

EXCALIBUR

Everything secret degenerates; nothing
is safe that does not show it can bear
discussion and publicity — Lord Acton

Editor-in-Chief Andrew Michalski
Managing Editor Tim Clark
News Editor Marilyn Smith
Cultural Editor John Oughton
Sports Editor Phil Cranley
Cartoonist John Rose
Business and Advertising Rolly Stroeter
Advertising Manager Jackie Stroeter
editorial phone: 635-3201, 3202
advertising phone: 635-3800

Excalibur, founded in 1966, is the York University weekly and is independent politically. Opinions expressed are the writer's and those unsigned are the responsibility of the editor. Excalibur is a member of Canadian University Press and attempts to be an agent of social change. Printed at Newsweb, Excalibur is published by Excalibur Publications under the auspices of the Council of the York Student Federation.
controlled circulation: 13,000

The media can join together too

The weekend's get-together of college councils and Council of the York Student Federation politicians is phenomena not likely to be repeated in its drama for some time to come. Now that they're talking, one can only hope that it continues until a new agreed-upon constitution results.

But if politicians can get together, then surely it's about time the campus press got together to sort out a few things. As the results of the survey on Page 3 point out, there's a lot of people who quite rightly think the campus media has not been doing its job.

It's not the media's fault entirely. No, not at all. They are competing in the most competitive market in the world. No other city like Toronto receives the deluge of Canadian and American literature, radio and tv waves.

And then there's the York environment itself. The great majority of students are commuting and their lives revolve around their family homes rather than the university. The cultural wasteland that surrounds York inhibits lively off-campus activities. Unless there is a sense of community — or even a community in any sense of the word — then the

media cannot help but reflect the sterility off which it feeds.

As long as there's the college system, there will always be more than one publication. Non-controversial Radio York will always survive as York's only radio station.

But surely if people aren't satisfied, we can take a hint from the Davy Committee on

Mass Media. Now is the time for a press council of all student publications to sit down and define what exactly our roles are.

The council could sit down and hammer out common policies and guidelines for all campus media. The council could handle complaints from York students. More often it would handle

complaints from politicians who feel they've been maligned. And finally, it could hammer out a policy and code of ethics for all media to follow.

We all have basically the same problem as any publicly financed operation: meddling politicians who don't like dirt being kicked around and exposed. To do our job properly,

we have to keep ahead of our elected representatives. York has not established a tradition yet of respecting a truly free press.

The media — being instrumental for any questioning society or any community at all — has a job to do. And we might take heed from the politicians and bury the hatchet for a while.



York's CUA brief inadequate says Glendon pres

By PAUL JOHNSTON

President of Glendon's student union

This year is a particularly critical time in the development of Ontario Universities. In the 60s Ontario went through a period of oversell in the area of post-secondary education. The present situation shows that this period of salesmanship has created a backlash both in the minds of the tax-paying public and the potential students.

As an emerging university in the 60s York looked to the future through rose-coloured glasses believing itself to be in a strong position to expand throughout two decades and become an established bastion of higher education in the future. In its original form it showed both spirit and inventiveness with rapid expansion and introduction of a new phenomenon — the college system.

As with all institutions of higher learning the objectives and expectations of York are presently under critical re-evaluation by the Ontario government's department of Colleges and Universities. It is quite unfortunate that at this time York has prepared a less than satisfactory brief to the Committee on University Affairs.

Beyond the fact that the technical data in some cases is incorrect (columns of figures are not added correctly, etc.) the brief bears York's traditional outlook. While it purports to support public service as a priority in the new university, it fails to exemplify how the large resources of manpower and research facilities will be used.

York's vested interests

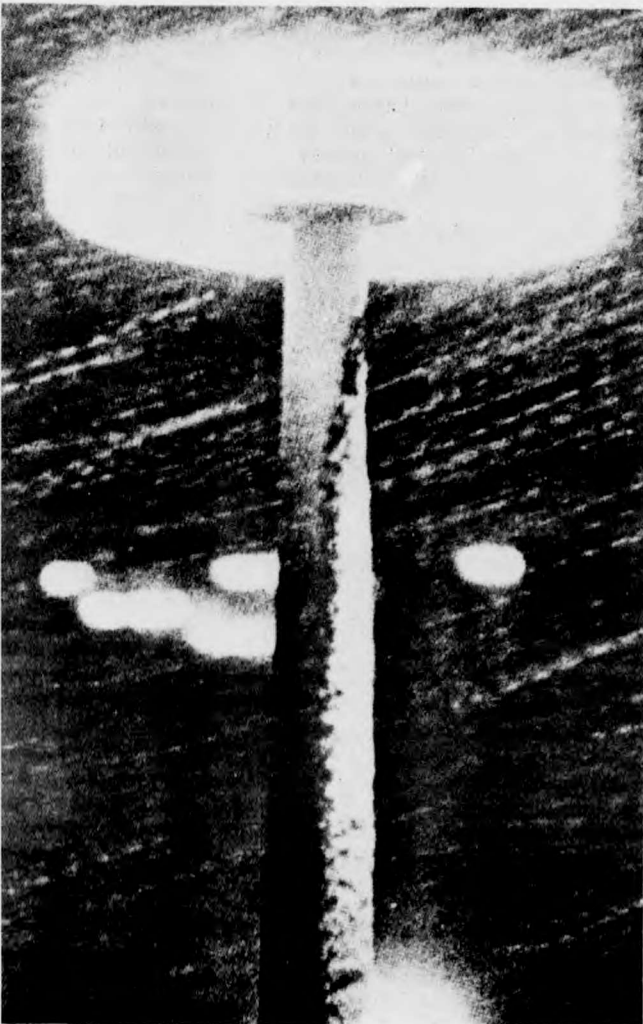
The implicit assumption for the future is that York, as other universities, shall continue to operate as a community of vested interests — faculty, students and administrators. The extent of their community involvement lies in the area of factory-produced technocrats and artists who are capable of filling quickly diminishing professional fields on the market place i.e. in fine arts, law, business administration and the relatively new department of environmental studies.

The basic question that arises in this critique is the relationship of universities (or for that matter any institution of post-secondary education) to the society in which it functions. Should it retain the role of purely "the educator" or in more common terms "the Ivory Tower Factory" or must it approach its duty to society in a more critical and imaginative way. Should it be a forum of debate, which is more than usually biased in favour of present societal forms, or an agent of social change?

The York brief with its constant reference to the necessity of high cost i.e. high quality education implicitly supports the traditional bias that university is a giver of great intellectual gifts that will be of great value to the student-come-worker after graduation. The reality is that the process of learning and development does not come from a packed lecture hall

with a well-known (i.e. well-published) environmentalist spewing words of wisdom already well-explained in his latest release.

Enrolment on a full-time basis has dropped all across Canada due to numerous factors such as the state of economy and the general shift in attitude of qualified students. Unfortunately since the universities are forced into competition for students by the Ontario government's financing formulas they must react in such a way as to attract more students.



Their reaction has to be a) expand "saleable departments" such as fine arts and environmental studies and b) to pay high prices for big name performers in different academic fields. (This coupled with the advertising of the unique, yet non-functioning college system and introduction of catchy irrelevant courses such as "gambling" and the "Western Cowboy" tend to relay a new absurd level to university status.)

The analysis enrolment problems is probably exemplified most perfectly in the drop in the francophone population of Glendon College. It states "this may possibly be attributed to a temporary disenchantment with the introduction of the unilingual stream". Far more likely and yet unmentioned is the political conscience developing in Quebec and the rising cost of transferring between provinces to participate in the unique experiment.

The question of enrolment must remain at a different level of thought. The university should not have to employ Madison Ave. techniques to sell itself nor should it be wrapped in its present false image by which the public is covered into believing in it as a step to utopia. Those who have passed the stage of secondary education must be given the choice of extending themselves in community service.

York again assumes that high quality means high cost in the area of faculty salaries because of the competition with other institutions on the market place. It may be time to point to recent surveys done by University of Toronto and the Economic Council of Canada that show a buyers market in relation to Canadian PHD's. The trend remains as in the past: Canadians must compete with Americans (55 percent of new faculty this year).

Residences for the rich

Their view of capital expenditure in the area of residence remains unchanged since last year. Many arguments in this area may be forwarded, pro and con but the reality is a probable increase in residence cost again next year. The debate in question centres on who lives in residence and the answer will be rich students while others must seek more financially feasible arrangements. The problems experienced this year at Glendon in residence vacancies may spread unless this fast and expensive expansion is re-evaluated (here again York's brief analysis of the problem falls short).

Discussion of teacher-student ratio faculty workload, class size and faculty research activities in many ways begs the question of university effectiveness. The core problem is "Who Does the University Serve?" Is it the students, the faculty, the corporate state or the society?