

# People concerned about peace

Over the decades since the Second World War, one question has often been asked: "How could the German people have permitted Hitler to carry out the atrocities?"

Did the Germans of the 1940s not know what was going on or did they not care? The answers could be debated forever, and perhaps will be. But perhaps another question will take precedence in the near future: "How could the citizens of the United States and Canada have permitted the atrocities carried out in their name in Central America?"

Some will say the cases are not at all similar. But aren't they? Hitler killed people in gas chambers because he considered them racially inferior. The United States trained Central American puppet governments in the ways of terror and repression, including torture, because it labelled them "Communist".

What is better, the gas chamber or the torture chamber?

A Canadian church worker

who recently visited Guatemala told of his conversation with a Guatemalan peasant:

"I questioned him about the stories of communist agitators and guerrilla fighters in the villages. The response was that illiterate people do not understand or have any interest in communist theory. All they want is respect and justice.

"But he had little hope. If a person expresses any discontent or shows any initiatives to change the status quo, he just disappears. The bodies of a relative and his children had been found beside the road that morning. They had been burned to death with acetylene torches. Guatemala has no political prisoners."

The man was asked what Canadians could do. He replied: "Tell your people what is really happening. We need help."

If the average Canadian student could experience for just one day the life of the average Guatemalan or Salvadoran student, his perspective would

be changed for life. But it is hard for us to grasp the realities of another land, and the mass media do not help. It takes a diligent and inquiring mind to ferret out the truth, and it is easier for many of us to spend our time drinking beer or dancing at the disco.

In Europe, students are becoming more politically aware. Young people in France, Germany, Switzerland and England are rebelling against the hype and propaganda; they are becoming a major force. In the United States and Canada, the disco mentality still seems to prevail. Not that there is anything wrong with dancing, but there is more to life than "Another One Bites The Dust". There are some signs of a

reawakening among the youth of Canada. Perhaps this is just wishful thinking, but perhaps it is real. The evidence of what is going on in El Salvador and elsewhere is getting harder to ignore. The right-wing rhetoric of Reagan, Weinberger and company is beginning to shock even those who take little interest in public affairs. The recent murder of John Lennon seemed to attract new commitment to the ideals that he stood for.

In Fredericton, too, there are signs of an end to the passivism. This Saturday there will be a meeting of those who still want to "give peace a chance". It will be addressed by Ernie Regehr, of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Waterloo.

He is an expert on the Canadian arms industry, and will speak on Canada's involvement in the arms race.

This is not going to be a grim lecture. It will, we hope, be a good time; an event that will bring together those whose horizons extend beyond their immediate personal affairs. Lutia and Paul Lauzon, New Brunswick recording artists, will present their composition, "Bang".

The meeting is being sponsored by various peace-orientated individuals and groups, including the New Brunswick Friends Society, the Voice of Women, and Fredericton area Mennonites. Everyone is welcome.

Deborah Wayne

## African coups (Continued from p. 10)

The coup according to the masterminds was necessary as a result of the recent publication (February 20) of an ASU investigative report on the issue of the Oromo peoples' right to self determination. I must say here that the only honest and maybe valid observation came from Mr. A. Chukwu who, as a member of the investigative committee, protested on the strong language used in the report.

But this disagreement between Mr. Chukwu and the other members of the said committee was used by the few members of the ASU who slipped through the immigration, to make a coup against the administration of Mr. Ernest Jones. His administration was judged on now what it has done but what it has not done. But as a free advice to all African students, in case they have forgotten: "Do not execute badly planned coups motivated by lust for power, recognition, for selfish ends, or for the sake of it!" You become a hero only when you succeed! But when you fail, in 99.9 per cent chance you pay with your own life! These are the realities of politics in Africa. Except if you want to deceive yourself.

I can see nothing other than jealousy, ignorance and selfishness in those few

African student who planned the abortive coup to oust a president who has repeatedly made it known to all the members of the ASU that he will resign whenever they want him to. Furthermore the coup was staged about one week to the scheduled date for elections to a new executive. Was the coup, therefore, necessary! The ignorance of those few students was further revealed by the fact that:

- (a) they failed to get the signatures required by the ASU constitution (not less than half of the membership -Article IX, III), to call a meeting, and;
- (b) according to Article VI they are technically passive members, they still could not realize what they were up to.

In a meeting in which persons not issues were discussed, these few people with the approval of less than a third of the membership, formed a so-called Caretaker Committee which has already been rejected by a pragmatic SRC President, Kevin Ratcliff.

I want to use this opportunity to bring it to the notice of the public that general elections has been rescheduled for Sunday, March 15, at 2 p.m. to elect an executive for 1981-82 school year.

Mustapha Kamara

The advertisement shows a desk with several books, some of which are labeled "Tipped". In the foreground, there are two boxes of "COLTS by OLD PORT" wine. One box is labeled "Rum flavoured. Wine dipped." and the other is labeled "Rum flavoured. Wine dipped." The text "Crack a pack of Colts along with the books." is written in large, bold letters at the bottom of the image.