

Some answers from CYSF

There's a referendum happening on Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 and 2. Some people are unhappy about what's going on, some are suspicious, most are merely confused or disinterested. I would like in the next few pages to outline the philosophy and the reasoning behind the referendum and I would hope to provide you with enough information to allow you to cast an intelligent vote.

Let's set down a few facts.
York is founded on the college system and has been both philosophically and structurally since the University's beginning. When York was founded in 1961, the effects of the multiversity could already be seen. In order to break down a mass of 10,000 students into something a little more personal and individual smaller units of 1,000 persons were conceived and individual smaller units of 1,000 persons were conceived and these were to be known as colleges. However, the college system has had a very adverse effect in politically (and otherwise) fragmenting the student body.

The college system is not working now. Please note that I am not saying the college system has failed and should be scrapped, rather that it has not been fulfilling the theory on which it was based. Need some proof? Let me cite a few examples.

1) For hundreds of freshmen orientation here this year was a fiasco. I tried to speak to as many students as was personally possible and those I managed to meet were depressed, lonely and confused. No senior students were there to help out. Getting into some college's tutorials involved worse hassles than registration. Dances and films replaced meeting people. But "orientation"?

2) The colleges, with three "major" social events have managed to lose about \$8,000 this year. Crowbar lost \$3,400, Festival '71, about \$2,000 and Chase about \$2,600. This was after one college had been guaranteed that it could not possibly lose more than \$900 on the Crowbar concert. This was also after Quicksilver Messenger Service had been offered for Festival '71. York has a deserved reputation for mediocre entertainment.

3) Massive congestion in Central Square and the Ross Building attests to the fact that students are not returning to "their" college to relax, because they don't identify with it. All of us have favourite coffee shops, but that too is rarely based on college involvement, rather it is on personal taste. Do you go back to your college all the time? If not, why not?

Many questions have been asked about CYSF, its budget and its services. Let me try and answer some now.

1) How much money does CYSF get? \$95,000 which is 9,500 students at \$10.00 each.

2) What does it provide with that money? Radio York, Excalibur, Day Care Centre, Student Clinic, stickers, phone books, academic information, course union help, community help, legal aid, university clubs, Pollution Probe, the Red and White Society, etc.

3) Can CYSF survive on a smaller budget? No, I don't think so. Come on over and take a look at the budget and tell me where and how we can cut the funds that we spend.

4) Has CYSF been financially efficient in the past? No, it has been certainly just as bad as the college councils in this regard. But we're planning to hire a full time business manager. That's a concrete step towards a permanent solution for CYSF's financial problems.

5) Why does CYSF want financial independence from the colleges? Firstly, because CYSF is broke right now since they delayed in passing our budget. Secondly, because the colleges never made a budget decision on financial grounds, merely on whether they like CYSF, Excalibur or whatever at that particular moment. Thirdly, the college councils get all their money without any approval from anyone at all — and they are the ones who are failing. Our effectiveness is only hampered by this annual game of paranoia politics over the budget.

6) How much money do the college councils get? Seventeen dollars per student, or an average about \$25,000 each.

7) Where do they spend it? You ask them. Some of the categories in their budget are a lot more open to criticism than those in CYSF.

8) Can the colleges survive on a smaller budget? I don't know. It has been suggested that a shortage of funds might promote more cooperation. However, I think all you would see is a cutback in what they do.

9) Are the CYSF trying to take over the college's function? No, we are not. We are still going to be only concerned with University-oriented affairs. But the new constitution does make the college council's job blindingly clear — which is to guide and govern their college and not everybody else.

And that's where we are now. Stopped. I believe that a successful referendum will start all sorts of schemes happening. With no control over CYSF, the colleges must turn and work on themselves. With no hindrance from the colleges, CYSF can become a more efficient and effective organization. The new constitution carefully defines a deliberate federal provincial setup.

CYSF is pledged to support the college system and will. This can be immediately evidenced in the cooperative planning of this year's Winter Carnival. You know the problems as well as I do and together I hope we can beat them.

To all other members of the University community, I would ask that you take part in the discussion and voting on the new constitution. I hope by the end of the month you will have received more than enough information to make an intelligent decision about the future of York's Student Government. Please talk to friends, council members, college masters, about what is and what should be, going on around here.

The referendum what your college thinks

Founders College

On Nov. 30 the CYSF will commit its gravest error in its short history. On this day they are holding a referendum regarding a new constitution.

The rewriting of the constitution is a tremendous idea. The present CYSF constitution is definitely a poor, but obviously a temporary document. It is the creation of the colleges — their attempt to coordinate the colleges on campus.

After two years, the college councils and the CYSF realize that coordination is not enough and that CYSF should have a more administrative role, for anything campus-wide.

Although I personally would prefer a new document, I am obviously opposed to the referendum for the following reasons. The constitution is the product of a few individuals working for less than a month, in fact the referendum announcement came before the proposed document became available to the council (CYSF) and before the ratification (by the CYSF) of the new constitution. In fact, on the writing of this (Nov. 15) the document is still not fully ratified.

How well could those few individuals conceive the needs of the York Community, in writing the constitution in less than a month, also how technically accurate could the constitution be? Two of the more blatant mistakes that I feel the constitution has is the lack of an "effective date", that is when does the constitution come into being; also there is no escape clause, a section in the constitution that allows an easy method of removing the document should it prove unfeasible within the next year, the other major fault is — no rules of order, there is no method of governing a meeting should the document be enacted.

If you vote on Nov. 30 please consider that the CYSF should be congratulated for its attempt but the referendum is too near and the constitution still has many areas that need reconsidering.

When you vote Nov. 30 please vote NO, so that the CYSF may be able to take a closer evaluation of a document that concerns the 18,000 people in the York Community.

Congratulations on a fine effort Mike, I am sorry that I cannot support this document — it just is not ready.

Robert Ashton,
Vice-Pres.
Founders College.

Glendon College

(A letter was not sent to Paul Johnston but we thought his letter should be published anyway — Ed.)

Sans

As an outside observer to the Student Government crisis at your campus I would like to make a few observations.

First of all the referendum that is being held on Nov. 30th must pass. It is imperative that CYSF be able to operate independently from the college councils and their parochial positions. It has been my experience in the past that much of the potential of this body is effectively stifled by the petty jealousies of the colleges. CYSF has to this point, been ineffectual as a voice in provincial student and government affairs. I believe the colleges have been at fault as they have consumed valuable energy in their no-count power plays.

As the only college apart from CYSF, Glendon has operated on social and political levels. I don't believe this should be cited as an example of what colleges would do independently as they have yet to show any interest of understanding of the external affairs that may drastically alter the perception of tertiary education in Canada. It seems to an observer they've been unsuccessful in organizing even social affairs, much less political response in their colleges.

CYSF must be given both the power and responsibility to deal in the intricacies of tertiary education philosophy and direction and the dissemination of their interpretation of these matters to a presently uninformed and alienated student population.

I would urge every student to overcome the inherent constitutional problems of York Student Government and allow the superior CYSF to get on with this necessary research and lobby.

Paul Johnston, President
Executive Student Union,
Glendon College.

Grad Student Association

You requested an opinion on proposed constitutional changes which you claim create a situation grave enough to warrant a response.

As you may know, most of the students in the Graduate Faculty of Administrative Studies obtained their degrees at universities where student government is more cen-

Letter sent to the colleges by Excalibur

Dear Sirs:

You probably know by now, Council of the York Student Federation has proposed serious constitutional changes in order to:

— make itself an independent political body instead of responsible to the college councils;

— automatically receive \$10 from every student without the ratification from the colleges;

— strengthen generally the power of the federal government (i.e. CYSF).

We would like to have the council's opinions on the matter for our Nov. 18 issue to give a balanced account of student opinions. To do this properly, we need your response by 3 p.m. Monday, Nov. 15. We realize this is short notice but feel the gravity of the situation warrants a definite response from you.

Andy Michalski.

tralized than it is here at York. Besides, as our members do not belong to the colleges and in fact have little opportunity to mix with undergraduates, a condition which is perhaps aggravated by the college system, we have reason to shy away from a decentralized form of government.

On the other hand we can also claim to have attended schools where the individual student was rendered insignificant within the student governmental structure.

It seems that there are certain functions that can better be performed by a centralized authority while others make smaller governmental units imperative. A federal system presents itself as a logical vehicle for carrying out these functions. However, a rational division of powers is mandatory for any federal system to have hope of successfully meeting its objectives. Needless to say, much of the dissatisfaction with the current setup arises from an inappropriate allocation of responsibilities. If there is to be any resolution of this problem, the various responsibility centers currently constituted will have to avoid fighting for power like dogs scrapping for a bone, but rather, the system as a whole will need to be redesigned in a logical manner.

The problem with most student governments is maintaining responsibility to the student body which has elected it. It seems clear that a federal system could provide for this as there would exist two counterprevaling centers of power both of which would be responsible to the student body: The central government and the collective force comprising the sub-units, the colleges. Ensuring the maintenance of responsibility to a student electorate can be achieved neither by a centralized government alone, as exist at other schools, nor by the structure which now exists at York. For such a system to work, each of the governments representing the sub-units and that representing the aggregate must exist independently

yet coordinate their activity in a spirit of cooperation if they are to fulfill the needs of those whom they represent. The cynic would probably condemn such a proposal on the simple ground that such a spirit of cooperation is unthinkable.

In closing, let me say that so long as the central government is responsible to the councils, all the needs of the students are not likely to be fulfilled. Fulfillment of those needs which can best be handled by a central government will be limited by the quality of inputs from the representatives of the sub-units, individuals, appropriately so, I might add, are liable to be more parochial than is beneficial to the students of York University in matters which affect them as a single body.

Kenneth G. Nelson, President,
The Graduate Student Council
of Administrative Studies.

McLaughlin College

Sir:
Concerning the proposed CYSF referendum scheduled for Nov. 30, I wish to inform you that I have never witnessed a more shoddy or conspiratorial affair than this one.

There has been no official notification to any college council or association whatsoever as to the referendum or the changes it will constitute.

There has been this air of semi-secrecy which has kept the majority of the York community in the dark about concerns that are vitally important to them. Why has CYSF neglected even the most common courtesy of notifying its constituent members of an impending constitutional change. What is it hiding?

The thought of conceding the entire ten dollars to CYSF frightens me no end. As Paul Axelrod stated in his diatribe about the College System (Excalibur Nov. 15) "It's a goal made easy in reality for the

colleges. For they must say yes before the CYSF can get its money." Mr. Axelrod forgot to mention however, that when he, as president of CYSF, approached us at McLaughlin to have his budget ratified, he could not account for various CYSF expenditures. His financial records were a shambles and no audit had been done on his records.

If it had not been for the council requesting he account for his records etc., and to have an audit done before he received the money, no one would have known where the money had gone.

I shudder then to think of a CYSF which has a financial autonomy and does what it pleases without consulting its constituent members.

When CYSF has financial control of \$95,000 to \$100,000 and no one to regulate its disbursements or to be responsible for it, we leave ourselves open to very serious trouble.

The example of Mr. Axelrod is a prime one. Without the college councils to oversee the financial competence of CYSF, the college councils and the students of York in particular would be in an extremely dangerous predicament.

This constant nit-picking and battering that the college councils receive from CYSF and its little handmaiden Excalibur in particular, is doing more harm to this University than good.

I would especially like to thank you, Andy Michalski, for your generous invitation to reply to the Nov. 30 referendum. The fact that you gave us three or four days to reply and set a time limit to submit our replies is of little significance.

In closing, I urge the members of York to vote against the Nov. 30 referendum.

Jim Cameron,
McLaughlin College
Student Council

Stong College

Dear Sir:
In response to your letter regarding the newly proposed CYSF constitution, we definitely feel that we should let the members of this university know where this college stands with regard to the major proposed changes.

CYSF provides a number of services essential to the York community. The majority of students at York are not aware of the services that CYSF does sponsor and back financially. It is mandatory that many of these services do operate for the good of the students. We feel that the only way

in which these facilities and services can carry on in the future is by strengthening the central government of this university, namely CYSF.

Each year, there is a democratic method of establishing this central council. The student body of each college elects three representatives for the central government. These representatives are people whom the students feel are competent enough to run an efficient central government. College councils cannot complain about the operation of CYSF because it is the same student body who elects the college representatives to CYSF that is responsible for the formation of the college government (whether it be a council or a participatory democracy).

We, at Stong, therefore feel that CYSF establish itself, with its new constitution as an autonomous body instead of as a body responsible to the college councils. We also feel that CYSF automatically receive \$10 from every student without ratification from the colleges. After an audit of the previous year's books has been initiated (as per University Regulations), College governments should have no power of ratification as colleges already have three votes on the Council. They need not worry themselves with that money anyway because if the central Council doesn't get it, they will never see it.

In conclusion, we would like to point out that this college government was represented at constitutional meetings and at the final CYSF meeting to review the Constitution not only by our 4 representatives (including the vice-president) but also by an ex-officio member and college committee chairman.

We would also urge all interested students to vote on the referendum at the end of the month.

Steve Dranitsaris
Jack Thomaidis
Marg Jennings
Howard Laderman
Lawrence K. McGuire
William Cook
Diane Wallace
Stong College
Student Government.

NOTE
The following councils did not reply to Excalibur's letter: Vanier, Winters, Calumet, Atkinson and the Graduate Business Council.

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STAFF MEMBERS DO YOU HAVE A VOICE ON CAMPUS?

Where can you go if you want to put forward suggestions, offer constructive criticism, or get information?

If you are a staff member at York and don't belong to a bargaining group you can make your voice heard through YUSA (the York University Staff Association) — Have you joined yet?

One of the prime objectives of YUSA is to increase communication among staff and between staff and the rest of the University community — this objective is being steadily achieved: in less than two years YUSA has succeeded in giving staff representation on all pertinent committees.

If you have not yet joined send your \$2.00 membership fee to: Mrs. Helen Allen, Membership and Corresponding Secretary, Department of English, Room S763, Ross Building.

ALL STAFF MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO THE INFORMAL GENERAL MEETING OF YUSA TO BE HELD

TUESDAY, NOV. 30 at 4:30 pm

in Lecture Hall L, Curtis.

Mr. R. MacPherson will explain the revised pension plan. Tea and coffee will be served.

The Director of Personnel has given permission for all staff members to attend the 4:30 pm meeting.

STAFF MEETING 2 PM

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