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Perhaps it is even more important now than before, since with the advent of the analysis story, opinions and facts are no longer segregated, but rub shoulders in the same news item. If analytical reporters do not make this critical distinction clear to the reader, their stories degenerate to the level of pure opinion in the reader's eyes.

Deitch indulges in much fancy talk about a "radical transformation of the American newspaper into a social participant, not a mere observer." But no paper has ever been a mere observer, and Deitch's two concrete proposals - allowing reporters to write editorials and to do their own copy editing - are tame enough to provoke yawns.

The real reason for the popularity of the "new" journalism and the impatience with "objective" journalism, especially on campus papers, is simply laziness. It is easier to sit down and crank out opinions by the yard than it is to sweat away trying to nail down a fact. For the campus radical, bursting and the seams with great social truths, this is a godsend: a license to editorialize endlessly without worrying about having to substantiate one's assertions.

Thus we have, for example, Ken Yasenchuk of CUP writing in the *Gateway* Oct. 23, 1980:

In the nineteen sixties the ultra-conservative, ultra-wealthy William F. Buckley suggested that marijuana smokers ought to be conscripted to work camps to be re-educated so that they might once again join the mainstream of society.

Never mind the objective fact that Buckley has ultra-conservatively disowned the John Birch Society (as one can discover in his 1966 book *the Jeweller's Eye*; never mind that he came out for decriminalization of possession of marijuana (*Execution Eve*, 1972, three years after Barry Goldwater); never mind quoting Buckley's exact words about "conscripting" grass heads (I suspect Yasenchuk has heard a garbled rumor about Buckley's proposal during the 1966 New York mayoralty campaign to send hardcore welfare recipients to "rehabilitation" centres). Anyway, never mind all these mere facts, let's just paint Buckley as an evil monster.

And there was the CUP story about Barbara Amiel being imprisoned in Mozambique (Jan. 1981) which consists

almost entirely of one John Saul, York University professor, berating Amiel for being "naive," painting "fallacious pictures" of poverty in Mozambique, and allegedly entering the country to document previous articles she had written denouncing Mozambique's leftist regime.


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Amiel is never quoted in reply (she states in *Confessions* (expanded) that the University of Toronto *Varsity* person(s) who wrote the CUP story never contacted her). The story contains the fact that Amiel was arrested for entering the country illegally, but omits the fact that she actually entered in a manner entirely acceptable to the illiterate Mozambican border guards, and was not arrested until she tried to leave. It also omits the fact that she was held without counsel in Machava Prison along with many political prisoners. And was freed from the hellhole thanks to hard bargaining by, of all people, the British. Or that Amnesty International appreciated her report on the prison, the first one they have managed to get. All these significant details: omitted.

The headline in the CUP News Package says it all: "Amiel's Actions Sheer Stupidity" (just for the record, Amiel went a step further and confessed it was "criminal negligence" - but you won't find that quote, or the reason for it, in the CUP story, either). And if the slant isn't obvious enough, there is the blurb in the introduction to the News Package calling Amiel "Macleans Motor Mouth."

Well, I have had the pleasure of ripping into both Amiel and Buckley on these pages this year, but it seems to me that CUP's attacks have been below the belt; they indulge in too much tailoring of facts to fit the opinion. Nor are these storied rare exceptions in campus journalism.

One can't help but think that a bit of objectivity would temper this lame editorializing, and silence the sneers of "left-wing bullshit" which inevitably greet student papers, even, amazingly enough, the *Gateway*, though it clearly succumbed to the fascist gospel seven months ago.

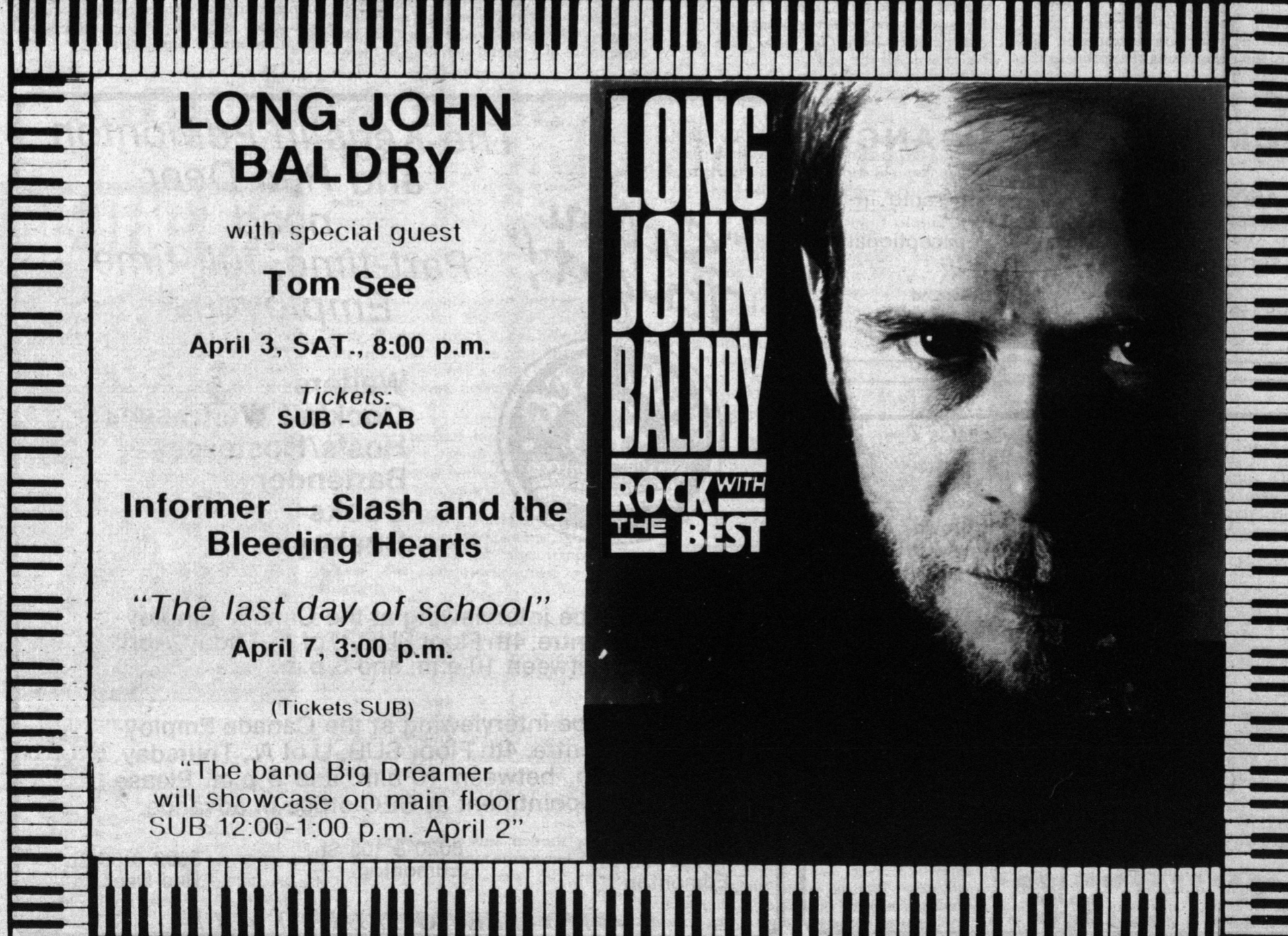


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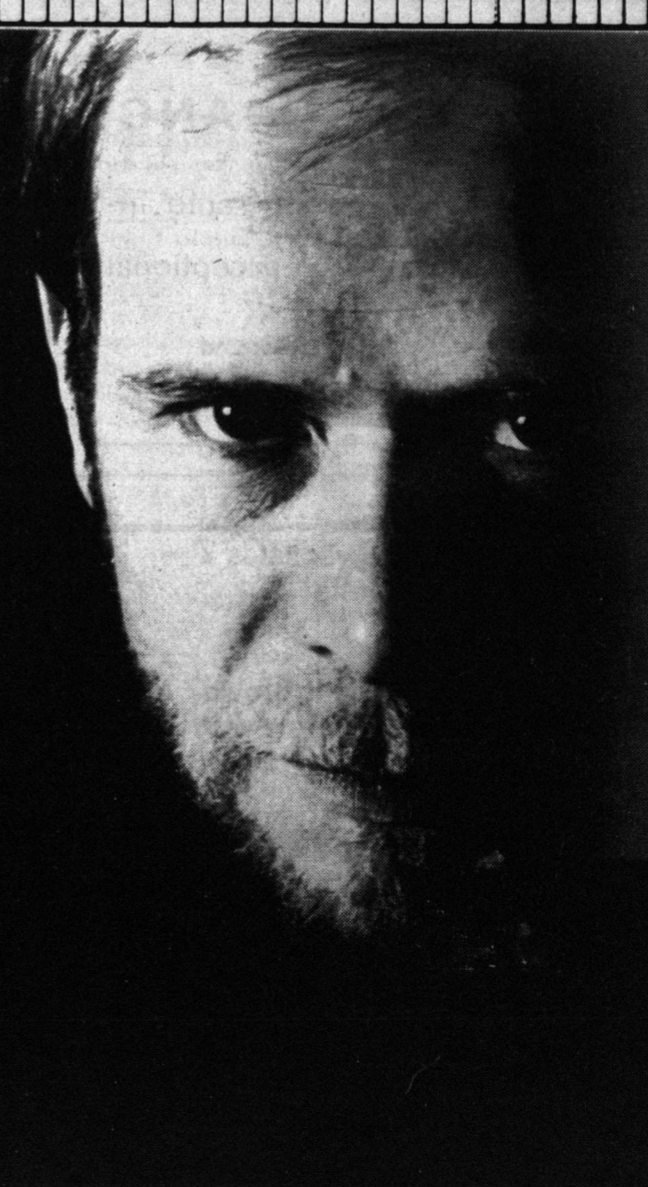
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