

EXCALIBUR

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

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editor-in-chief, Marilyn Smith; news editor, Jim Daw; managing editor, Lerrick Starr; cultural editor, Lynn Slotkin; photography editor, Harry Kitz; sports editors, Alan Risen, Judy Campbell; cartoon editor, John Rose; CUP editor, Jane King; staff-at-large, Paul Thomson, Dave Phillips, Valerie Sullivan, Mike Barris, Peter Hsu, Harold Stein, Peter Matilainen, Nancy Hobbs, Robin Rowland, Danny Zanbilowicz, Jerry Silverman, Carla Sullivan, Marg Poste, Bernie Stein, Ken Myron, Lionel Llewellyn, Harry Stinson, Mike Woolgar, Art Irvine; business and advertising, Rolly Stroeter; advertising, Jackie Stroeter. Editorial—phone 667-3201, 3202; advertising—phone 667-3800.

Issues of the fee strike leave no neutral ground

The fee strike is on. So says the Ontario Federation of Students after 40,000 students voted last fall to protest

the government's new trend in policy for post-secondary education. The OFS demands are clear: accessibility and

accountability. The faculty council at Glendon and the senate at York have endorsed the seven demands.

government policies will cut back the number of students who can afford to go to university. And with fewer students, the universities will get fewer government grants. The university has said it sympathizes with the student strike; but its own continued existence is at issue as well. York must do more than put up token support, real obstacles and washed hands in this fight against government cut-backs in education.

Yet at York, grant cheques are being withheld from students who want to take part in the strike. The university argues it's only the middle man, caught in the cross-fire between the students and the government. The gain of this argument is only a short-term one. The new



"We're all behind you, my boy!"

York won't stand scrutiny

There's been a lot of attention focused on York lately. The politicking, squabbling and inefficiencies that usually hide behind ivy-covered walls have popped up in the public eye. It's most embarrassing and York administrators, always image-conscious, have developed a special paranoia these days.

In a recent meeting of the new co-ordinating committee, the members discussed whether or not the press (in this instance, Excalibur), should be allowed to meetings when specifics of university business and budgets were discussed. "Indiscreet" use of such material might hurt next year's enrolment, it was argued. Others replied that Excalibur had acted responsibly; it was the downtown dailies that were causing the problems.

The point is absurd. If York ad-

ministrators had been doing their job properly in the first place, there would be no need to work at creating an "image". The sudden conscientiousness shows that public accountability is the best check on abuses of power and finances. York got slammed by the daily press because it deserved it.

For academics and administrators to suggest that the York community press act with "discretion" and not report discussions of concern to the whole community is another example of the isolationist elitism afflicting this institution. Once inside the Keele-Steele boundaries, too many York decision-makers forget that the institution is publicly financed. It will be tolerated only as it serves the interests of students and the people beyond the campus boundaries.

Letters to the Editor

Physical plant wastage high

Last year's executive of the Glendon College Student Union commissioned a study of certain areas of budgeting within York University. I wish to apologize for a full report not being complete, but wish to say that the section on Physical Plant is finished and needs only slight revisions before reproduction.

The reason for our inconclusiveness was two-fold. First of all, we did have internal problems related to a lack of expertise and effort on the part of our research staff but more important was the lack of co-operation and diversionary tactics on the part of certain administrators in the university bureaucracy.

I will refer specifically to Dr. David Slater, who did not answer a letter which outlined a series of costly miscues particularly in capital expenditures and John Becker, who found it particularly important to determine whether I was in fact, a member of the York community despite my recent tenure as president of the Glendon Student Union.

Perhaps a few things should be said about our findings in the area of Physical Plant. As negotiations between CUPE and the university have broken down, I do not wish to jeopardize the union's position and thus can say very little about the problems related to contract dispute. I can say, however, that York's published deficit and attitude is quite over-exaggerated. If students think they have been hit badly with the government's policy of cutbacks in post-secondary expenses, they should consider very carefully the situation of union members at the university.

Last April and May, the maintenance staff was faced by layoffs of 12 per cent of their membership. Nothing was said about the enormous number of middle and lower management personnel that the university employs. On the average there is one management person for every three or four workers. Their salaries and expenses account for 25 to 35 per cent of the budget of this department. This is exceptionally ludicrous. Similarly large amounts of money have

been wasted in replacement of faulty equipment.

Vast amounts of money have been wasted and are continually wasted while university management constantly speaks of the lack of money and financial crisis in dealing with the "lowly" workers.

Threats of contracting labour were used last year and numerous grievance procedures have been referred to arbitration, a costly procedure for both the Union and York.

In my opinion, the university is attempting to break the union's strength and retain a cheap labour pool. This will protect their own position and the outrageous sums spent on luxuries and salaries within their over-bureaucratized institution.

I hope that students will think about the cost of chauffeur driven limousines, \$40,000 convocations, department cocktail parties and other extravagances when you give the university that extra hundred dollars or when the halls begin to pile with garbage in the case of a strike by maintenance.

PAUL JOHNSTON
Past President
Glendon College Student Union.

Senate refuses student reps

As a result of the Senate's refusal to allow a student Senator on the proposed co-ordinating committee, it is impossible to consider this committee a legitimate one. It is all too frequent that professors and administrators sit in their ivory towers (a time-worn but very often truly spoken phrase) without any notion of what is happening in the campus community below. Words were spoken by "old guard" members of the teaching faculty regarding the wisdom of the Senate so as to maintain a "university atmosphere".

I as a student will not believe that as a result of what I have witnessed in Senate thus far, a "university atmosphere" will occur. What will occur, in my view, is no more than a continuing reflection of old ideas, old per-

sonalities, and old ways. By disenfranchising students (and this is what is happening), the students will have no say in what happens regarding our education, our library facilities, and our physical amenities on this campus. Again, I fail to believe that, given the state of mind and perceptions of Senate members (other than student Senators), a student will serve on that committee.

Students will not believe any words coming forth from this committee which will simply reflect old views and prevent a realistically university-wide point of view.

I maintain then, that students should make known, in any and every way possible, they want a student Senator sitting on that committee as a voting member. After all, if the President of the University can appoint two people, why can't the lifeblood of the University have one voice?

LAWRENCE EDELSTEIN
Student Senator

Students duty to "muck around"

As two of the student leaders who were around in the chapel debacle of 1968, we feel it is our duty to "muck around" in "old history" (to use President Slater's words) just a little to raise the issues that the campus felt were important when the chapel gift was first introduced.

A campus chapel was planned for the campus to be built in the early 1970's. However, in the late 1960's York first began to feel a financial pinch. It was decided at that time that the football stadium, artificial lake and chapel could be postponed. Then, an "anonymous donor", who later turned out to be none other than Board chairman Scott, came up with the \$400,000 price tag so that we could have our chapel. It turned out that Scott was going to give us our chapel regardless of cost — cost to York, that is.

What the campus must realize is that Scott's donation is for capital costs only, and as well, only the capital costs related directly

to building the chapel. According to 1968 estimates, Scott's donation would cost York somewhere between \$100,000 and \$200,000 in capital costs related to connecting the chapel to the central electrical and air systems. This is in addition to the \$12,000 per year operating costs.

At Osgoode, where one of the writers attends presently, we have been suffering from York's current austerity programme. One of every four lights in our locker room has been removed. The air systems are shut down for part of the day. Lights in hallways are turned off at set times. Our library has threatened shorter hours. If this is the way we are handling our present facilities, are we ready for Scott's "gift"?

John Theobald says we cannot question an earmarked gift because it is "coming out of a person's own pocket". Why not? If I donate a pint of blood to the Red Cross, can I earmark it for a pagan sacrifice? If a man wishes to make an educational gift, he makes it to an educational institution. If he wants to make a religious gift, he makes it to a religious institution. A man should not be allowed, through the powers of his "generosity" to change the priorities of an institution to suit his desire for a memorial.

Theobald thinks that the chapel will fill the "spiritual needs" of the York students. Scott feels that if it "saves one life" it will be worth the cost.

Are we really to believe the lunacy of these positions? Are we really materialistic enough to believe that four stone walls are the magic factors that can automatically fill spiritual needs and save lives? I would suggest that more York spiritual needs are filled and lives saved in professors' offices, coffee shops and common rooms than in all the myriad of churches and synagogues in the York vicinity combined. More than would ever be done within the four walls of a chapel. To suggest to all the York religious, cultural and psychological organizations that their work is futile unless they have a grandiose edifice in which to parade is an insult to these hard-working people. It is people who fulfill spiritual needs and save lives, gentlemen, not buildings.

We do hope that Scott and the York powers will consider student opinion before they go