

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

### Excalibur just reflecting campus climate

I would like to respond to two letters published in the March 30 issue of *Excalibur*. The first from Messrs. Van Velzen and Martin is rather confused but they seem to be annoyed that *Excalibur* reports left-wing causes and does not better report the "majority" point of view.

As far as I can see *Excalibur* reports mainly university news which, in the context of York, is hardly left wing. As far as its reporting of speeches, lectures and demonstrations goes, it is true that some of them are presented by left-wing groups. *Excalibur* merely reflects that fact in its reporting.

They also claim that an entity called the "establishment" is responsible for the "health, wealth

and freedom" of contemporary society. The establishment is not defined in their letter but it seems to be confused in their minds with their parents. I certainly applaud Messrs. Van Velzen and Martin for having such nice parents, but I think they have made a mistake in coming to university. After all, if they did not want to hear diverse points of view expressed, if they did not want to learn that right, justice and freedom were often fought for by dissenters, reformers and even revolutionaries, then they should have gone directly into a business school or into business. If they want to see selected the current values of society, they can read the Sun and never have to think again.

As for Professor Flew: welcome to York University. Your reputation as a philosopher has preceded you, but perhaps some people are not aware of your credentials as a fierce critic of all that is Left in Great Britain - from the Labour Party, through the trade unions to the anti-nuclear movement. For those who wish to be better informed I refer them to the August, 1982 issue of *Encounter*. There you refer to the bad "consequences of responding to the ever-increasing Soviet military build-up by further unilateral Western disarmament (p. 54)." Exactly why you use the word "further" is unclear since there has as yet been no unilateral disarmament in the West, but then, after all, you are writing for *Encounter* not for your professional colleagues in the philosophical community. Along the same lines, you point out in your *Excalibur* letter that the proposed installation of cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe is merely a response to a Soviet build-up. Is that all that's involved? Surely it is not so much a question of responding to Soviet military measures that is at stake but the whole question of whether the installation of a new generation of nuclear weapons increases the risk of accidental nuclear war, or of

nuclear war arising almost immediately out of a conventional confrontation. Readers of *Excalibur* might also be interested to know that in *Encounter* you say that "Marxist-Leninist organizations" play a leading role in the British CND, as if that were the main point in discussing their anti-nuclear platform. The fact is, as you know quite well, CND is composed of a wide variety of individuals and groups - some on the Left, some not. Just because an issue is supported by the Communists doesn't mean there is no merit in the case. After all, for a long time in the United States the Communist Party was in the forefront against racial segregation and discrimination. Did that mean that segregation and discrimination were a good thing?

As for your throwaway remark about Soviet world domination, please have some pity for us. True, we are colonialists, true York is still a young university, but I would guess the average IQ here is around 100 (a bit higher for the students, perhaps lower for the faculty). But if you start throwing around terms like Soviet "world domination" I can always come back with "American imperialism" and before you know it we will be slugging it out with pig's bladders.

Harvey G. Simmons  
Professor, Department of Political Science

locked into repaying those loans at 15 7/8, the rate set for 1982/83, and a rate which does not reflect the recent drop in interest rates. That is not right.

It is my belief, and that of the New Democratic Party, that the Federal Government should require the banks to allow re-negotiation of student loans to reflect the lower rates which now prevail. In the future loan rates should be established on the basis of a weighted average of the loan rate in effect every year that the student makes a loan. The interest-free period of grace should extend to until the student has found a job.

Young Canadians have been encouraged to take up post-secondary education by the availability of supposedly low cost student loans. The combination of the Government's high interest rate policy and the inflexibility of the administration of the Canada Student Loan program yields a situation where students, who face a youth employment rate of 20.7 per cent and are often unemployed themselves, are required to repay student loans at inflated rates. The only party which benefits in this situation is the banks who are collecting the interest.

Should the Government not comply with our requests to lower the Canada student loan rate, students should be aware that if they can delay the consolidation of their loan until after July 31, 1983, the new and hopefully lower 1983/84 rate would be applicable to their loan.

David Orlikow, M.P.  
Winnipeg North

### Social change possible at York?

We could not ignore the Robert Van Velzen/Dean Martin letter (now running for two weeks, will it go for a third!).

These two clearly have a misconceived understanding of the 'public' aims of higher education.

The prime purpose of a university education in a 'liberal arts' university such as York should be to foster tolerance and respect for all people. It is obvious from their unwarranted and prejudicial attacks

on feminists, peace activists, gays and others seeking progressive social change that they are a long way from achieving this goal.

If these two represent the majority at York, as is likely the case, then it is clear that York University is neglecting to fulfill this fundamental objective.

Joanne Hurley  
Chris Harris  
Marc ter Brugge  
Randy Persaud

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### Something Right?

I have got to hand it to you. You really must be doing something right if someone is accusing you of representing Radical Marxists and immaculate conceptions. Keep up the good work, I guess?

Axelle Janczur

### Look at O.S.A.P.

There is something seriously wrong with the student loan system that requires students to repay their loans at rates that are higher than generally available consumer loan rates.

Under the present system, graduating students are forced to consolidate and begin paying their loans six months after leaving their fulltime program, whether they are employed or not. Many graduating students who started making loans three or four years ago when rates were around 10 per cent will be

### What's the point?

What are you trying to accomplish by your front page photo on your February 24 1983 edition of *Excalibur*? What ever the message was it was not clear or well understood by many of the students I have talked with. There is no written article or explanation. What was the newspaper's intention, maybe you should make your reasoning known to the student body in future editions. Also in the next edition explain in detail to your readers the motive and thinking behind this new approach to your student newspaper.

Thank you and waiting,  
D. Reszczynski

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