

Student Christian Movement

Group develops Christian faith into life-style

BY JAMES McCALL

The Student Christian Movement, after virtually expiring from lack of student interest during the late 1960s, is attempting to become again the force for social change it once was.

When the SCM began in 1921, it was the first student-run organization on a Canadian university campus. Since then, it has tried to bring together a theological and political point of view dealing with social issues.

Judy Shand, the current SCM organizer at York University, said "from our point of view a Christian's life style must reflect his faith. SCM helps people to develop that political style."

Shand is a United Church-commissioned minister; she is trained in religious education and pastoral counselling but is not ordained, and therefore is not permitted to perform the sacraments of the church.

The SCM is not exclusively for Christians, according to a statement made in 1971 by the then national secretary of SCM, V.I. Goring.

"The Movement has always interpreted the 'C' in its name to mean only that the orientation of the SCM is Christian. Individual members have been Christian, agnostic with an interest in Christianity and even in many cases deliberately non-Christian".

This broad appeal to all people interested in social change, however,

has been to some extent the SCM's own undoing. Shand explained, "the SCM traditionally has been the group that raises issues on Canadian university campuses. The radical political people took over the issues in the late 1960s, and the SCM just about died. There was a real threat that we would be taken over by the radical political groups."

"The SCM has been affiliated with such groups as the NPD and the Waffle. Now we're trying to remain unaffiliated".

The SCM, at York since 1965, is supported by the Anglican, United, and Presbyterian Churches. But Shand pointed out, "we don't exist to convert people. Evangelism in a good sense means education; in a limited sense it is hard sell conversion which I'm personally against. "We take our mandate from the life of Christ to support the oppressed and powerless, and to bring about a realization of their own human rights. In many instances that isn't any different from what other groups do."

"We attempt to develop a community where people can express a faith stance. The SCM doesn't lay heavy trips like if you don't believe this, you're a sinner. No one is obliged to believe anything. We try to bring an open spirit of discussion".

Shand indicated a personal dislike of the movement toward fundamentalist religious groups recently popular among young people, "who get their highs on Jesus on Sunday morning".



Carlo Squassero photo

Judy Shand, organizer of the SCM.

The appeal of these groups, according to Shand is that they provide an authoritarian approach which sets definite limits and gives pat answers, but does not seek self-criticism.

The SCM is attempting to bring a Christian point of view that is intellectually and academically sound and that stands up to criticism, says Shand. "Christ's life is a model from which to draw, not an easy blueprint."

"Christ's concern for people is exciting and appealing to me. There will be points in time, when the law of love has to transcend the laws of the land."

"I would be prepared to be militant and radical as long as the consequences are fairly clear, and

questions are raised, such as who are we serving, who do we have to challenge, and who is going to get stepped on."

Since Shand started to work at

York on August 1, only a handful of students have expressed an interest in the SCM. Shand commented, "we're not in the numbers game, and we're not attempting to be exclusive or competitive with other groups".

The SCM, according to Shand, would be willing to cooperate with other campus groups, both religious and political, particularly concerning issues such as the recent Indian demonstrations in Ottawa for native rights.

Regarding the proposed chapel at York, Shand said, "The SCM initially opposed (the building of) the chapel. We hope the space will be used for a variety of purposes. We come from a tradition that has too many empty buildings that are only used on Sunday mornings."

Students interested in the SCM may contact Judy Shand in room N105 of the Ross building. Do not come looking for easy solutions to problems, however. Says Shand, "I'm not prepared to lay answers on anybody."

Commerce Student Services. They're tops!



At the Commerce, we offer a complete range of student services, to help you with your banking needs. Services that you'll need now, and after graduation.

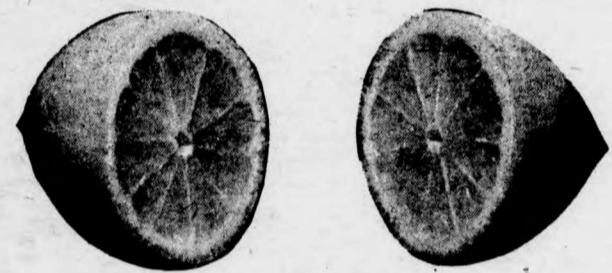
Like savings accounts, to help your money grow. A variety of loan programs, including Bankplan and student loans. Chargex, and more.

Get to know the people at the Commerce on or near your campus. Drop in and ask about opening a savings account with us.

We think you'll find our people are tops, too.



CANADIAN IMPERIAL BANK OF COMMERCE



**NOT ALL STEREO IS HI-FI
SOME PEOPLE FIND OUT THE HARD WAY!
FOR ALL YOUR STEREO NEEDS CONSULT
TORONTO'S ORIGINAL AUDIO SPECIALISTS**



514 - 516 Yonge St. 924-8852
Yorkdale Shopping Centre 781-0011
Fairview Mall 491-2125
Scarborough Town Centre 438-5528

All Shopping Centres open daily until 9:30 p.m.

**WE SELL MORE PIONEER THAN ANY OTHER DEALER IN CANADA
WE WILL NOT BE UNDERSOLD**

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE JEWISH TO EAT AT "THE DELI"

(formerly The Buttery)

WHEN: 11 AM - 1:45 PM
4 PM - 10 PM

WHERE: Winters College

WHAT: Corned Beef, Knishes, Hot Dogs, Meatloaf, Hamburgers...