

SRC—paperwork or leadership?

The Students' Representative Council is in a sad state. It depends on the colleges for handouts. It has no specifically defined role in the university and because of this it's even unrecognized by the administration.

A week from today elections will be held for seven positions, including that of President of the SRC. What kind of council will the students be voting for? It is imperative that the candidates make clear what kind of council they want to sit on.

It should be a council which can effectively represent the students as a whole. To this end, it must insist on financial independence from the colleges. No more doles.

It should demand that it and it alone appoint students to the administration-faculty-student Advisory Committee on Student Affairs (ACSA) being set up now by President Ross. The colleges will already be represented on the SRC (2 members each). There's no justification for the independent college representation on ACSA unless it is to undermine the SRC's role of the voice of all the students.

The SRC must be more than a mere "paperwork" organization, serving the college councils. It should be a dynamic initiator of policies promoting the interests of York students.

October 7, 1966
Ron Graham/Mannie Zeller

End hypocrisy—legalize marijuana

Social norms of human behaviour change relatively slowly, even when they are influenced by fashionable waves of behaviour.

Normative legislation develops even more slowly. It has been argued that this very fact ensures the individual the guarantee of his basic human rights, which are more static and less needy of constant change.

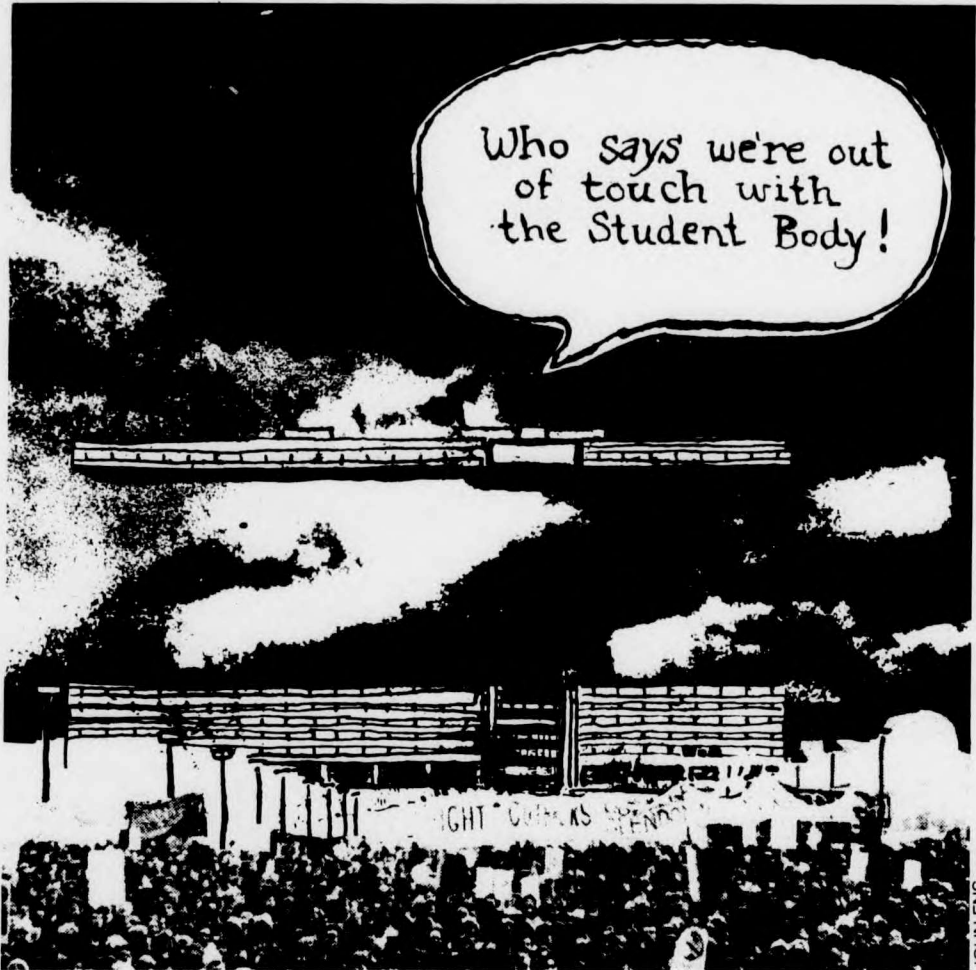
In the case of the increasing use of marijuana (and other drugs) the slow and timid response of legislators and the law-enforcement agencies warrants serious criticism.

Any first year student at York learns in his Social Science courses that a major source of deviance from a norm is the discrepancy between the value of an established norm and the constant neglect of these values by some parts of society, the hypocrisy of preaching one norm and executing another, can be most harmful if it is allowed to persist.

We plead for the legalization of marijuana. Our reasons are obvious. Even if one believes that individuals do not have to resort to marijuana to feel free to "do their own thing," it would be blind to suggest that this warrants the prohibition of its use. For, if the ultimate aim is to become better human beings, we can only work towards this aim by educating the individual thoroughly and un hypocritically. Education means presentation of true alternatives and actual provisions for the individuals to select according to their own rational and emotional standards.

Legislated norms should only be used to protect society, and have to be balanced against the basic right of the individual.

Since the use of marijuana is not more dangerous for the individual or for society than the use of cigarettes, alcohol, or sex, we cannot reach any other conclusion but to legalize its



use and consequently its distribution.

It is obvious that the legal distribution of marijuana will result in a higher quality and lower price of the product. Once everybody can legally use this stimulant, its use will regulate itself, and lose much of the artificial excitement and criminal implications which now surround it.

The case of hallucinatory drugs is different. We do not encourage the legalization of these drugs, because their obvious danger to the

individual user. Provision should be made for their controlled use by psychiatrists and doctors since such drugs can provide valuable clues in research.

But the problem is not solved yet: society is in dire need of complete information and education (as opposed to paternalistic guidance) on marijuana, drugs, and for that matter, on all stimulants.

January 30, 1969
Ross Howard/Rolly Stroeter

Soft pornography not so harmless

Recently, *Excalibur* received a spate of letters to the editor on the issue of pornography. The author of one such letter suggested that *Playboy* magazine is a harmless publication and that its readers are merely looking at beautiful women.

We disagree.

In fact, *Playboy* is the most insidious of pornographic material—it may seem innocent compared to some of its competitors, yet it's a strong part of an industry which seeks to retain men's dominance over women and portray human beings as things.

This type of pornography is not as blatantly hurtful as the obvious instances where women are shown being beaten, bound, or raped (and enjoying it).

To further add to the facade of harmlessness, *Playboy* publishes articles by respected writers, offering its readers the perfect excuse to buy it: "I only read it for the excellent writing." Readers think they're getting a taste of the sophisticated 1980s lifestyle.

But still, there is a very clear message relayed to consumers of all types of pornography, and

the message is this: Women are but playthings of men, to be admired *only* when they are (at least close to) air-brushed perfect, do not speak (except to heap praise on "their man"), and care only for their outward appearance.

There is *no* reference to the personalities, intelligence, or opinions on issues such as politics or finance ("men's realms") of these women. Isn't that the most important part of a human being?

We do not advocate full censorship. We recognize that erotica can be an important part of an individual's sexuality. Images portraying sexual acts between or among consenting adults in a spirit of sharing and caring should not be censored.

But when human beings are exploited and used merely as objects, we must draw the line. In order for women to be treated as three-dimensional people, they must no longer be considered in one dimension—on the pages of *Playboy*.

February 23, 1984
Roman Pawlyshyn/Bernardo Cioppa



An editor's tearful farewell

Imperfect as it is, though, the *Excalibur* has become an extension of myself and the untiring staffers who work so diligently week after week. It is our baby and despite the flaws and imperfections we embrace each issue like a doting mother. When the baby is good we all beam with pride and when it's bad and gets a spanking from our readers we rush to its defence, because we can appreciate *Excalibur's* good points when no one else can. We know that we owe a debt to the paper for allowing us to work in the best possible medium.

So to all the people I've met and worked with and who's presence has enriched myself and the paper, my gratitude and affection go out to you. I'll miss you all.

To all the people who've made the job so tough and, at times unattractive, I hope your conditions clear up soon. Until then remember not to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

April 8, 1982
Gary Cohen