dear Editor,

Have we become accustomed to blatant sexist advertising? Or, have the more critically aware students ceased to read *Excalibur*? I am referring to the "Spot the Bear" contest sheet that has apparently occupied the back cover of each *Excalibur* edition this year. Has not one student noticed the content of these pictures? Have you been too busy searching for the bear?

It disturbs me greatly that these ads are repeatedly being printed, and that no one has thus far complained! This being an extremely hectic year for me, my first encounter with this ad was, frighteningly, in the special supplement issue - "500 Years of Resistance: Shattering the Columbus Myth." The supplement was truly remarkable. I'm certain many students sat down and read it in one sitting. Perhaps, they may have even said to themselves, "Wow. *Excalibur* sure has changed from last year..." However, had they continued past the feature articles, and reviewed the last page, this claim would have most certainly become questionable.

For those who are not aware, the last page of the issue consisted of a cartoon depicting a university bookstore. Within this animated drawing, students are asked to locate and circle a Labatt's Blue polar bear. This page is then to be submitted as a contest entry form.

My vehement disturbance with this ad has to do with the sexist stereotypes it perpetuates. For example, out of the 51 students portrayed, a mere 5 are women. (Actually, more rabbits appear in the picture than do women). I have been a student for the past 5 years at two different universities and I have never seen such a disproportionate number of men. On the contrary, I believe the numbers are about equal, if not in favour of women.

Furthermore, out of those 5 women in the drawing, 2 are wearing revealing dresses in which over half of their breasts are displayed. Two of the other women have buttocks which appear naked (i.e. clothes are so tight that all lines are shown). The last woman is portrayed as a little girl (bow in hair), reading a book entitled, *Lots of Pic-*

tures Inside.

Being the optimist that I am, after viewing this ad, I figured so many people must have complained to *Excalibur* that they wouldn't dare print another. To my dismay, another ad was printed in the Oct. 16th issue. This scene took place in a university library. Only 3 women appear in this ad: one is wearing a bikini, one has impossibly large protruding breasts, and the third has her leg flung over a study carrel and is engaging in intercourse on the carrel.

The above described depictions serve as 'reminders' that university is a place for males. Further, all the females that attend university are either sluts or stupid or both. I have lodged formal complaints to Labatt's and to *Excalibur*. I will not rest until these ads are removed. Yesterday, I saw a student-parent with child in the cafeteria. While the student read, the child was given the 'Spot the Bear' sheet to colour...

Nancy Fisher,
student, 4th yr.

English attitude offends

Dear Editor,

In your issue of Oct 2, 1991, you reported on some of the implications of the current financial crisis the university is facing. It was with some amusement that I read the comments I had conveyed to you on this issue over the phone.

Despite the fact that my name was misspelled (I can live with that) and that I was misquoted in regards to certain changes that are taking place in the English department of the faculty of Arts, I did not feel it necessary to respond.

However, the letter to the editor from the Chair of the English department has caused me to reconsider this decision. For the record, I said that the English department was considering the elimination of a number of part-time faculty positions in the following academic year. This information was conveyed to me by some of the CUEW members in that department.

What I find more alarming and dismaying than the apparent misinformation presented in the original *Excalibur* article, is the rather cavalier attitude that the chair of the English department has taken in regards to the elimination of course directorship jobs this year and the move towards packing more students into classes (however insignificant this may appear in the current academic year).

This attitude strikes me as being symptomatic of the position many of the constituencies at this institution are taking in regard to funding constraints. With few exceptions (the Department of Social Science, being a notable one), most administrators have not even questioned the manner

in which the cuts are implemented. If this trend continues, both teachers and students will suffer in the coming years.

Joe Kispal-Kovacs
Chair, CUEW/SCITE Local 3

Art as eyesore

Dear Editor,

At risk of being labelled a boor, I feel compelled to voice my displeasure at the recent attempts to spruce up the York campus. Admittedly, the architecture here is quite stark; however, the "installation" of the York Fine Arts Department, despite its heralding in *Excalibur* of October 9, 1991, also leaves something to be desired.

While the two objects at the main entrance off Keele Street are intriguing, the "two lines" dangling between 4, 6, and 8 Assiniboine add less to the visual aesthetics of the campus than the new blue boxes. The lines might as well be made of thread from the Emperor's New Clothes, as far as I am concerned.

The shack frame standing near the Osgoode Law building is simply an eyesore. As I look out my window from my Assiniboine Road apartment, I know I would much rather see the open grass field on which the frame sits. A question: why do the carpenters who actually built the frame get no credit as co-artists?

To summarize, *Crossroads* is no more art than the doodling in my notebook. Perhaps that is why it is termed an installation. Elsewhere, art is exhibited not installed.

Sincerely,
Hans Christian Connor

Letters

We will publish, space permitting, any letters up to 400 words. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name and telephone number. Material deemed libelous or discriminatory by the staff of *Excalibur* will be rejected. Letters may be mailed or delivered to *Excalibur* • 426 Central Square • York University • 4700 Keele Street • North York • Ontario • M3J 1P3



Alok Sharma

Mall smokes readers

Dear Editor,

Now I've seen/heard it all! On October 9, 1991, after spending a stressfilled hour and a half in our Taj Mahal-excuse me-Bookstore - something strange occurred to me. I decided to drop by one of those cute little coffee shops in "our" new York'dale" Lanes. I had been at a figure skating practice at an awful hour (without the benefit of a tape playing I might add!)

I figured I could find a moments peace to read over some pages to try to catch up on some reading. Shortly after I opened my book I was in-

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