

Excalibur

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

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Suddenly petitions are all-powerful

The Council of the York Student Federation has hit a new political low with its refusal to stage a by-election in Vanier College, after it voted to impeach Vanier's ULS representative Cheryl Pruitt last Wednesday.

Impeachment was passed in a 10-3 vote after a petition for Pruitt's removal, containing 130 signatures, was submitted to council. The petition charged Pruitt and fellow-ULS rep Jane Chisholm (who had a terrible attendance record) did "not represent the opinions and better interests of Vanier College."

It is clear from the wording of this petition that Pruitt has not been "impeached" in the way corrupt political figures are dealt with. Her only "crime or "misdemeanor" has been to represent Vanier College according to the dictates of her own conscience. Let's hope her reputation doesn't suffer from this episode.

The staff of *Excalibur* holds that the Vanier students who organized the petition, Richard Lichtenstein and Ryan Shoychot, were perfectly within their rights to campaign for the removal of Pruitt and Chisholm. It is simply an example of "recall democracy."

Nevertheless the three United Left Slate councillors who voted against impeachment had good reasons for doing so. For while the petition proves there is significant discontent with the job Pruitt has done, it tells us nothing about Pruitt's supporters.

Only a by-election can do that. And council, on the authority of President Paul Hayden and nine others, has refused to stage one.

And you'll pardon us for doubting that CYSF has acted on this petition out of any sincere devotion to the will of the people. After all, this is the same bunch which, in November, ignored a petition opposed to cutting Harbinger's grant — and that one contained 576 signatures. The fact is that council has voted impeachment of Cheryl Pruitt to get rid of a member of the opposition. Inspiring isn't it?

If this is the concept of democracy holding sway at CYSF these days, then we shudder to think of how any controversies which may pop up in the upcoming elections will be handled.

CYSF has a choice. It can reverse its decision to let the college councils nominate appointees to the vacancies left by the Pruitt and Chisholm removals; and can then hold a by-election as quickly as possible. If by-elections are judged to be a needless expenditure as we near the general elections, then Pruitt should be appointed to her former seat. And the student voice could let itself be heard in March.

Or...council can let things stand and pride itself on a disservice to democracy, with this unfair silencing of a critical voice.

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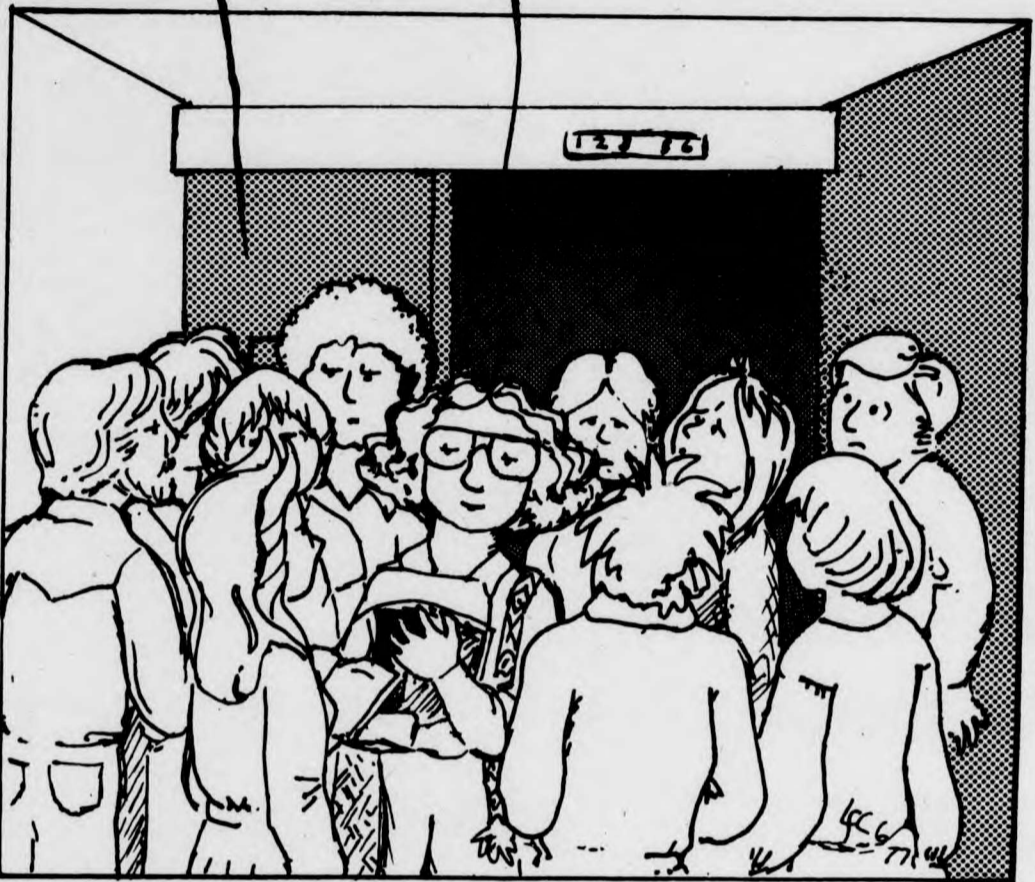
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What page are we on?

DON'T LET THE CROWD
FOOL YOU - THIS IS THE
ELEVATOR, YOUR SEMINAR
IS NEXT DOOR



News item: cutbacks could mean 300 fewer part-time faculty, and in turn, larger class sizes.

Harbinger vote of confidence

The long debate about the validity of Harbinger, York's peer counselling and referral centre, should end, once and for all with the publication of this week's *Excalibur*.

On pages 8 and 9, we publish the results of an *Excalibur* poll of York community opinion about Harbinger, and the results are a resounding vote of approval for the centre.

Carefully conceived, prepared, conducted and analyzed by Lorne Wasser, in constant consultation with *Excalibur*, CYSF, and Harbinger, it clearly indicates that the

York community wants Harbinger, and thinks it should be adequately funded.

Student politicians who have heretofore been in dour-faced opposition to doling out funds to Harbinger, who have complacently sat by while Harbinger's Sue Kaiser was forced to spend too much of her time as a fund-raiser instead of a counsellor, should take note.

Our poll indicates that CYSF's constituents believe that a higher proportion of their student fees should go to Harbinger.

Perhaps now, with the publication of the poll, the critics of

Harbinger will be quiet, and we can turn our attention to the administration which is, after all, the real culprit. A service as valuable (and, as our poll indicates, as wanted) as Harbinger should get an annual grant from the administration adequate for its operation. Our student leaders should spend their time and energy pursuing that goal instead of wasting our time with utopian "cost-cutting" "reorganizational" schemes for the centre.

But perhaps that's hoping too much. That would actually require leadership from our student "leaders".

Going Going Gonzo

• In response to my snipe at Vanier council last week, we received the letter at the top of the opposite page, stating that most of the \$1200 bestowed on the college hockey team for a tournament will be paid back.

That may be true, but as no sum was set for the team to repay, it's up to them how much they return. Unless the puckmen raise \$850, Vanier will still be dishing out more on their team than any of the three other colleges entering.

By the way, last year the team was given \$1000 for the tournament and none of it was paid back...

• Toronto *Sun* columnist McKenzie Porter enjoys the dubious honour of winning the

National Lampoon's "Bullshit" award twice in one year (1977). *Natlamp* reprints each month the article it finds among all print media to be the most "full of it". Porter's gems dealt with defecation in public washrooms and loose Canadian sexual mores.

Of more local interest is Porter's proclamation on York, printed in March '76, in the wake of neo-Nazi vandalism at Bethune College and Master Ioan Davies' zany shenanigans. (Davies spun a tale to Toronto media and police of how he was attacked by neo-Nazi western guard types. He was charged with mischief for same.)

Over to you, MacKenzie. "York University is a notorious nest of long-haired, pot-smoking, blue-jean academics whose radical pratings on the political aspects of all the arts and humanities have driven many students to leave in despair ... York continues to engage lecturers who are interested only in turning out soap box revolutionists.

"The university is a haven for pedants who began their careers as American draft dodgers..."

And on the Bethune vandalism and fictional attacks on Davies, Porter wrote, "The expression of

extreme views by some lecturers is goading students into extreme responses." He noted that the Canadian taxpayer cannot afford "to send policemen to restore order in the college when students are pricked by their teachers into moods of riotous outrage."

Finally, "It is up to the Governors of York to invite certain members of the faculties to seek more appropriate appointments in Moscow and Peking".

And the *Sun* was surprised when *Excalibur* refused to sell it pictures of Jeffrey Forest's arrest ...

• Scott Marwood was station manager of Radio York a couple of years back, and more recently has been one of the brighter spots in Q-107's programming. Marwood left the station earlier this month, but the split was amicable.

Marwood plans to tour Europe for a while, and to approach York's various colleges with a course in Canadian media. He's also working on publishing some of his short stories...

• Speaking of the rock music periphery industries, CPI's classy (but as of yet unprofitable) rock



rag *Stage Life* (formerly *Cheap Thrills*) is edited by Jeffrey Morgan, one-time *Excalibur* rock critic. He took over from Sam Charters, who started out at Ryerson's *Eyeopener*...

• A chain of petstores in British Columbia recently removed its stock of "Sing song birdseed" from the shelves, as the product was found to contain high grade African marijuana seeds. Said one store storekeeper, "We've had a lot of people coming into our stores buying packages of singsong

who really don't look like they own canaries."

• Meanwhile, one Robert Randall, who has been supplied with 75 joints a week by the US government to keep his glaucoma at bay, has been pronouncing in public that the feds ought to make hemp available to all his fellow-sufferers. Randall maintains that as with laetrile, the supposed cancer cure, medical use of marijuana should be up to the afflicted, not the elected.

But federal officials are not yet convinced of the medicinal value of reefer. (Randall's case is being monitored for research.)

Said a spokesman for the National Institute on Drug Abuse, "He (Randall) tends to distort reality on a continuing basis."

Ted Mumford

**Staff meets
today 1 pm
Tues. 5 pm**