

Y2 - Shut the hell up!

Did anyone else wake up the morning of January 1, 2000 and think "What the fuck?"

That night was strange for me, I didn't know if anything would happen but I kept on checking the news anyway — just to see.

I watched as countries like Israel, France and the United States celebrated and toasted in the new year both terrorist and Y2K glitch-free. The Gaza Strip didn't light up in gun-fire, New York City or the White House were not bombed, and planes didn't fall from the sky.

The only place there was any disturbance was in Buenos Aires were the Mothers of the Disappeared—a group of mothers who believe their children fell prey to the urban terrorist acts of the Argentinean government—were protesting.

Why no looting or mass destruction through the streets? Why didn't our electricity go out or our water stop running, like all those who stock piled on water, blankets, food and candles had expected?

I went around most of January 1, 2000 puzzled. Did shit really happen, and media and government officials simply hid it from people to avoid mass hysteria? Could it be true that with all the flailing militant terrorist groups in the world, no one took the opportunity to even throw a pipe bomb in the window of a government official's car. On this, one of the most highly anticipated days for acts of terrorism society has ever seen (or so I thought), nothing seemed to happen. Society was supposed to be at its most fragile state, I mean what were we going to do? Either all the money government and individuals put into securing that the change over into the new millennium would be consequence free or things would totally screw up.

Officials said everything would be fine but who really knew for sure?

Maybe all the money we put into ensuring that things would work in big bad 2000 was just a ploy

by big business to scare people into believing something false for the sake of making a dollar — God knows that hasn't happened before.

Maybe it was because our government took care of its people and did everything in their power to ensure that the lives of its citizens would continue unscathed by that which was Y2K. Or, maybe it

witness to the atrocities that we have fallen victim to in the past? Who knows, maybe all the drinking and other substances that I'm sure people were dipping into, as well as the sentimentality and meaning of the night had their affects on people. Maybe, people around the world were worried about the direction the world is going in and decided to celebrate without destruction. I certainly hope so.

It was odd, though, I felt kind of disappointed that nothing actually happened. It made myself (and I'm sure others) question the convictions of all those who stand up on soap boxes to spew their thoughts, or all the raging terrorists who say they loathe Americans. I wondered why didn't they do anything? Did all the money industrialized and threatened countries spend on security scare terrorists away or were the chances of getting caught too high? Maybe, the potential threat of terrorism was used as a ploy by organized terror to waste millions of government dollars.

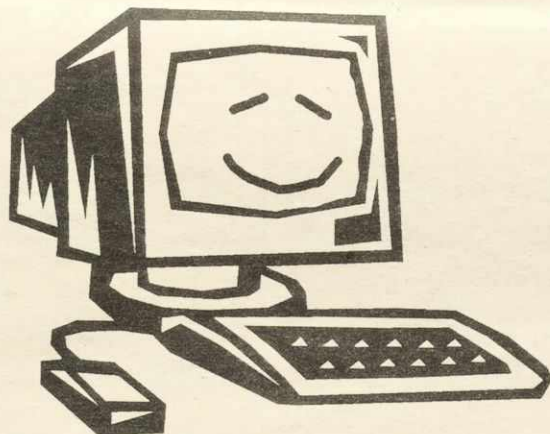
Ploy or not, people were totally expecting terrorist action. Maybe that was just it. There is not as much glory in doing something that people are expecting you to do or something that everyone else is doing. So maybe they are going to wait a couple of weeks until the hype has died down and everyone is back into their routines. Maybe that's when the terrorists will make their move. Get your anti terrorism kits at the Gazette office, room 312 of the SUB.

Brianne Johnston

EDITORIAL

was because nothing was really going to happen anyway, or at least not to the extent that government agencies had us believing. The possibility that the wool has been hauled even further in front of our eyes is a good one. One thing is for certain. The money and resources spent on the so called Y2K bug could have fed countless starving children, it could have built low income housing for thousands of homeless or be put back into education and health, forever slammed in the name of financial prudence. Maybe that is the real lesson here, when we want to, we can raise funds to solve potential global crises. All we need now is to tackle some of the real ones.

Did the night signify people actually forgetting about their differences and enjoy what was happening around them, as it seemed? Was all the celebrating we saw around the world indicative of society's desire to start anew and ensure that this century's people do not bear



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Student Union Building, Dalhousie University, 6136 University Ave, rm 312, Halifax, NS, B3H 4J2.
editorial tel. 902 494-2507, facsimile 902 494-8890, e-mail: GAZETTE@is2.dal.ca

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OPINIONS

Betrayal of privacy

CALGARY (CUP) — Last spring an appalling breach of patient confidentiality took place in Alberta.

A nurse from the Foothills Hospital in Calgary sent an anonymous letter, followed by a fax of confidential hospital records, to *Alberta Report*, a magazine with a pro-life stance. The nurse alleged she and her colleagues were being forced to participate in induced-labour abortions for malformed babies, who were born alive but subsequently left to die.

The confidential documents made their way into the hands of several of the province's Reform MPs.

Alberta's laws state that abortions can be performed upon request, in either a clinic or a hospital at up to 20 weeks gestation. From 20 to 24 weeks, abortions are only allowed if the fetus is abnormal and abortions must be through induction in a hospital. After 24 weeks of gestation, terminations can only be carried out if doctors are sure that the fetus will not survive for more than 30 days after being born. It is this last form of abortion that the anonymous nurse was talking about.

The Alberta Regional Health Authority went to court and got an injunction to prevent the magazine from printing any information contained in the documents without its permission. But it was a little like locking the barn door after the horse had escaped.

Just before the injunction came down, the *Alberta Report* ran the story under the title, "Down the slope to infanticide." I wonder how the women who had undergone those abortions felt after being portrayed in public as selfish baby killers?

It is bad enough to discover that the child you are expecting will be born so severely malformed that it will not live past 30 days.

It is bad enough to have to go through the pain of childbirth knowing that at the end of it all you are giving birth to someone who will either be dead or will die shortly after birth.

But the *Alberta Report* had to make sure these women had to go through the indignity of having their private medical information dis-

played before the world.

Who cares whether or not the law is broken, or that people already in pain are further victimized, just as long as the magazine's objectives are maintained?

A police investigation subsequently cleared the hospital of wrongdoing and found that proper palliative care had been provided. That at least must have been a small comfort to those women and their families.

But no one can erase the fact that they suffered a gross violation of their privacy.

And the suffering continues.

How can any of these women be sure their names weren't on the leaked documents? That's a pretty scary proposition when you consider that two Canadian doctors who perform abortions have already been shot and wounded in recent years.

I wonder how comfortable the women feel with the prospect that anti-abortionist groups may know exactly who they are?

The worst part in all this is that no one was held accountable for their actions. *Alberta Report* wasn't forced to reveal the name of the anonymous nurse, even though she clearly broke the law. The magazine wasn't fined. In fact, it didn't even have to give the documents back.

They're still out there somewhere.

To add insult to injury, some experts painted this situation as revealing the dynamic between the need for whistle-blowers to be able to reveal wrongdoing and a patient's right to privacy. Yet an independent police investigation found that there was no wrongdoing.

So now we're down to a patient's right to privacy, which in this case was apparently nil.

It is illegal in Alberta to release confidential medical information. What is the point of having privacy laws if they aren't enforced?

The government should have aggressively pursued this case, but it didn't.

Abortion rights are a touchy political issue in Alberta. Unfortunately, the right to privacy is not.

Elizabeth Phelps

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