letters & comment

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, *Excalibur*, room III, Central Square. Please type letters, triple or double spaced, and keep them to around 250 words. Name, address and phone number must be included, but name will be withheld on request. *Excalibur* reserves the right to edit for grammar and length.
Deadline Monday 4pm.

Disgusted at Excalibur's blatant bias

I should like to take this opportunity to register my disgust at the blatant show of biased reporting which occurred in the most recent issue of *Excalibur* of two weeks past.

Specifically, I am referring to *Excalibur's* treatment of the decision of CYSF to cut Harbinger's budget by $6000 for next year.

After opposing the budget cuts in its opening editorial, *Excalibur* proceeded to devote the entire first page of Letters and Comments to letters opposing the budget cut and only one small letter on the third page in favour of the cut.

In these days of financial cutbacks, I think it's ridiculous to expect CYSF to allot $6000 to an organization which merely duplicates services which are available from either the family doctor or other non-profit community organizations specifically set up to provide sexual consulting and advice on birth control and so on. Also, the view expressed by Tom Silverhart that professional consulting is available from well qualified PhD's in Behavioural Sciences free of charge is well taken.

Excalibur, instead of trying to present both sides of the issue chose instead to proclaim its bias with large headlines and full page letters from people opposed to cutting Harbinger's budget.

Perhaps *Excalibur* should consider changing its name to something which better reflects its level of professional reporting, eg. *Lowcalibur*.

Hugh Nicholson
Stong College

Council cuts 6 grand off Harbinger's grant

By Laura Brown

Seven angry CYSF (Council of York Students Federation) members stalked out of the council-day night meeting, after losing a slim margin to restore $6,000 less than CYSF finance vice-president Tom Silverhart, had proposed that Harbinger receive $2,000 this year. Harbinger said the constraints of this year's budget necessitated the cutting of funds for most campus organizations.

Harbinger is a centre which provides birth control, drug, abortion and pregnancy information and counselling for personal and sexual problems.

Debate began when the validity of Harbinger's services was disputed. Council president, Paul Hayden said that the council had to re-evaluate the students' need for Harbinger.

He said that today's students with problems are "sophisticated and are not deathly afraid of a doctor who holds a degree." No staff member of Harbinger has a degree and their competence as counsellors was challenged.

Steven Muchnik, representative from Founders College, said, "People who have serious problems should have professional help."

Sue Kaiser, Harbinger's only full time staff member, said the centre provides direction for people with problems. She said that if a problem could be dealt with before it becomes serious, council that 2,500 students received counselling from

Harbinger's claims doubted

First, I want to make it clear that I'm not trying to pass any judgements on whether or not Harbinger is a worthwhile organization. The point of this letter is to express some doubts concerning the amount of responsibility Harbinger supporters seem to claim the organization takes on (sic).

The first point has to do with the number of students Harbinger claimed to help last year.

I understand it to be around 2,500 students. This isn't such a large number compared to the number of students attending York (I assume it works out to approximately 10 or 12 percent.

Harbinger is credited for helping a girl get a precancerous condition detected in time. However, I'm concerned that some students will make Harbinger a substitute for professional help.

I sat in the doctor's office on campus one day and noted the number of times the nurse referred women to Harbinger for information on the pill. Their first instincts were to seek professional aid and not to go to Harbinger.

Another thing, Harbinger seems to think that 570 names on a petition circulating for four days is successful. I feel it demonstrates the small percent of the student body that needs Harbinger.

In last week's paper, the Harbinger Collective accused the CYSF of not reflecting the students' interest and priorities. I suggest that the CYSF should poll the students to find out.

I hope I have made it clear that there are students who are trying to evaluate this controversy that seems to preoccupy the *Excalibur*.

I sympathize with Paul Hayden's position. I've been a student council president. In this position, I was often praised for my generosity and condemmed for so called lack of support.

In other words, when the hands go out for support they forget that someone may have to be told 'no'. It's fine to sit back and say someone isn't doing a good job but put in the same position, I'm sure the critics couldn't do much better. (Well so much for my two-cents worth.)

I just wanted to express some of the feelings that other students may have as well as myself.

Sandra Alderson
(Ex-prez)
first-year undergraduate

Is CYSF choking course unions?

We congratulate the editors of *Excalibur* for their excellent editorial: "Hayden's Pipe Dream". We the executive of the political science student council could not agree more heartily with you.

Not only has CYSF been unrealistic and unreasonable to deal with in regards to course union funding, but the proposed budget for the Course Unions for 1977-78 is unacceptable.

Course Unions have finally become a very significant aspect of university life. Last year there were only 9 such unions. This year there are well over 20. Is it not absurd that when there is a remarkable increase in student academic participation at York, the funds to encourage and support that increase are not only not meeting the increase but in fact they have been substantially reduced!

It is difficult enough to organize course unions and encourage student involvement. Without sufficient funding the situation is made more critical.

Lack of appropriate funds kills the incentive of the union members to organize academic events. Arranging for guest speakers and other such events is costly. But that is the main purpose of a course union.

Money for maintenance-stationary, mailing costs, telephone bills, etc. — may as well not be granted if CYSF is not prepared to support the unions' major function. Hayden and CYSF are choking off the course unions. They cannot provide the very services they are established to provide — so why should they continue to exist?

We feel that the course unions are a very important part of a student's academic life. Much hard work has gone into establishing course unions as integral aspects of the university. Indeed, as the increase in participation shows, the reality of course unions is here to stay; everything possible must be done to maintain that reality.

In a time of need the allocation of the incredible amount of $10,000 for Hayden's "Pipe Dreams" is absolutely absurd. CYSF funds do not belong to CYSF but to the students. The executive has no mandate to use that money in any arbitrary way. It is responsible to the students for the efficient and responsible allocation of those funds. In this time of economic hardship CYSF must be particularly responsive to student needs.

Essential priorities, such as course unions and Harbinger, must be considered first and only in prosperous times can CYSF consider saving for a "rainy day".

It is high time that CYSF became more realistic about present needs. Do we think of hoarding our money with the intention of possibly one day buying a colour TV while we watch our children starve? Come on "dreamweaver" stop pulling the wool over your own eyes! It is time to get to work.

Karnik Doukmetzian, Chairman
Sherry Wasser, Vice-Chairman
Political Science Student Council

Theatre union asks same

I am writing this letter to express both my extreme dismay, and the disgust of a particular course union (Theatre Students Association) at the amount of money which has been allotted to CUAC (Course Union Administrative Commission) by CYSF.

Upon realizing that communications, external affairs, and social events have received up to three times as much in the way of funding as have the course unions, the members of this course union are absolutely appalled. There are presently 15 course unions applying for funding from CUAC, and $3,700 to divide between 15 unions is simply pathetic.

Course unions are primarily academic clubs, and deserve much more in the way of funding than they have received!

Cindy Recchia
President, Theatre Students Assoc.

Ed. note: This letter was received November 3 and was misplaced. Sorry!

Thanks for your coverage

Thank to *Excalibur* for their well-researched and encouraging articles on the Bethune leakage situation. While the interest shown by the *Toronto Star*, CKOC radio, and CITY TV was much appreciated, some of their enthusiasm must be credited to a need for story material.

Excalibur not only reported the situation, but came out on our side on the editorial page! It was an easy thing for us to complain among ourselves when the problem began, but it was a different matter altogether when it came to doing something constructive.

So, on behalf of the committee members and those Bethune residents who will be cancelling their December rent installments, I would like to extend our appreciation to *Excalibur* for a job well done. A little recognition goes a long way in a David and Goliath battle such as this, where students are pitted against Physical Plant.

As expected, the deadline has passed with no repairs being started, so we expect to see a lot of cheques cancelled this week. I would like to remind Bethuners that the fight isn't over; just because our rooms are dry now it doesn't mean we can relax.

Therefore I hope you will get out and support our rent strike; then maybe we'll see some results.

Sara McLennan
Bethune 'Flood Committee' Member

Staffer corrects himself

A leftist journalist must be impeccable and beyond reproach. He must qualify his statements and insure their integrity. For these reasons I wish to make the following comments:

The initial sentence for my article on Noranda two weeks ago should have read: "A multi-national corporation is a very large economic institution that monopolizes the production, manufacture, and distribution of certain goods." This sentence would have qualified my claim that multi-nationals exist to accumulate capital.

It has also come to my attention that Noranda has renegotiated its contract with the Chilean junta. Consequently Noranda now owns fifty-one percent share of the Andocollo copper development. Falconbridge has also secured majority interest in its project at Quebrada Blanco.

Andrew Nikiforuk

Smoke chokes abstainers

This is a letter of complaint, and as I don't know who to direct it to, I'm writing to *Excalibur*, in the hope of it being published. I would like an enforcement of York's no-smoking regulations.

Last Saturday night I attended a double feature movie in Curtis L; The room was packed, and the only seats available were on the stairs, where many of us were forced to sit.

Clearly posted are no-smoking signs, yet *many* people were lighting up during and between the films. Being crowded and smoky made it most uncomfortable for those of us who find smoking objectionable.

I approached the only visibile official, asking him to at least make an announcement that smoking was forbidden. This he refused to do - firstly by claiming that it would not have any effect, then, when pressured, agreeing to "see what he could do" which, as it turned out, was nothing.

What recourse have those of us who don't smoke, but who'd like to take advantage of the movies and other activities on campus? I think that at least a modest effort should be made to control smoking during movies.

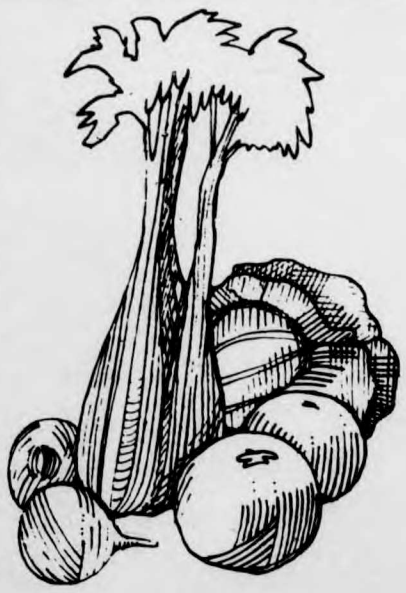
An announcement should be made, and if students don't comply they should be asked to leave the theatre. I feel that the no-smoking signs were put there for a purpose - and that purpose was to prohibit smoking in the lecture theatre.

I hope those responsible for the movies will enforce this suggestion.

An avid non-smoking moviegoer

Co-op time

About your November 10 story on *Produce Price Disparity* and the high cost of food, for example, at the Dominion on Four Winds Drive:

When my husband was a graduate student we lived in grad student housing served by a single commercial super market. In response to high prices, the students organized their own co-op. It was centrally located and grew from a small, one room outlet to a thriving business. Why couldn't it happen at York?

Sylvia F. Campbell
Counselling Services