

EXCALIBUR

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

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Why you should vote 'yes'

Altogether, things are looking up.

And that's a distinct change from the tune of the Page 6 and 7 feature on York's recent political past. To be exciting, York politics need some sort of dynamic politicians. They are the leaders, the movers of students alienated from a sterile York environment. They are the ones who must provide the impetus towards collective political action.

But, as one of Excalibur's informants put it, the Council of the York Student Federation is "one of the more frustrating experiences in my life."

Students don't always get what they deserve. Honest, fair, and efficient use of student funds within a cohesive plan of action is the least one would have expected from student politicians. Yet the past has definitely not shown that at all.

When CYSF was first formed by the college councils to coordinate York-wide matters, it did exactly that. And it was easy with only three colleges to worry about cohesive York policy and a relatively small

campus press stuck in sandbox politics.

It all came to a rather dramatic end with last year's activist administration under Paul Axelrod and Karen Hood. It attempted to act upon and resolve the down-to-earth gut issues that beset York and the student populace: parking, food services, the bookstore (and steep costs), Americanization and student-academic difficulties. The problems are still here today.

The initial spurt of enthusiasm to delve into campus issues began to fizzle with the same problem that has hounded every CYSF regime: the college councils. McLaughlin wanted to pull out; Calumet (then College F) said they were never in.

CYSF's energies were once again turned towards defending its own existence.

But the colleges weren't all to blame. Under the very nature of a loose federal system, it is the college's right to do whatever it deems fit for its own college constituents. They were, after all, the watchdogs of the federal



giant. But then, who checked the watchdogs? Nobody.

This year's CYSF administration under Mike Fletcher has neither dynamism nor leadership. It was elected on a social affairs platform that ostensibly still belongs to the colleges. In its humble attempt to humanize York, it failed miserably to provide cohesive

action for York students. We went back to sandbox politics that placated nobody, least of all the college councils.

It had no plan of action. Hence, it attracted few students to fill positions. Quite naturally, the group that filled up positions came from a select group and spent most of its energies bickering over personality conflicts. The chaos was complicated by Fletcher's refusal to hire a secretary throughout the summer. His present refusal to hire a full-time business manager has resulted in administrative bedlam.

CYSF's demand for parity on university committees is a valid principle towards a democratic university. But naturally, the concept is utterly useless without effective action. Fletcher's administration — weak at best — was then a ripe plum for the annual battle against the colleges.

Buffeted by the councils, a referendum to get CYSF out of the yearly mess has finally been brought to the student. And it

offers the possibility of a strong central government to cater to students' needs.

No federal government can operate when it is at the mercy of its constituent members because it spends most of its efforts fighting for its own survival.

No competent student wants to run for an organization hamstrung by its constituencies. The Axelrod regime proved that no matter what good programs the council may have toward serving its electorate, sooner or later it has to devote its energies in fighting off the colleges.

CYSF's budget was produced last April. To date, it has received the approval of five colleges. How effective would the Canadian government be if every provincial government had to ratify finance minister Benson's budget? The scene would be as absurd as what faces York today.

Yet on Nov. 30 it can change. A stronger constitution attracts more competent people. On Nov. 30, it will be your choice.

A woman's right to choose

"Cess and riddance to the days of honest abortion when the fingernails were filthy and the heart of a woman went screaming through a cave as steel scraped at the place where she touched the beyond."

— Norman Mailer

Are the days of "honest" abortion really gone? Are they, when the back-street abortionists still ply their trade?

How can they be gone when women are still forced to carry unwanted or illegitimate children. It is after all, her right to choose if and when she will have a child.

By the whole system of the social

fabric, the brunt of child-care lies with the mother. The process is difficult enough without making it an unasked for burden. And finally, the creation of the uncared-for children of the world results from the current criminal abortion laws.

Women aren't going to win repeal of the laws in one fell swoop. The whole is plugged into a system of long-standing suppression, of traditions and prejudices that all weigh down and squeeze women into a narrowly defined role where a woman's work is never done.

It's almost become an issue of motherhood now. With the United

Church of Canada, the Canadian Medical Association, the gynecologists, the New Democratic Party and all the other supporters of the repeal action, many will find it's not imperative to go to Ottawa for the mass assembly this Saturday, a day of international protest against abortion laws. But the traditions are long entrenched, and women are going to have to battle en masse to attain what should be theirs unmasked for.

But that's the situation. So women have no choice but to demonstrate in numbers their unwillingness to have their decisions taken from them.

Letters to the Editor

All letters should be addressed to the Editor and sent to Excalibur, Central Square, Ross Building, York University, Downsview, Ontario. Excalibur reserves the right to edit all letters more than 500 words long. Unsigned letters are the responsibility of the editors. All letters will be published however due to space limitations letters may not be published the week they are received.

Winters bites back at Stong

There are several things in your recent memo that are most disturbing to me personally, and to me as a Council president.

First, under no circumstances will this council or individual be pressured by any ultimatum from you or anyone else. We don't work that way.

Secondly, I question your wisdom and judgement in so readily passing Council of the York Student Federation's budget in March. The fact that your college was the only one willing to ratify this budget would suggest that either you were quite naive about budgets or were passing this one for ulterior motives, or a combination of both.

Pressure from other, more responsible colleges have caused the CYSF budget to be changed considerably, so, in effect, the budget you passed is no longer the CYSF budget. Sorry if that surprises you.

It is very hard for me to conceive that, as rational members of this community, you have taken it upon yourselves to be judge, jury and hangman over the rest of us. If there were a total lack of involvement by the colleges in the campus community, there would be reason for your feelings.

Campus Involvement, Student Involvement, Individual Involvement goes beyond CYSF — far beyond it. It means more than passing budgets, more than social or cultural affairs. It means more than winning athletic trophies. It means careful and intelligent scrutiny of the world around us, both on York Campus and in the cold reality beyond Keele and Finch. Actions, perhaps speak louder than words, but if they are thoughtless or careless actions, of what value are they!

Perhaps we, the other colleges, do not feel CYSF and the institutions it supports are worthy of our time and effort. We express this by withholding monies. That judgement, however, is our own and our decisions are not subject to you. We are not accountable to Stong College.

We are accountable to ourselves and to the students of our college. Until such times as they indicate otherwise, we of Winters College will continue within our own frame of reference doing what we judge to be best.

We are not saying we aren't ready to discuss alternative routes of action, but we won't be blackmailed.

Dennis Lee

President Winters College Council

No money on Varsity sports

I would like to complain about the phys. ed department. It seems that they are trying to pressure the university administration into giving them more money for their operations. To do this pressuring, they have reduced the hours for swimming so that the general university community will be brought into sympathy with their demands.

For myself, I am having the opposite reaction. I realize that it costs just a few dollars to extend swimming hours from 1 to 2 pm. I feel I am being used as a tool of the physical education department. As far as I am concerned, York would be a better university if we didn't spend ANY money sending athletes to compete with other universities and instead, used such funds for genuinely academic and recreational purposes.

An Arts II student

Excalibur new dog pound

Well, you've done it again. . . in your own inimitable fashion, probably an attempt to sensationalize the commonplace, you've distorted the facts.

Aside from the inappropriate metaphor, the item (Dog lost, now in residence) in last week's York Briefs was a distortion of fact.

You humorously implied that I am in direct competition with the North York Animal Shelter by setting up "a lost and found for dogs in Grad Residence Three". This is not true.

First of all, I didn't find Maxwell (as he's now called). Secondly, Max is not staying in my apartment. He is staying in Grad Res 3 and when I called you to report that Max had been found I indicated that my telephone number could be used (Max's finder does not have a phone), by callers purporting to be Maxwell's rightful owner(s).

As a result of your grossly inaccurate item, however, my apartment has become the refuge for several lost animals. I feel that journalists should accept some sort of responsibility for their actions, therefore I am sending four dogs, three cats and two unidentifiables to Excalibur's offices. I trust you will take good care of them.

L. Viviane Spiegelman