

OPINIONS



Clive Cohen

The number of protesters in front of the U.S. consulate increased steadily with escalation of tensions in the Persian Gulf. Some students from Toronto area universities are playing an active role in the anti-war movement.

More protesters join ranks

by Jeannine Amber

As much as this is a military war it is also a war of propaganda.

George Bush speaks of military attacks, of success, of strategic targets but makes no mention of casualties.

Bush has made every attempt to dehumanize this war. But we must not forget that the fighting on both sides of the war is being carried out by young people whose participation may be more the result of force, misinformation and circumstances than choice.

There are no names or faces for Iraqi civilians, just talk of the "enemy" and the mysterious "New World Order" that we are supposed to be fighting for.

Many people won't start realizing what this war is really about until men and women start coming home in body bags. But by then it will be too late — thousands of lives will have been lost.

The involvement of students in the anti-war movement is crucial. This is not a war fought by mechanical troops but by people like ourselves who deserve a future.

George Bush says that he won't let his troops fight with one hand tied behind their backs. But both he and Mulroney, by ignoring opposition, have left the protesters of this war with both hands tied. The sanctity of human life is at stake. And all we can do is to take to the streets.

Demonstrations, Rallies and Meetings

- January 21, 12 noon, Caroline Egan will speak on the lessons of Vietnam. Check posters for room number.
- January 22, 12 noon rally in East Bear Pit
- January 26, 12 noon massive rally at City Hall
- York Coalition For Troops out of the Gulf meets every Thursday at 4:00 pm. The group welcomes interested individuals. 169S Ross.
- The Toronto Coalition for Troops out of the Gulf meets 7:30 every Wednesday at Trinity St. Paul Church 427 Bloor St. W. (at Spadina)

Unity commission quizzes reps

Courtesy of The Imprint University of Waterloo

The Spicer commission came to Waterloo Wednesday morning to ask students groups in Ontario to help gather opinions from Canadian students.

Kay McKinna, the newly appointed youth commissioner, began her cross country quest to find out how students feel about Canadian unity.

The representatives of Ontario student groups who gathered were in agreement on what the barrier to Canadian unity was: Brain Mulroney.

"He's dismantled the CBC, Via Rail . . . everything that held this country together," said a unidentified York student. "I really wonder if this government wants a united Canada."

McKinna admitted that the commission may very well be "a white-wash, but it's up to you students to see that your point of view gets across," McKinna said. "What is in this report is what Mulroney sees."

One student even questioned the handout, saying that she had seen the same letterhead on Prime Ministers office's releases and should she concluded that the commission was biased in favor of the governmental views.

The mood was generally cynical and rowdy, with people pounding on

desks whenever Mulroney was criticised.

While McKinna did answer questions, her purpose was to ask the student representatives to organize sessions with the new discussion kit that premiered in New Brunswick last week.

While McKinna wanted students to use the kits and their fourteen questions "as a way of getting your point across", the kits will not be available as of yet. They are being fine-tuned after being criticized by the media for being overly general in their questions.

Goods and Service hotline set-up

by Jennifer Lim

York has set up a GST Hotline service.

"The purpose of this set up is to answer general question (about the GST) related to the York community," said chief accountant Glen Emond.

The telephone service is not provided for personal questions. It is catered strictly for the university's business affairs.

According to Emond, the GST hotline adds no extra costs to the university's expenditure.

Due to insufficient funding and the lack of qualified staff, the university is unable to provide students with a personal hotline.

"It will be a waste of money

training temporary staff to answer students' personal questions about the GST," said Ken Ho, a fourth year political science student. "The money may be better off somewhere else."

"There is a lack of knowledge about where students can go to get information concerning the GST," said Gabriella Donatelli, a first year arts student. "A university hotline would be a good idea."

The York GST Hotline extension is 44100.

The service is provided during normal business hours until the end of April, 1991.

All personal questions may be directed to a hotline set up by Revenue Canada at 973-1000.

COLUMN

The dissent of (wo)man

by Sue Pennypacker

Choice, or lack of choice, is a subject which I have talked about since the inception of this column. Thanks to the Gulf crisis, we are now faced with another aspect of choice — the choice to serve or not to serve in the military.

Traditionally, women have been barred from participating in combat. Many reasons are given for this exclusion: women are the weaker sex, women have children, women are too emotional, women are needed to keep the home fires burning, etc . . . All of these reasons are based on stereotypes of women.

War is a macho thing and it is thought that women are not tough enough. Unfortunately, the West now feels that it is time for another war. The United States media (something which we can't escape) is showing heart-wrenching footage of the

military exodus of troops to the Middle East. This time, however, more women than ever before are involved in this military exodus. I'm not sure if this is good or bad.

My feelings about women in the military are conflicting. To begin with, I don't feel that anyone should be involved in a military action. Idealistic, yes, but I can't help the feeling that violence is wrong. On the other hand, I'm forced to accept the reality of the situation. The military exists and violence exists. As such, I feel that women should be allowed to serve in combat roles if they are willing and able. My fear is that women serving in the armed forces may become the norm and this could make women victims of conscription.

Voluntary participation in the military is one thing; conscription (forced participation) is an entirely different issue. Men have historically faced the possibility of conscription, especially in highly-militarized nations like the United States. This, however, doesn't make conscription acceptable. People are forced to participate in violent life-threatening and life-taking activities. This is the ultimate violation of choice.

Here in Canada, conscription has not been as prevalent. Although it's unlikely that there will be a draft in Canada, it is certainly possible. What if the Gulf crisis evolves to such a point that more "bodies" are needed to continue the battle? Conscription of men and perhaps women could become a definite possibility.

One point that can't be ignored is

the fact that minorities are often exploited in times of war. During the Vietnam "police action," the men who were most often drafted were visible minorities and economically-disadvantaged and/or illiterate. Men who came from wealthy or influential backgrounds were often able to get out of active service. Just ask Dan Quayle.

Considering the way that women have been exploited throughout history, it's likely that women would be exploited by a draft as well. Essentially, the draft is an embodiment of systemic discrimination which destroys the small amount of autonomy that minorities possess. Women would fare no better under a draft than people of color and the economically-disadvantaged.

War is the last bastion of male supremacy. Although everyone confronted with war is affected, for the most part, warfare is controlled by men. It is the pinnacle of paternalism.

The so-called experts make all of the decisions and the people pay the price. As such, I reject the idea of war as a noble fight for justice and democracy. I can't even imagine a society in which women, men and children are military automatons.

Forcing people to participate in military actions is ironic in that men and women create new life and are then asked to take it away. While I can't protest an individual's choice to go to war, I can certainly disagree and I can protest the possibility of conscription.

No blood for oil.

Cyrano by F.W. Cameron



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