

Editorial

Administration ignores rights of York students once again

York students returning from Reading Week were greeted with an unexpected 'gift' from the President: new legislation governing non-academic student conduct.

While portions of the regulations (such as the establishment of a Student Complaints Centre) mark a significant improvement over old policies, some disturbing changes have been made regarding students' rights in minor infraction cases. What's more, students may not even understand the serious implications of the new procedures, because they were not adequately notified of the proposed changes in the first place.

The new rules grant unreviewable authority to Local Hearing Officers dealing with minor offenses. Where before a student had recourse to appeal an Officer's decision, no such provision exists now. Furthermore, Local Hearing Officers can impose sanctions as serious as \$100 in fines, or removal of a student from residence.

This dramatic reduction in student rights is frightening in light of the fact that the Administration did very little to properly inform the York Community of its intentions. Granted, submissions from the student body regarding the matter were requested by the University over the past year; however, no public debate of the final regulations was allowed.

The Office of Student Affairs published an announcement concerning the recent legislation in *Excalibur* on February 26, three days after they came into effect. Students were informed that new regulations had been implemented, but were not told what they contained. Only the new Student Complaints Centre was advertised. How can students effectively respond to a regulation that has already been ratified? Once a new policy is instituted, the Administration is under no obligation to change it, regardless of outside protest.

Concerns have already been raised by members of Osgoode's Community and Legal Aid Services Programme (CLASP) regarding the dubious legality of the new regulations. The President's delegation of absolute authority to Local Hearing Officers runs contrary to the York Act, which explicitly states that the President must maintain a supervisory role in the York Community, according to Marshall Swadron, a supervisor at CLASP.

President Arthurs has refuted this claim, saying that he received two legal opinions on the matter—one of them his own—and the regulations contain nothing which is contradictory to the York Act.

And while Arthurs admits that the new measures are vague, he believes they are sound, and insists on maintaining them. If the procedures don't work, Arthurs said, he's prepared to say that he made a mistake.

With students possessing no recourse to appeal, and possibly facing the stigma of a criminal record, can we afford such experimentation? An open forum should have been held before the final regulations were proclaimed. As it stands, students' rights have been profoundly diminished, and one has to wonder if this is the continuation of a worrisome trend set by an unconcerned Administration.

Asbestos Scandal



PHYSICAL PLANT'S AFFORDABLE SOLUTION TO THE OSGOODE ASBESTOS PROBLEM.

Letters

Letters to the Editor are welcome, and should be sent to 111 Central Square. All letters should be double spaced and preferably typewritten. Although *Excalibur* may withhold names of correspondents in extenuating circumstances, all letters must be signed and include the writer's phone number for verification. Anonymous letters will not be published. *Excalibur* reserves the right to edit letters for length, and to withhold all correspondence which is of a libelous nature.

Canada has no united culture

Editor:

I am writing in response to an article in Feb. 26 *Excalibur* entitled "Conference looks at consequence of putting culture on free trade table." I would also like to relate this article, to help clarify my point, to a past letter written by a gentleman who had complained about the so-called "flag etiquette" at this institution. In my opinion, both demonstrate how we in Canada clearly abuse and misinterpret the true implications of cultural sovereignty.

The "Flag" letter, as I will call it, commented on the way the security staff at York habitually raised and lowered the flag at the wrong time of day, at times forgetting to raise or lower it at all. This action pointedly demonstrates how we Canadians truly feel about our cultural sovereignty. We will not even respect the very symbol which unites us together, never mind try to understand what our cultural sovereignty truly means.

Cultural sovereignty in Canada has become a phrase to catch the very diverse and fragmented cultures which the policy of Multiculturalism has enabled to spring up. We in Canada do not have a united culture. We have our Italo-Canadian culture, our Serbo-Croatian-Canadian culture etc. What kind of culture is this? This is just a mish-mash of immigrants clinging to their homeland and traditions, conveniently forgetting that it was Canada that gave them their refuge from wartorn homelands. A Canadian culture, unless you want to speak of tolerance for these diverse groups, has not developed.

How then I ask, can we Canadians

justify our "concern" for giving up our cultural sovereignty when we, especially here at York University, continually disregard the very symbol of our identity?

Finally, I would like to respond to the statement quoted from Calvin Rand, that said "the people of the United States hardly know what the word cultural sovereignty means." On the contrary, I see the American people as a group who are fiercely loyal and patriotic, who have learned from history of their country and who have demonstrated this loyalty by understanding that they are Americans first, that it is America which is their home and that it is the development of American culture which is the important uniting force for the people. I feel that instead of Canadians being frightened of any total inundation of American culture, it is the Americans who should beware of entering into any agreement with a country who will not unite itself and present to the rest of the world a truly national cultural sovereignty.

Lisa DeSprit

Pritchard evades issues raised

Editor:

Re: William Pritchard's letter to the Editor "Safer Sex group clarify mandate" (*Excalibur*, March 5).

I must begin this letter with a confession: upon reading Mr. Pritchard's letter, I was favourably impressed with his organization's laudable efforts to raise the issue of AIDS to a higher level of public awareness. Upon re-reading the letter, however, it became increasingly clear that Mr. Pritchard has chosen, with one exception, to not directly address the issues I raised in an earlier letter to the Editor. It is for this reason that I take this opportunity to

respond to his opinions, some of which distort the true meaning of my criticisms and suggestions.

To begin, I would like to emphasize that I did not criticize the mandate behind which "Condom Day" was organized. Indeed, at no time during my letter of February 26 did I suggest that the Lesbian and Gay Alliance was not "aware of the seriousness of the health crisis posed by AIDS." I am aware, however, that the Gay Alliance is especially concerned about the disease since approximately 80% of Canadians afflicted with AIDS are homosexuals or bisexuals.

My real bone of contention stemmed from the events that actually occurred on Condom Day. To his credit, Mr. Pritchard has adequately explained the motives behind the "Captain Condom" suits, although I still believe they were somewhat inappropriate for the occasion. Left unanswered, however, was my contention that Gay Alliance organizers had, when given the opportunity, discussed issues entirely beyond their mandate for Condom Day. By not rebutting such a view, Mr. Pritchard has only reinforced my belief in this regard.

I question Mr. Pritchard's true sincerity when he invites suggestions or constructive criticism on behalf of the Lesbian and Gay Alliance. In my earlier letter, I suggested that *Excalibur*, CYSF and the York University Administration should co-operate in dealing with the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. I felt that such a proposal would generate a greater level of support among the York student body than would an AIDS information campaign headed by an organization which often seems to be more effective at creating controversy than in solving problems. This being the case, Mr. Pritchard should have at least considered such an

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(Due to the approach of Purim and St. Patrick's Day, we have postponed Super Hero Alter Egos; We hope you've enjoyed Danny Kaye Characters & 76-79 Punks; next week: Famous Irish Playwrights & T.B.A.)	

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