

# The trial of Anatoly Shcharansky

By Greg Saville

Blatant. That's the perfect word to describe the message in the once only production of *The Trial of Anatoly Shcharansky* at Con-

vocation Hall last Thursday.

The mood was set from the start with a black-and-white etching of Lenin on a bright red Soviet flag overhanging a courtroom.

The theme was consistent, blatantly consistent, throughout; to Anatoly Shcharansky, many of his fellow countrymen and to much of the world - the Soviet judicial

system is a joke. But to Shcharansky, now serving thirteen years in a Soviet prison, this joke is no laughing matter and, (very fittingly) there was little humour in this multi-ethnic endeavour.

Aside from occasional quips and comments emphasizing the hypocracies in Shcharansky's trial most of the play was deadly serious. Evelyn Schusheim's imaginative production was based on actual Soviet transcripts from the trial four months ago.

One of the few disappointments was knowing from the start there was one main theme that would unfortunately, never varied from the start to finish.

After a brief and sombre musical introduction on the pipe organ, by Michael Freeman, three Soviet judges, played by James Aldridge, Barry Weinrib and Nan Herst, walked on stage and addressed the audience in praise of Soviet justice and freedom. It was immediately evident that Shcharansky had no chance for a verdict other than guilty. In fact, this was expounded so blatantly that the audience could see the play's obvious conclusion far in advance.

But much praise must go to director Cynthia Grant who

utilized an original use of theatrical freeze-action and dramatic pause which made the play a fascinating spectacle, even to someone unfamiliar with the Shcharansky tragedy. The fact that Shcharansky's trial was a tragedy was quite evident.

The acting, for the most, was superlative - especially Anatoly Shcharansky, played by Allan Merovitz, who gave his role a sensational touch of reality.

The play's culmination saw the cast singing "Hatikvah", the Jewish national anthem, in the same manner it was sung outside the courtroom at Shcharansky's trial in Russia after the guilty verdict was handed down.

A special appearance was made by Professor Irwin Cotler after the play's finale. Cotler filed the first legal appeal for Shcharansky at a news conference in Ottawa three months ago and it was this appeal that inspired him to approach the Canadian bureau of the North American Jewish Students' Network who sponsored the play. Cotler turned to the audience at the end of his speech, much in the same fashion as Merovitz did a few moments earlier during the play, and called out the traditional, "Next year in Jerusalem."

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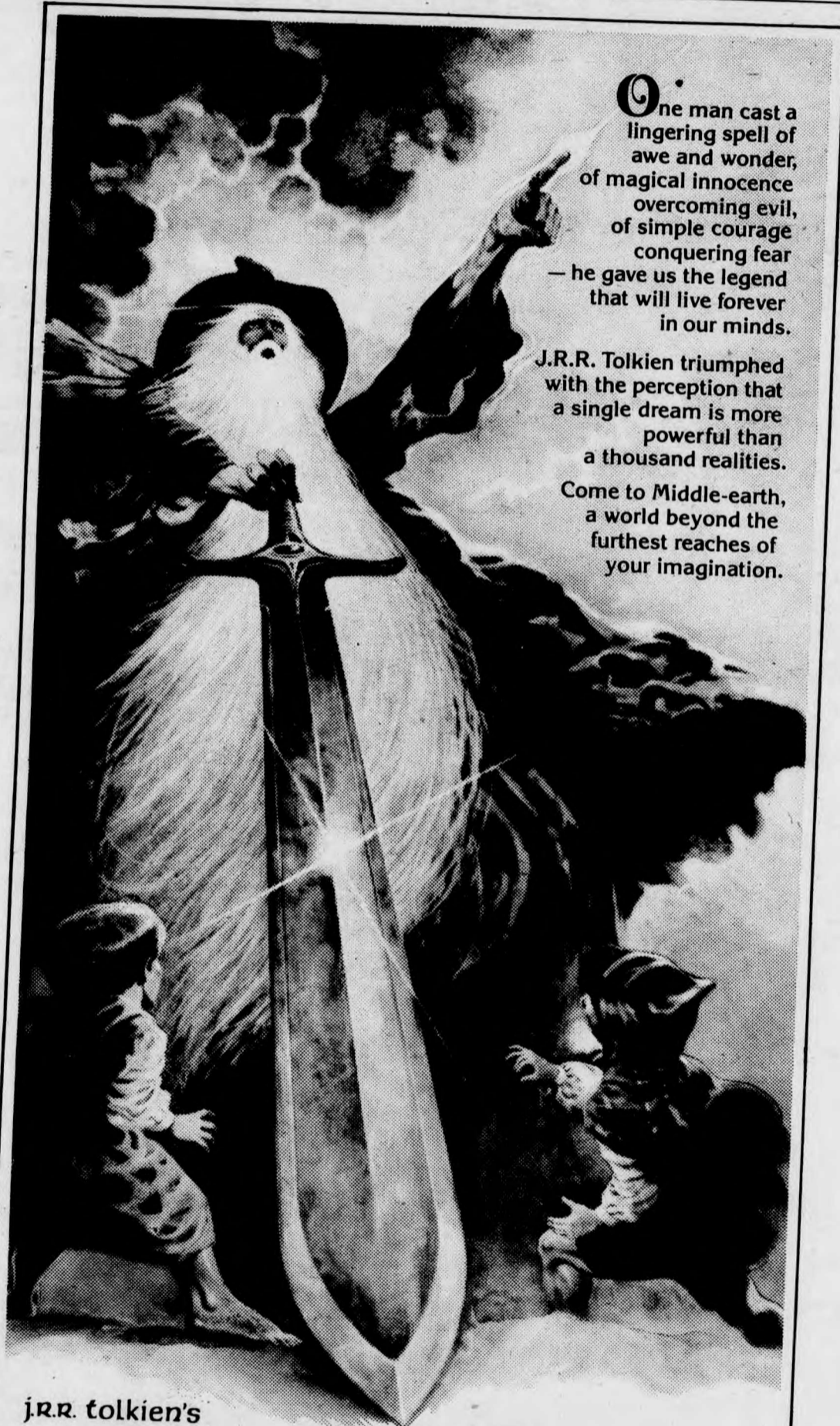
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## York prof in zoo

By Ed Skibinski

Imagine yourself in a deep dark jungle, vines hanging all around you and the heat and humidity keeping you awake well into the night. Then as darkness falls the sounds of the jungle increase, grunts and cries, roars and whistles...

Now picture yourself in the Toronto Zoo. You see the animals but they never make any noises in captivity, right? Wrong!

Professor Licht, a biology teacher at York, has gone out and recorded the sounds of the Indo-Malaysian and African Pavilions of the Metro Zoo and the results are, well, natural!

Licht's main reason for making the recording is that when we visit the zoo we concentrate only on seeing the animals, and that noise from the human visitors prevents us from hearing them communicate. So he recorded the animal sounds as a sort of souvenir

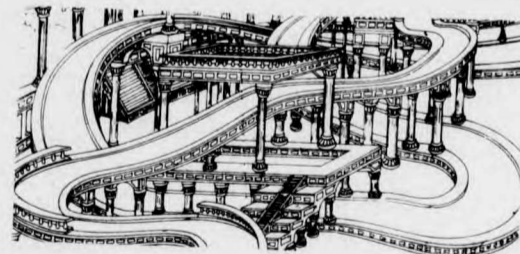
of what we miss during our trips to the zoo.

Licht recorded the sound over a period of a few weeks in the spring, early each morning before the zoo was open to the general public. Despite some small technical problems such as animals misbehaving, he was finally satisfied with the result.

Listening to the record one can see where that impression came from. The record is only twelve minutes long but it is long enough to give you a sense of what goes on at the zoo. The gorillas are the best of all, sounding more like obscene phone callers than primates at play. The other animal sounds are evocative of Tarzan movies, both peaceful and strangely exotic at the same time.

The record is on sale at the York bookstore and at the Zoo for about \$3.50. It's worth looking into as a different gift for children, being both educational and amusing.

## Off York



Cinema

Billed as "a terrifying love story", *Magic* is the not-so-terrifying tale of Corky, a ventriloquist, and Fats, his dummy and alter ego. Without Fats, Corky (Anthony Hopkins) is a shy but clever magician who finds his every performance a humiliating experience. However, with Fats, Corky is a confident, experienced stage performer. Hopkins is believable in all his roles: the insecure man without his dummy, the charming man with a dummy as crutch, and, finally, the puppet of his dummy. Ann-Margaret plays Corky's old flame adequately, although the role does not demand more than a portrayal of a sweet, childlike personality.

Kim Llewellyn

The Lansdowne Artists Collective film series continues tonight with an Open Screening. According to Patrick Jenkins, series coordinator, the programme is "going very well." All films are invited to tonight's screening which hopes to discover Toronto's unknown talent. Both Super 8 and 16mm projectors as well as cassette and reel-to-reel recorders will be available and admission will be waived for those bringing films. (58 Wade Avenue near Lansdowne subway station, 8 p.m.)

Theatre

*Mackerel*: Israel Horowitz's new play should have been called *Carp*. What begins promisingly as a lightweight almpoon of the American family degenerates into a nagging attack on the failures of the entire society. Horowitz seems to have spent too much time watching the six o'clock news and too little developing the potential of his far-fetched plot or creating distinguishable comic voices for his characters.

Hugh Westrup.