

Space university opponents real space cadets during debate

by Alex Fang

When I first heard about the bid to locate the International Space University at York, I was very skeptical. But after watching much of the drama and histrionics surrounding the bid unfold in the pages of *Excalibur* and on campus, you have me convinced. *You have me convinced that the voices opposing the space university don't know what they are talking about.*

Both Nick Marchese, their unoffi-



BEARPIT

cial spokesperson, and the *Excalibur* editorial staff, seem all too eager to openly exhibit their ignorance of this important issue.

I already knew some of the arguments on both sides when I went to the briefing by the space university bidding team at Vari Hall, and showed up at the rally opposing the bid. I heard all the pro-ISU arguments, but being a suspicious person, I was sure that there were some real concerns about the project. I was surprised to discover more positive benefits of having the ISU at York — not only was I unimpressed by the objections, I was frankly embarrassed.

At the briefing, opponents appeared irrational and paranoid. Every



Students, faculty at Sept. 24 rally in front of Vari Hall supporting an Ontario government-based bid to bring a space university to York's main campus. Photo by Rose-Ann Bailey

rebuttal by the project's briefing panel was met with more rhetoric and a seemingly endless train of irrelevant issues. Instead of intelligent arguments as to why the ISU is a bad idea, all the audience got is plenty of dogma.

And frankly, I expected more from the rally, which just seemed to be a soapbox for anyone with a gripe.

I do not know why so many of the anti-ISU students hate and distrust scientists. They have to realize that scientists are just people, capable of as much good or bad as the rest of the society.

Most of the opposition's objections have to do with the involvement of military contractors. Well folks, do you own any GE products? How about an IBM computer, or an HP printer? Made a long distance phone call re-

cently? Hey, do you own a domestic car? Well, I guess you are all guilty of supporting the "military industrial complex".

What does the ISU opposition expect to do with all the workers involved in the military industry? Make them join the ranks of the unemployed, and load up our screwed-up economy even more? How about retraining them to develop technology for peaceful research? This is what part of the ISU is all about. The space university's mandate is to do peaceful research.

Another argument here is that peaceful technology has been used for military purposes. So what does the opposition propose — not developing any technology at all? Stop using telephones, computers, and printers?

By the way, I noticed that there was no opposition when IBM made a deal recently to provide technology to the York's Faculty of Arts. It seems that these people take the side of the ideological fence which is convenient to them at the time.

A further concern is the expense. Here, there is actually some foundation for debate. But I have not heard a decent argument on this basis by bid opponents. I am concerned about the cost, but I also cannot think of a better investment in Canada's future than increasing its participation in high technology industry. The government throws out \$11 million many times over on patronage deals alone — these are the real "bad guys" the opponents should go after.

The ISU is a bargain, considering

its positive impact on the local economy, from the construction to the service industries. The opposition might not realize it today, but the students and unions — those who they are allegedly speaking for — may well be the ones most hurt by the loss of ISU.

Unfortunately, the apathetic York community has allowed people like Nick Marchese to represent them. I want to make it clear that he does not speak for me, and I resent him saying so. I also resent the use of student federation and *Excalibur* time and money — my money — to support a platform I oppose. Lastly, I resent my union also saying that I oppose the ISU. I hate the fact that Marchese has counted me twice, as a student and as a CUEW member, in his statistics of four million people opposing the project, when I don't oppose it even on one count.

I wonder throughout all this: "Have the *Excal* folks heard of unbiased journalism?" Well I can't really blame *Excalibur* considering the role models out there: Geraldo, Sally Jessy et al. Is *Excalibur* here to present the facts with an even hand or is it some sort of self-serving propaganda mill?

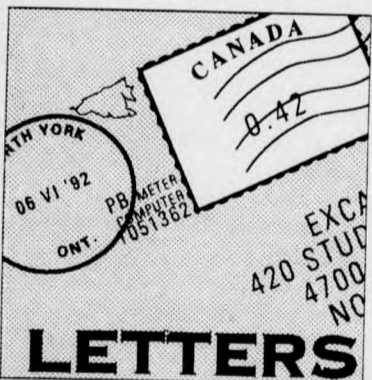
Let me add here, I'm glad we've had a debate about this, it's a healthy sign. It shows democracy is alive here. It's scary when things are unquestionably accepted by the masses. Apathy is at least worse than what *Excalibur* has done. I have read all of the viewpoints from the other college papers and no one else has taken such a deaf ear.

Most people agree with the bid and most will probably just not take the time to write to *Excalibur*. Ah, democracy — with the tail wagging the dog — only at York and other apathetic locales.

(Alex Fang is a graduate science student at York.)

Macedonian students insist on expression

It is most shocking that at an institution of higher learning, eight Greek-Canadian students should verbally accost a Macedonian student at the Macedonian Students Association Club Fair booth on September 16.



These students felt compelled to convince the Macedonian student that he was not Macedonian.

According to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, people in Canada have the wonderful ability to express their opinions, associate with whom they please and maintain their cultural heritage. Canada is a liberal, democratic country that respects cultural diversity, abhors racial discrimination and promotes gender equality. However, the U. S. State Department Report on Human Rights Violations in Greece 1991, reported that, "... (Greece) denies the existence of a Macedonian minority entitled to claim rights within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. There appears to be a pattern of obstacles to social, cultural, and religious contact between

We will publish letters up to 250 words. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name and phone number. Material deemed libelous or discriminatory by the staff of *Excalibur* will be rejected. The opinions expressed are those of the letter-writers and do not represent those of the *Excalibur* staff, Editorial Board, or Board of Publications.

that minority, and other Slavo-Macedonians, many of whom were exiled from Greece to Yugoslavia and elsewhere during the 1940s."

It is sad, therefore, that these Greek-Canadian students, while expressing their own cultural heritage, wanted to prevent someone else from expressing his culture. This may be the policy in Greece, but it certainly is not the policy in Canada.

Mirka Nitsis
Osgoode Hall Law School

Man upset by campus sexual harassment

Wednesday, September 16, around 4:30 pm. You were sitting in the Common waiting for Suzy S. to show up.

It wasn't long before I was reminded: you're a woman and this is York. This is Canada in the 1990s, so I'll admit, I was surprised when King Asshole leaned out of the third floor Student Centre window of a certain club's office and shouted "Hey, Blondie, you dropped your pencil!"

(Translation: "Bend over and give me a shimmy show, sweetcakes.") What a brave fellow, to embarrass you in front of 100 or so of your fellow students, male and female, who were also taking in the sun that afternoon in the Common.

You did look up after a minute or so, and there he was, leaning through the window with his buddies, waving down at you. I can only imagine how alone you must have felt when it seemed everyone was looking at you, and no one said a word. No one offered a comforting, "Hey, forget that prick." It probably seemed an hour to you before your friend Sue arrived.

How do I know this? Who am I? I'm the guy who was sitting just a few feet to your right. Not the one who said "Bless you" when you sneezed — the non-smoker, no sideburns.

I know no one offered you a word of comfort, because I was right there. I tried, but the words didn't come. What could I say? "On behalf of all men, I apologize for that ass up there." It would have sounded as wooden then as it does here. It might have earned me a slap in the face.

I'll tell you what I'd like to have said: "Could you watch my briefcase? I'm going up there and toss him through that window." I wish. Alas, violence never solves anything.

I wanted to wander into that office with an *Excal* photographer and get a nice group picture of the offender & friends, but that didn't happen. So we're left with this little rant of mine.

Sexual assault is not limited to rape or a quick grope in a crowded pub. A look can assault, or in this case, a string of carefully chosen wrong words. I hadn't noticed it too much before, but I noticed it that day. A quick check with a few female friends shows that this is by no means an isolated incident.

Buddy, I don't know who you are, but I hope someone waves this in

front of your nose. I'm no angel, but you've got to be the biggest jerk I've never met. You look normal enough — unshaven, football/hockey shirt, white socks and blue jeans — and I'm afraid you're probably the norm.

But next time you consider shoot-

ing your mouth off in front of your buddies, take a second, or even half a second, to think how you might be making someone else feel.

Sincerely,
Shane McChesney

optilab

just around the corner from the University

- Our prices are the most competitive prices in Ontario
- You will enjoy 1 hour service on most jobs at no extra cost

Please try us and compare our quality and prices

**800 Petrolia Road
Unit No. 3
Downsview, Ontario
M3J 3K4**

(416) 739-9463