

Opinion

Academic racists should not be heard

The incident at the University of Toronto in which visiting American professor Edward Banfield was physically stopped from speaking raises the question of the right to free expression when such expression threatens other community values.

The Banfield incident follows similar incidents within the last two years in which professors accused of advancing racist theories were prevented from speaking at English and American Universities. William Shockley, a Nobel prize winner was stopped at Princeton University and at Staten Island Community College; Richard Herrnstein at the University of Iowa; Arthur Jensen at Berkeley and Hans Eysenck at the London School of Economics.

In each of these cases the protesters, who include lecturers, students, blacks, Puerto Ricans and Italians shouted the speaker down or invaded and occupied the speaker's platform.

Assuming that the theories advanced by these scholars are racist, are such methods of protest reconcilable with the right of academic freedom and the idea of the rule of

law in a constitutional society? Does freedom of expression include freedom to express racist beliefs?

The right of free expression has always been subject to certain limitations reflecting the moral standards of the best established segments of a society at any given time. Thus we may find blasphemy, libel, sedition, obscenity, contempt of court and promotion of hatred against a racial group as exceptions to the rule of constitutionally protected free expression.

The foremost principle of justice in society is the right of equal status of all persons. This right includes the right of freedom from racial discrimination. It is public policy in Canada that every person is equal in dignity and rights without regard to race or ancestry. Racism is a threat to this principle.

Racism fosters the belief that one group is superior to another by reason of natural endowment at birth and by right has a preferred place in society. Any theory or scientific research directed to showing one race as superior to another is racist and contrary to the principle of equal status.

Protesters who prevent academic racists from lecturing take the position that the very expression of racist theories is a crime to be physically stopped in much the same way as the burglar must be stopped. Says Guy Sison, the French journalist, "Racism is no subject for debate; it is a subject for a trial."

The right of freedom of expression is subordinate to the right of equal status and is a right only insofar as its exercise secures the right of equal status. To those who say, "How can racism be the issue unless we first hear what the speaker has to say? Don't deny us the right to hear the speaker. Let us decide for ourselves."—the reply must be that their right to hear the speaker must cede to the right of his victims to be free from racial discrimination. It must be remembered that the views of academic racists are well known through their many books, wide publication of their papers in journals and through their previous lectures. (In the University of Toronto incident Banfield did in fact speak twice on Tuesday, March 12.) In Toronto, the organized struggle against Banfield's theories has been

going on for two years

The academic racists are restrained, sophisticated scholars. This makes them more difficult to deal with than Western Guardians or John Birchers. They are advisors to presidents and governors and their books are used widely in North American universities. It is doubtful that those in authority would stop them in the way that the Canadian Government stopped Stokely Carmichael, Abbie Hoffman or Jerry Rubin, who were all denied entry by Immigration officials.

The "pillars of the community," among who are seldom found victims of racism, may unwittingly sanction racist expression by emphasizing the right of academic freedom over the right of freedom from racial discrimination. When this happens the victims and their supporters will struggle with whatever means they have — including civil disobedience addressed to the sense of justice of the community.

CHARLES ROACH

Ed. note: Charles Roach is a lawyer for the National Black Peoples' Coalition

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, c/o Excalibur, room 111 central Square. They must be double-spaced, typed and limited to 250 words. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for length and grammar. Name and address must be included for legal purposes but the name will be withheld upon request. Deadline: Mon. 5 p.m.

Letters To The Editor

Walrus runs second to the dialogues of L'il Abner

I recently glanced at a copy of Stong College's "newspaper." The Walrus, which of late, seems to be freshly skimmed from the top of the literary wastebasket. I decided, and, I hope, and, I have, and, I'm sure that I have found my only beef, and, I defy anyone, but I can only say that when you find ten I's (I have, I think, I defy, etc.) in the front page lead story, you begin to wonder about the inadequacies and lack of ability of the paper's personnel. Front page editorials are the ploy of yellow journalists, not good reporters.

The salaried 'editor' (yes, they do have one) is apparently trying to get 'everyone' to get 'people' off their asses. He mentions in his lead editorial something about the student apathy situation in one line and in the next states that he has decided not to mention the apathy issue—pathetic or what! This kind of puerile writing would not be so bad, if it were confined to one article. Unfortunately, with the exception of the sports section, it prevails throughout much of the paper.

What is the 'editorial' staff trying to prove with such opinionated drivel? Presumably the 'newspaper' is supposed to appeal to and inform university students. Are they trying to insult people into action or prove that college papers are a waste of funds that would be better appropriated to Harbinger or Excalibur?

Of course, the professional typeset job of The Walrus (and its expense) does not reflect the 'professional' aim of Stong's newspaper, which seems to be, at present, an attempt to run a close second to the dialogues of L'il Abner. In this case they should can the attempt to look professional. It is rather nauseating to discern student funds and newsprint being so blatantly wasted.

A FORMER READER of THE WALRUS

What really happened? Mouritsen doesn't know neither does council

As a student of York University, I am deeply disturbed by the motion presented by CYSF president Mouritsen at the council meeting of March 20, 1974.

Mouritsen presented a motion that supports the invitation of racist pseudo-scientists like Edward Banfield to university campuses. As the reader is probably aware, Banfield is an anti-minority groups preacher.

The most disturbing thing is that all the members of council who voted to support racist theories do not know what really happened at the U of T on March 12, 1974, or what Banfield stands for when a group of students and ethnic workers stopped him from speaking.

When I asked Mouritsen on what information he had based his motion, he replied, "from the Globe and Mail".

As a student of York, I strongly feel that this is a very irresponsible way of governing student affairs. Mouritsen should have contacted the

people at the U of T to find out what exactly happened before he went ahead and presented his motion endorsing racism in universities.

JOE RENDA
Senator, Vanier College

Charges of racism in teaching of French disturbing says readers

During the March 7 Teach-In on Racism, Carleton French professors Donald Smith and Sinclair Robinson put forth some interesting ideas on the teaching of French in English Canada. They suggested that it is a form of racism to refuse to teach Quebec literature and "Quebec French" to English Canadians.

Although I agree that we must increase the Quebec content of our French courses (while still leaving a large French content), Smith and Robinson's remarks disturbed me. To suggest, as Robinson did, that it is a form of racism to say that one form of language is to be preferred to another strikes me as just plain silly.

Of course it is true that one form of language is considered better than another for extralinguistic reasons and that from the scientifically neutral standpoint of the linguist no form is better than another. But it is by no means true that these extra-linguistic reasons are racist. What Robinson apparently had in mind is the kind of case which occurs when someone maintains that British English is superior to Canadian English. But Canadian English does not stand to British English in the same (extralinguistic) relation Canadian French stands to European French.

Moreover, French-speaking people do not have the same attitude to their language as English-speaking North Americans have to theirs. Some French Canadians are of course 'anglicized' in the sense that they have adopted a more North American attitude, but a good number of Quebecers have not yet been assimilated on that point. Smith and Robinson are superimposing their own cultural attitude to their language onto the French language. By this they are doing a grave disservice both to Quebecers and to their own students.

It is at any rate wrong to speak of Canadian French as if it were an alternative, in all spheres of life to European French. The differences that exist between the language of the educated Quebecer and that of the educated Frenchman, Swiss or Belgian are not of the sort which can cause any real confusion or misunderstanding.

Still, I agree with them that the students may often find it handy to know familiar expressions widely used in Quebec. But we must teach these expressions for what they are and not exaggerate their importance, even though they may be used in contemporary Quebec literature. Finally, I heartily agree that French teachers must accept that vocabulary which, though Canadian, is in no way to be considered patois: certain sports terms, certain political terms, measurements and, I would add, other terms approved by linguists and l'Office de la Langue Francaise du Quebec.

There are difficult problems here and we cannot solve them for the Quebecers, but neither must we assume that anything goes and start accepting of the same level any and all Quebec expressions. As Jean Marcel points out in his

book *Le Joui de Troie*, those who claim that Quebec can create a new language are, in addition to being poor linguists, not friends of Quebec.

B. THOMAS HALL
(Graduate student, Philosophy)

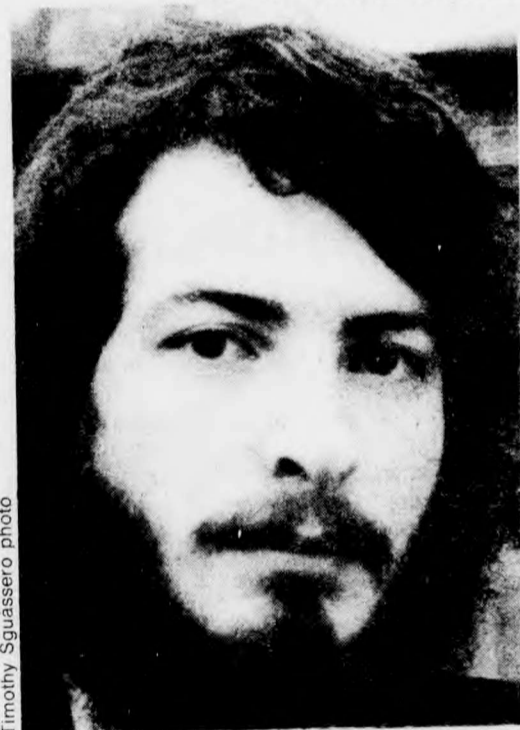
In-depth analysis has blatant error

I was rather pleased to see your "in-depth" analysis of the Inter-College Table Tennis tournament in the March 21 issue of Excalibur.

However, I was upset by a rather blatant error in the article entitled "Stong wins York torch Law rally not enough". This error, as you are probably aware by now, is the reference to Glendon as last year's winner, when in fact Stong has won the York Torch for three consecutive years now. Glendon last won the championship in 1970-71. This information would not have been difficult to obtain.

Nevertheless, I must commend you for your efforts.

YOUR LOYAL WALRUS FAN.



TED REESER

Letter writer objects to "CKRY vs CYSF" says we made it up

On page five of the March 21, Excalibur is a piece entitled "CKRY vs CYSF." This piece is signed by myself supposedly on behalf of Radio York. A check of my copy of the piece I wrote confirms that I did not sign the letter on behalf of Radio York, and that it was in fact a personal letter to the editor.

Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the title was selected by Excalibur without consulting me. I attribute it blatantly irresponsible of Excalibur to attribute the opinion that there exists a situation of "CKRY vs CYSF" to me. That is the position of Excalibur, and in my opinion does not represent the true state of affairs.

TED REESER

Readers commend us on our accuracy

We would like to commend Excalibur on the accuracy of its reporting. In previous years the tendency of our newspaper to misrepresent the facts has elicited copious complaint from the community. We are happy to see that this problem has been rectified, as was especially evident in the issue of March 14/74 to which we shall now refer.

We have selected at random the article on page three, entitled "ARGH MAY BECOME BAR," as an excellent example. In this article we find only three gross errors, two contradictions and one blatant lie—obviously a vast improvement over yesteryear. It should be noted immediately that nobody's perfect and that most, if not all, of the errors in this particular article are understandable mistakes.

It was stated that Bob Porter is manager of the Argh. This is, unfortunately, not true as Mr. Porter finished his term as manager eleven months ago.

It was further reported that Argh would be converted to a lounge. This is, unfortunately, not true as the proposal for the lounge states clearly that the social and debates room will be the location. This obscure point, which is one of the major issues of contention, the cause of a proposed referendum, the idea behind a petition and the source of much heated argument, must have (understandably) escaped the notice of the eagle-eyed reporter — all of which is extremely unfortunate because it makes the headline a blatant lie.

A little further into the article, one reads that the social and debates room will be the site of the lounge. Considering the headline and the earlier statements about the conversion of Argh, it seems fairly obvious to me that we have here a minor contradiction.

Perhaps we are wrong, but it also appears contradictory to say in the first line that the college council "has agreed to examine the cost" and in the last line that "the opening for the new campus bar is projected for early September." At the very least it is jumping to a conclusion.

Beyond these few minor inconsistencies, the article is a paradigm of the journalistic art. Moreover, there is not a single typographical error. Assuming that this is a representative sample of the contents of Excalibur, the students of York can rest assured that their money is certainly well-spent.

Keep up the good work fellas!

ROSS EARNSHAW
BOB PORTER

Letter Lovers?

All members of the York community who have been putting off writing letters to Excalibur are reminded that the next issue is our last for this academic year. Deadline for submissions is Monday noon, Rm.111, Central Square.