

# Editorial

## The time has come to leave OFS

York students will head to the polls February 6 with a very difficult choice to make about the fate of York's participation in the Ontario Federation of Students (OFS). They will have to decide if belonging to a provincial organization representing post-secondary students' interests is important enough that OFS's glaring faults can be overlooked.

The necessity of a provincial lobby organization to represent students' interests to the Government is clear. And the larger the interest group (OFS has a membership of 200,000 people from 14 universities) the more clout it should have. Yet comments from key figures in both the provincial and federal governments, show OFS to be an ineffective lobbyist.

According to a senior aide of Gregory Sorbara, the Ontario Minister of Colleges and Universities, "public opinion in the post-secondary area is somewhat pathetic. Universities need a higher profile in order to get a bigger slice of the budgetary pie. Somehow these institutions must find a way to mobilize public opinion to force politicians to change the current system," the aide explained.

London West MP Tom Hockin, the chairman of the Progressive Conservative caucus committee on education, recently remarked that he could "count on my two hands the MPs who are interested in post-secondary education." Hockin added that post-secondary education "has almost no political sex appeal; it's an invisible issue."

These statements by the policy makers themselves raise serious questions about what OFS is accomplishing. Should York continue paying \$30,000 annually to an organization that has been unable to raise the political visibility of the universities' plight. Without a strong presence at Queen's Park, York cannot expect the infusion of funds into the post-secondary sector that is desperately needed to alleviate its pressing concerns in areas like the funding formula and York's space shortage.

OFS has made advances for students in areas that all universities can agree on such as OSAP and affordable housing. However, when it comes to York's specific demands, OFS is unable to satisfy because of its poor lobbying efforts and more importantly, because of its structure.

Given OFS's broad representation and the divergent views its membership holds, OFS cannot effectively lobby for one institution's chronic needs. York's overriding concerns conflict with what the older, established universities, like Queen's and Western, want. And by the time these endemic needs are addressed by the OFS's bureaucracy and action is taken on them, the solutions will be too watered down and too late to help.

In a perfect world CYSF would have enough money to afford both membership in OFS and their own research and lobbying unit to deal with its own specific needs. CYSF, however, only has \$230,000 at its disposal and has to choose one or the other. OFS can deal only in generalities and this is something York can no longer afford. Therefore, it's time that York takes matters into its own hands. We urge York students to vote Yes and pull York out of OFS.

## Student Forum

THIS WEEK... "YES OR NO TO OES?" ... HEY ITS YOUR TURN!!!



"HECK YES! YORK'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ONTARIO FRUIT SOCIETY HAS BEEN MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL"



"OH YES OF COURSE! I HAD A GREAT TIME AT LAST YEAR'S OLDSMOBILE FENDER SHOW!!"



"I HIGHLY ENDORSE YORK'S PARTICIPATION IN ANY ORANGUTAN FUR SANCTIONS!"

Cartoonist's signature

## Letters

### Cock and Bull callous on tragedy

Editor:

As you all know by now, tragedy has struck the American space program with the crash of the Space Shuttle Challenger on Tuesday, January 28. This event not only affects NASA and the American people, but also touches the hearts of admirers of the space program around the world.

For many people, it was not until noon of that same day that they heard of the accident while watching the news. We, too, did not hear of this until noon while at the Cock and Bull watching the television broadcast. It was apparent that others in the room were moved as details of the crash were revealed due to the silence that prevailed.

However, the death of the seven astronauts did not seem to affect the operators of the Cock and Bull as they showed a callous disregard for this tragedy by playing Peter Schillings "Major Tom" even as the news broadcast continued. This song depicts an astronaut losing control of his spacecraft and falling towards earth and his death.

Since the music was controlled by Cock and Bull employees, as told to us by a Cock and Bull representative, we felt the act was inappropriate. When we requested the music to be turned off, we were refused.

This letter was written to inform you of this malicious act and ask you to support us in no longer associating with this establishment.

Terry Gleeson  
Henry Wielinga

### Not a stab—just a cracked rib

Editor:

On behalf of the York Yeoman Fencing team, I would like to thank your staff for their recent interest in the team. Your coverage was much appreciated. Edo Van Belkom and Roberta Di Maio should be congratulated for their dedication to sports reporting. Their presence recently

at the York Invitational further exemplifies their goal of giving all York varsity level sports coverage, including the 'secondary' sports such as fencing. However, there is one criticism which must be mentioned. The team and coach felt that the wording used to describe the one injury was rather harsh. While such accidents are most rare, using the word "stabbed" brings fearful connotations to the sport and may frighten people away. The female fencer from Ryerson was 'injured' and suffered a chipped rib and mildly punctured lung. She was treated and then released from hospital. Once again, congratulations to the sports reporting team of *Excalibur* for a job well done.

—Warren Kotler  
Capt., Yeoman Sabre Team

### Refutation of Ridpath

Editor:

A refutation of the many dubious statements in your interview with Professor Ridpath would take many pages, a task for which I have neither the time nor the inclination. In the interests of having your readers consider the validity of Rand's philosophy however, I should like to challenge three points which Professor Ridpath makes in his opening paragraph. (Needless to say there are many other questionable statements in all the other paragraphs.)

If "Reason is Man's only means to knowledge" then 99 percent of all the human who have ever existed have had no knowledge of themselves or of the world in which they live or lived. All cultures not based on one narrow western tradition are thereby dismissed. Such claims are so parochial and so patently self-serving that they scarcely merit debate.

Second, if "reality exists in itself as an objective absolute" then there is no validity to the findings of almost all 20th-century physicists (the highest priests of the rationalist tradition) who have proven mathematically that all observation influences what is observed and that there is no such thing as a neutral

observer or so-called "objective reality."

Thirdly, mysticism is not what Professor Ridpath claims it to be, i.e., "another form of subjectivity (which) takes the view that truths, morals, absolute truths, the good in itself, all exist intrinsically out there is some higher level of reality which is known through intrinsicism (sic), i.e., whim." Mystic consciousness, a phenomenon observed in all the world's cultures, is arrived at after year or decades of self-discipline and is the apprehension of the non-sensual and ultimate unity of the universe. The individual experiencing the phenomenon is, of course, a part of it and in no way experiences it as a reality remote from or higher than him or herself.

Those tempted to explore subjectivism further, will, I hope, take a long, hard "objective" look at this specious and myopic view of human reality. They might also read some of the recent writings of Nathaniel Brandon, Rand's most assiduous disciple and defender for many years, who now looks back on that part of his life as a primitive stage in his evolution towards becoming a much richer and loving person.

—Kenneth Golby

### Apartheid groups mask Constitution

Editor:

Congratulations to the York University Divestment Committee for your efforts, so far.

My point, however, is to comment on the controversy at University of Toronto, regarding South Africa's Ambassador Babb's visit there. Let the pro-apartheid group not mask behind the constitution. Even if it were true that the 'freedom of speech' guaranteed by the constitution was to cover lectures by sympathizers of apartheid, the Canadian Constitution does not apply to foreigners—especially diplomats from other countries.

The truth of the matter is that the South African regime draws great support from the U of T. Otherwise, is it sheer coincidence that three of the four professors seeking an injunction from the courts happen to be black?

—Kelton Kateba-Mushanga

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