

CYSF purge YSF blush

In a symbolic effort to break away from the scandal-ridden executives of the past, CYSF has changed its name to YFS (York Federation of Students) and become bilingual (FEY: Federation des etudiant(e)s de York).

At first glance, this seems to be a constructive, well-intentioned decision. Unfortunately, it smacks of bureaucratic posturing. The current CYSF (pardon me — YFS) executive has admitted that the name change is politically motivated to help improve its image at York. And the move to bilingualism reads like an opportunistic grab at the national agenda under the pretext of achieving solidarity with Glendon College at the local level. The final result isn't misdirected in itself, it's just CYSF's overinsistence about the efficacy of their political purge and YFS' brand new start that seem spurious.

Some of the members of previous "scandal executives" are still currently holding office.

Without necessarily passing judgement, let's remember: last year's Vice-President (Internal), Caroline Winship, is back in the same position this year. And Tammy Hasselfeldt, the CYSF President two years ago, has now been hired as the YFS Executive Research Assistant.

So, it's strange for YFS to talk about shedding its old skin, while continuing to drag its remnants behind; in fact rejuvenating the whole body under a different face.

With the Meech Lake accordion foremost on the minds of Canadians and Quebecers, YFS' move to bilingualism seems well-timed indeed. Supporting Glendon (and, in effect, the Quebec position) is a nice sentiment. But we'll have to wait and see what substantial effects YFS' decision will bring to the campus, considering that administration has only paid lip service to bilingualism at York Main. Whether or not Glendon wants to give up its "distinct society" atmosphere at Bayview and Lawrence, a statement of student solidarity is essential for this campus.

Certainly, the pragmatics of doing reconstructive surgery during the summer have not been lost on student politicians. They have learned from administrators that it's wiser to make important changes during the off-season when few students are around to notice or take interest. In this way, the frosh who arrive in the fall can get the rosy-cheeked first impression of their school that they so patently deserve.

For most students, the transition from a unilingual CYSF to a bilingual YFS will be transparent. But if we look closely enough, I'm sure we might still spot some of the scars.

Thank you YFS. We've seen your image, now let's concentrate on your substance for the rest of the year.

Peter Stathis

Stifling Dissent

Many people would like to live in a world where everybody holds the same opinion — theirs. While this ordinarily results in nothing more than arguments in pubs about who can drink the most beer without puking, it has ominous overtones when applied to a national government.

In recent months, Brian Mulroney's Conservative majority has cut back funding to native newspapers, women's centres and feminist journals, including York's *Canadian Woman Studies/Les Cahiers de la Femme*. The government pleads poverty, but how can its agenda be anything but stifling dissent?

As Jane Springer, managing editor of CWS/CF, points out, the savings are ridiculously small relative to the federal budget as a whole. Moreover, other government expenditures (\$2 million for fireworks to celebrate Canada Day, for instance) seem better targets for restraint, less likely to cause hardship than the current cuts.

Finally, the fact that the federal government contributes to REAL Women, a right wing group actively working against sexual equality, while cutting funds for groups working towards equality, is a clear indicator that the government has more on its agenda than economics.

Why should we care if natives or women lose important avenues of communications? Aren't they just troublemakers, upsetting those who are happy with the status quo? Well, while they may not accept the status quo, marginal voices are vital to the mainstream in many ways.

Canadians pride themselves on having a liberal democratic country, justly ruled by just laws. These laws, however, were created and perpetuated by the mainstream to protect its own interests; minorities are frequently poorly served by them. The same argument can be made for economic and social concepts of justice.

A society where the majority imposes its will on minority groups has no right to consider itself just. Minority publications are important because they help foster diverse views within the community, and can transmit their community's concerns to society at large. In a truly just society, these concerns would be heard.

This kind of argument doesn't carry much weight with the self-obsessed members of the Greed Decade, so consider a second one. If a society isn't prepared to change over time as it faces new conditions, it inevitably stagnates and declines. New ideas are the lifeblood of a nation.

But, new ideas don't just magically appear. They arise in order to describe the life and respond to the needs of small groups of individuals (in short, minorities). Only when the minority voices its concerns and ideas do they then percolate upwards, impinging the consciousness and finally becoming accepted by the majority. Stifling the views of minorities impoverishes the majority.

Given that Canadian society is changing rapidly, stifling minority views, even if we do not agree with them (perhaps especially if we do not agree with them) will ill equip us to cope with those changes.

Ira Nayman

EDITORIAL



graphic by Brett Lamb

Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose

LETTERS

Excalibur welcomes letters to the editor on all topics. We will publish, space permitting, letters up to 500 words in length. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name, signature and telephone number. The opinions expressed belong to the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of *Excalibur* staff of directors. However, letters judged to be racist, sexist or libellous by the editor will be refused. All material is subject to editing. All submissions must be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief, Room 111, Central Square.

Sanghera unhappy with alumni tables

To the editor,

This is regarding an event that happened on Tuesday June 12. We all know that Convocation is going on right now, yet I had a small problem with it. **Who the hell let the alumni set up tables in Central Square causing a fire hazard?** The even stranger thing was, that the Student Affairs Office was only about ten metres away!

Do they honestly think that just because they are not students that they are better than us? We spent too much time protesting this to let you get away with it. Get real buddy!

Thanks,

George Sanghera
VP (Programmes), YFS

Excal reaffirms student priorities

To the editor,

We would like to extend our compliments to both you and Michele Greene, regarding your article entitled, "York for sale," in the June 6 issue of *Excalibur*. We found the article both accurate and insightful, but most of all, it

represented the best interests of the students. Adequate representation of the student body is a quality which we feel has been lost to *Excalibur* in past years, so it is all the more important that this year's staff has reaffirmed their ties to the general populace here at York.

Nonetheless, as good as the article was, we feel that there were a few points which were missed. Harriet Lewis (York's lawyer) stated that the, "competition between licensed manufacturers will eliminate this tendency." We would take this to mean that normal business competition will remove the burden of the 6.5 per cent from the students. **Not true!** Most, if not all, promotional companies operate on such a small profit margin that the competition factor will only result in reducing the quality of the finished goods.

No one department or college places orders large enough for the manufacturer to absorb the added surtax.

Secondly, Lewis has also stated that she has given adequate notification of this "royalty" to all departments at York. We here at YFS have received no such notice. As a matter of fact, we found out about the tax through the Office of Student Affairs, of all places.

Finally, we find it absolutely disgusting that the fascist administration here at York is planning to tax the student body in order to open a boutique at Simpsons or the airport. **Where the hell are their priorities?**

Yours sincerely,
George Sanghera
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