

LETTERS

cont'd from p. 4

Protester lashes out

Dear Editor,
The *Excalibur* editorial of October 6th made for very disturbing reading. Entitled, 'The last straw for "floundering" York,' it appears that it is the editor who is floundering over an issue that demanded a statement of some impact from York's foremost "news" paper.

The editorial does little more than regurgitate the issues raised by this action.

Surely the editorial of a student newspaper should attempt to reflect, or at least to identify with students' feelings on this issue. The editor is entitled to his opinion that the action was "justified," but please don't expect students to pay even more than they already do to read your confused and irresolute ramblings.

Peter McKenzie's letter on the same page made for far more stimulating reading and did more than churn out spurious clichés and inconclusive ponderings. If *Excalibur* is not willing or able to comment decisively on such important matters then maybe its editorial space should be taken up with even more advertising.

—Phil Downes

Progressive institution?

Did you know that Oxford is a bourgeois institution, Plato and Aristotle were both male chauvinists and that the world we live in is male dominated, racist, bourgeois and generally not very "progressive"?

Recognition of this seems hardly earthshattering, the real issue remains how we ought to approach these problems so as not to become part of them ourselves or to create still others.

"Progressive" is the new buzz-

word one often hears those who see themselves as such use to refer to each other (this as though there were people who would refer to themselves as regressive or draconian).

Last year I applied for a Teaching assistant position at Atkinson College for a course called Introduction To Social Science which among other things was supposed to focus on theories of Social Science.

The interviewer looked me straight in the eyes and said "I should tell you that we take a 'progressive' approach here and if you think that this might make you uncomfortable, the job is probably not for you." He explained that the "progressive" approach taken in the department referred to the fact that they taught the theory of social science from a Marxist perspective. I was ready to agree that much could be gained by the Marxist approach but that to exclude thinkers like Nietzsche, Weber, Foucault and Durkheim, who along with Marx have contributed profoundly to our understanding of modern social science and indeed to our understanding of modernity itself, seemed no less than a sham.

A woman I recently met who is doing her PhD in Sociology at York retorted that Plato and Aristotle were both male chauvinists not worth studying, and that Oxford was a bourgeois institution, when in conversation I mentioned that I had considered applying to Oxford to study Aristotle (I did political theory at McGill, undoubtedly another bourgeois institution in her mind). "Surely," I replied, "you would not advocate that we stop studying the theory of relativity or toss Hamlet on the proverbial dung heap if it were somehow determined that Einstein hated women and Shakespeare was violently racist?" And by the same token, ought one to dismiss the work of a powerful thinker simply because he happened to teach at Oxford?

That such a simple approach to things (which one finds not only on the left but the right as well — eg. Ayn Rand's "objectivism"), lacks

intellectual integrity and reflects and impoverished conception of scholarship seems so clearly evident, and yet one will still find, even in some "academic" circles that this conclusion must be strenuously argued for.

The utter lack of depth in the outlook and approach of some of those who would self righteously refer to themselves as "progressive" is so much a part of the very problem(s) which they themselves claim to be addressing, whether this be male dominance or general economic inequality, etc., that one cannot help being saddened by the irony of it.

That serious consideration has been given to suggestions by some that York's Community and Legal Aid Service Program (CLASP) ought not to represent males *accused* of assaulting females, which would allow one's sex to form the basis of waiving the presumption of innocence in such cases is hardly intellectually defensible in the name of progress. Not only does such a policy fail to address the problem for which it was presumably conceived, namely male violence against women, it also, in principle, undermines one of the vital legal safeguards which protects citizens against state encroachment of their basic individual rights.

Clearly we must recognize the deficiencies and injustices existent in our society. However, unless we are to find ourselves in a worse position than we are in now (some people forget this is possible), we must not allow our reformative policies to become infected by a need to lash out, or still, to become dominated by parochial interests who would seek changes to benefit themselves or the "world" regardless of the cost.

— Howard Gerson

Overcrowding? Chernobyl U.

To the Editor:

The Black Death of 1347-51 which took 75 million lives, The Shensi Province Earthquake of 1556 that killed 830,000 Chinese, and the Ganges Delta Flooding of 1970 that claimed 100,000 victims; What do all

these great calamities have in common aside from the horrible suffering and enormous death tolls that they created??? You guessed it, none of them happened at York!

The absence of a natural disaster at York is not only regrettable but downright troubling to clear and far thinking Canadians. With no natural check or "great equalizer," York's population has exploded over recent years and is now posing a serious risk to the very continuance of student education. Solutions to this dilemma considered by the York administration and various government commissions are numerous and have included raising admission standards, increasing school hours and encouraging shifts in scheduling. Of course these proposals were rejected by our left-wing liberal legislators as being unfair, unworkable and unnecessary.

There seems to be only one sensible and practicable solution left to solving the over-crowding and congestion at York: Nuclear Radiation.

The splitting of the atom and its associated properties have long been used by science to power cities and in effect end world wars. So why not use it at York? Obviously I'm not suggesting we drop a five or ten megatonne bomb on the York campus, at least not at first anyway. What the plan entails is the careful and specific use of low-grade nuclear waste in the general hope of sharply increasing student mortality or to put it in a Jesse Jackson-like prose, "Use radiation, to reduce the population."

This waste could be purchased quite inexpensively, of if we're fortunate enough, could be donated to the school by some rich benefactor of the nuclear industry. The waste, after being carefully prepared, could then be taken and distributed throughout Central Square in areas of high population density such as around benches, doorways and females with high skirts and low neck-lines. Because we're using a low-level toxic waste only repeat offenders, such as those who spend inordinate amounts of time crowding and congesting Central Square, would be fatally affected.

Equally as beneficial is the fact that the others, after developing

facial boils, blindness, excessive hair loss and impotency, would soon get the message that Central Square is not a place to loiter or gather together between classes.

It's become apparent that our University must move into the twenty-first century when it comes to implementing and selecting the most effective student population controls. Sure a bullet in the head or a detonation of TNT in the hallways might have been effective 50 years ago but it just isn't feasible on a large scale in the University setting of today.

Human rights aside, something drastic must be done immediately before we are swamped in our academic institutions by masses of myriad mindless, meandering, misplaced students. So let's start living by that familiar edict that every nuclear scientist's mother tells their child as they grow up, "Remember son, an ounce of radiation is worth a pound of cure!"

Indignantly yours,
William F. Buckwheat Jr.

No church differences

Darryl Wiggers' letter (Sept. 29, "Discord on Christianity") leaves me in the dark.

After reading Wiggers' critical piece on the Church of Christ, I decided to write not to attack his view so much as to point out another: Wiggers shows us how the Church of Christ uses fear, seduction and intimidation to manipulate its members. Everyone agrees this is bad. My point is to state that I see little difference between this church and others. This one is obvious in its means and methods, the others are not.

Consider, for example, that in becoming part of a church, some of the big questions (Why are we here? How did we get here?) are "answered," or addressed. Many find relief. Fine.

But consider further how religion dissipates one's fears about death

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ALL WEEK IN THE BEAR PIT

Employment Opportunities

The Chief Returning Officer is looking for Poll Clerks for a Referendum to be held October 18th and 19th. Please apply at the CYSF Office by October 14th.

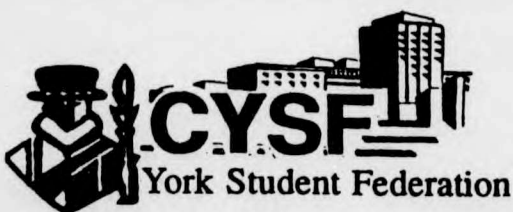
Vice President - Internal

All interested candidates must present a resumé to the CYSF Office by Thursday, October 18th in order to be eligible for consideration.

COMING SOON...

October 21 Amnesty International Concert
(in association with CYSF)
Stong Dining Hall

October 26 *Europe on 84¢ a Day* with Gil White
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