

# Editorial

## Board of Trustees a disgrace to York

In January when the administration of the University of Toronto was being severely criticised for refusing to take a stand against Apartheid, we were proudly calling York University "an innovator in the arena of social justice." York, we bragged, would soon be the second university in Canada to adopt a policy of total divestment from South Africa.

Despite an overwhelming mandate from the beneficiaries of York's pension fund, the decision last week by the Pension Trustees of York's Board of Governors to delay the divestment process would appear to have proved us wrong.

The Trustees say that the divestment of the \$9 million in South Africa-linked investments needs closer legal scrutiny because this is the first time a Canadian University has considered divesting a pension fund. Perhaps so. But the evasive behavior of the trustees over this matter has understandably raised suspicions.

The Board of Trustees willfully deceived a group of divestment supporters who were waiting outside the meeting hoping to hear good news, or at least an explanation if divestment was to be delayed. Instead, the trustees slunk out of the committee room sporadically in ones and twos, deferring all comment to the Pension Trustee's chairman Edward Kernaghan as they walked away from questions. Then Kernaghan, unfamiliar to most of the divestment group, almost succeeded in walking away unnoticed himself. We can only conclude from this stunt that Mr. Kernaghan is embarrassingly oblivious to the biggest social issue at York this year.

This lack of respect for the York Community is also an embarrassment to the York Administration. The Administration, particularly Harry Arthurs, has put York's reputation on the line by making public gestures of support for the cause of black South Africans. Last June Arthurs conferred symbolic honorary degree on Walter Sisulu, a founding secretary of the African National Congress who is in a South African jail. Since then the Administration has endorsed in principle the work of the York University Divestment Committee.

When we contacted Mr. Kernaghan about a week before last week's meeting of his committee, he claimed he was unaware of a motion to divest the pension fund. York deserves a lot more awareness from its "leaders."



## Letters

### Zarnett incites emotional attacks: Cohen

Editor:

Re: Martin Zarnett's article of Feb. 27.

Every member of the York University community should be appalled at the shocking statements of the Zarnett Zone article concerning Jews For Jesus. Mr. Zarnett would have you to believe that a university should only be open to those ideas that everyone agrees on regardless of the source.

Is not a university a market place for the free exchange of ideas? At York you have every political stripe under the sun, religious groups that run a full gamut, social groups that many find personally abhorrent. So why not Jews For Jesus?

He suggests that we Jews For Jesus deny or denigrate our Jewishness. How absurd! After all, if Jesus is the Jewish Messiah, what could be more kosher than following after the Holy One of Israel? Does he really believe that faith in Jesus changes one from corned beef on rye to ham on white?

Jesus did not come first to the gentiles, but to the Jewish people. Rabbi Saul of Tarsus said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe, to the Jew first and also the gentile." (Romans 1:16). So now we Jews should forget about Him? So long as gentiles believe in Jesus, it is OK. But when a Jew believes in Jesus and wants to tell other people, then we in some way are denying what God says. This kind of doublemindedness is logically intolerable.

He closes by saying that he for freedom of speech, but not for us. Is that fair? Is that what the law of the land says? Does Mr. Zarnett seek to bring harmony, or incite others to demonstrate religious intolerance contrary to the rules of York University and proper human dignity.

Spiritual truth is not determined by majority vote. We believe the Messiahship of Jesus is true because the Biblical evidence proclaims it to be so. The vocational "status" of the proclaimer does not alter truth! If Mr. Zarnett had his way, he would not want you to know more about Y'shua (the Jewish way to say Jesus).

We see that there is only one issue: THE MESSIAHSHIP OF JESUS. So far we have heard little about Jesus from those who would try to oppose us. When will people deal with the real issues instead of inciting emotional attacks?

—Steve Cohen

### Dafiewhare void of decorum: Bricker

Editor:

I was astonished to read Esiri Dafiewhare's response to my letter that appeared in *Excalibur* two weeks ago. Certainly, I expected that the YSMAA would disagree with my interpretation of their behavior at Ambassador Babb's visit to the U of T. I did not expect, however, to have my integrity impugned by an individual who appears void of any

sense of decorum or proportion. Not only is Dafiewhare's tone insulting— "... he leaves me in no doubt that he is insensitive to the integrity and right to life which is and must be the fundamental right of every human being"—his logic is so riddled with inconsistencies that I considered not dignifying his churlish rantings with a response. A sense of outrage, however, has motivated me to make the case for free speech once again.

Readers will recall that in my first letter I stated quite clearly my support for the anti-Apartheid cause which I described as just and appropriate given the history of race relations in South Africa. Support of the anti-Apartheid movement, however, does not permit individuals to do violence to liberal democracy in this country to hasten the struggle to free the oppressed in South Africa. While I find the views of Ambassador Babb and his government repugnant, I state once again that the right of Canadians to hear his position first-hand must not be dispensed with.

Esiri Dafiewhare, displaying all the mean-spirited acumen one finds in Eric Hoffer's "true believer," has perverted my argument for free speech to the extent that it is rendered a "smokescreen" for acceptance of Apartheid. Where in my letter did I suggest anything of the sort? I feel that your zeal, Mr. Dafiewhare, has clouded your mind to the extent that you are unaware of where your impulsiveness delivers you. Denial of free speech to choke dissent and debate should sound familiar to you. It rings exactly like the argument P.W. Botha makes to stifle the movement against Apartheid in South Africa.

Perhaps the most interesting shortcoming in Dafiewhare's logic is displayed in the following passages:

They [the "correctly committed"] also know that what Glen Babb and his agents are up to in Canada presently is not to "debate" and reason, but to use every platform to perpetuate their offensive of deliberate misinformation and mystification [sic] to reduce Canadian public opinion.

Moreover,

We trust that Canadians are wiser and will not be led from the central struggle of freedom to life and one man one vote to a sterile trick of free speech and rational manners

The patent illogic of Dafiewhare's statements is absolutely astounding. If Canadians are wise enough to recognize the offensive nature of Babb's position and will not be led from the central struggle for freedom, what is the point of denying them the opportunity to make up their own minds? Let Babb try to defend his indefensible position. Canadians are astute enough—or, at least I think they are astute enough—to sort fantasy from truth and recognize the South African regime for what it is—A bestial travesty that can longer be tolerated in the global community.

Finally, Mr. Dafiewhare, let me offer you some advice which you appear to require. In future I suggest that you reserve your mean-spirited vitriol for those that you can at least claim to have met. It is impossible to divine from a two paragraph letter the measure of my commitment to the fundamental rights of

humans or gauge the intensity of my support for the anti-Apartheid movement. Your rejoinder was insulting and it served no purpose in furthering debate on this sensitive issue. Frankly, if your letter accurately depicts the feelings of the YSMAA on this issue, I would prefer to continue confronting Apartheid in my own way.

—Cal Bricker

### Student defends drunk prof

Editor:

Re: "Drunk Professor Shocks Students", *Excalibur*, March 6th

I found the letter to the editor written by the 'dugusted and enlightened' P. Hubbard deplorable. In the past I have been as student of the professor whose job P. Hubbard would like to see 'threatened.' While P. Hubbard feels that there is 'little to be admired' about this professor, it is because he or she has been so attentive to his shortcomings as to have missed his admirable qualities. This professor is one of the most interested and interesting in his department. The subject he taught us could have been drudgery to many, but he made it fascinating and memorable. If such an event as P. Hubbard describes were to have occurred previously in this course, I have no doubt that P. Hubbard would have publicized it, so I assume it has not. I can only wonder if the self-righteous P. Hubbard ever noticed during the 40-odd classes that had gone before how interesting the professor was making the facts he was relating, how captivating was his style of presentation, or how the manner in which the material was being presented could not fail but help the students to succeed in this course as they may not have done were the course taught by some uninterested professor? Presumably P. Hubbard is unaware of these things, and I, as well as many others in my department feel it vital that they be known. If P. Hubbard feels that he or she is doing some good by exposing their professor with the intent of threatening his job, then P. Hubbard should reconsider. If he or she had their way, many future students would be deprived of the wonderful resource that this professor is. I only regret that P. Hubbard had not the generosity to reconsider before sending in his thoughtless letter for publication. Although P. Hubbard evidently sees himself as a Crusader for the Cause of higher standards of education, his unsubstantiated generalizations ('This professor is known to have a drinking problem . . . and is not alone among some of his colleagues at York'; 'This type of incident is a common occurrence') will only serve to undermine York's faculty in general. I am dismayed at P. Hubbard's inability to recognize or to care about the ramifications of his self-righteous moralizing.

—Cecilia Moens

### Reader supports Portuguese studies

Editor:

I would like to bring to the attention of *Excalibur* the existence of a proposal, supported and petitioned for by the York University Portuguese Association (YUPA), calling for the creation of a

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