

Ho ho humbug — Guru goes Grinch

Oh Christmas tree... Oh Christmas tree... how offensive you can be.

Anyone who has been in the Student Union Building this past week would surely have had to notice the beautiful tree tastefully placed in the middle of the lobby.

It is a gorgeous tree that stands tall and proud. Like an ancient sentinel it stands watch over the young minds of Dalhousie students who pass by it each day.

It is lavishly decorated with the finest tinsel money can buy, and shiny, eye catching Christmas balls have been strategically placed to give the tree just the right look.

This is a tree we can all be proud of. A real Dalhousie tree (Rah, Rah, Rah!)

So, to all of you out there have a Merry Chri... Whoo. Stop! Take a few deep breaths, and do something that seems to be getting less and less popular — THINK!

Why do we have a Christmas tree in our

lobby? Why is it that at this time of year everyone gets so rapped up in Christmas they forget. The government forgets, the University forgets, even progressive, culturally aware people forget. They all forget that Christmas is a Christian holiday.

It may come as a shocking surprise to some people that there are those in the city of Halifax, and on the Dalhousie campus who do not celebrate Christmas.

Having a Christmas tree in the SUB to celebrate one of the most important Christian holidays is fine, but do you expect to see the symbols of other religions in the lobby, on or around their major holidays...probably not.

Nor does anyone expect the Student Union to pay for such displays for other religious and cultural groups.

Once again Dalhousie has managed to function without thinking. If Dalhousie is

going to be a centre for higher learning, a place of excellence, and an example of what universities should be we all better wake up and realize the world is not all Christian.

Here at Dalhousie we have a vast array of cultural and religious groups. They are active in the community and play an important role in creating an interesting and diverse campus life.

Let's stop creating an atmosphere that is cultural discriminatory and include everyone on campus. If we are to have Christmas trees at Christmas, let's make sure we also provide space and money for groups who wish to acknowledge their important holidays.

P.S. Having a real tree is also environmentally unfriendly (see last weeks Environmental issue of the Gazette), and besides everyone knows Christmas is a capitalist plot.

Alex Burton



Petroleum wars mean Canadian cutbacks

by Paul Webster

Over the past week yet another reason has emerged for us to re-think the Canadian military commitment in the Gulf. It has become clear that we cannot afford the \$350. million price tag put on the initiative by the Treasury Board.

If the peacetime price of the initiative is so far beyond our means that it requires across-the-

board departmental cutbacks like those imposed last week, what will be done if hostilities break out in earnest?

The obvious answer to this seems to be more cutbacks. Canadians will very likely see health-care, educational, social welfare and cultural programs radically pilfered should a war break out. This may not have been clear as our bonny ships set sail last Sep-

tember, ensconced in the kind of gung-ho patriotic sendoff only possible among people who have forgotten the realities of war. But we must now accept that fighting this war will irreparably damage the fabric of Canadian life.

Of course, it may be possible that the Government is fully aware that sacrifices will have to be made to support the Americans (who are already borrowing \$32. million per

day to pay for their forces in the Gulf) in this latest adventure. The present government has, after all, done everything it constitutionally can to cut back Canadian social programs. The war is perhaps merely the next best device at hand after Meech Lake exploded in Mulroney's face.

In many ways its sad to have to appeal to the pecuniary sensibili-

ties of Canadians on the precipitous edge of war. Similarly, it seems silly to have to argue against the ethics of sending forces to prop up a system of petroleum exploitation which is undeniably linked to our planet's ecological destruction. It should simply be enough to remember the lunacy of war in any era but especially in the nuclear era to raise the cry against war in the Gulf.

LETTERS

APOLOGY

In reference to the editorial of Nov. 22 and the above letter, I wish to personally apologize. It was never my intention to criticize the artist or art work that appeared on the cover of the Gazette Nov. 15. I must also clarify that my interpretation of the work was mine alone, and not that of the artist. In writing an editorial on sensitivity, I myself acted insensitively. My apologies to Rochelle Owen.

Alex Burton

Iraq crisis

To the editor:

The moral repugnance of Alex Burton's "Canada shouldn't follow U.S." in the Gazette (Nov. 1) cannot go unchallenged. The article puts forth arguments which are misleading, offensive and unschooled.

Yes think about war. Canadian warships, F-18s and soldiers have been dispatched to defend international peace and security in the Middle East, and if that means war, then that is the price to be paid. Canadian servicemen and women have fought in the past and when the ships sailed on 24 August 1990 the Canadian government committed the Canadian Forces to the possibility of hostilities.

Burton is wrong when he claims that Canada's presence is a move away from Canada's usual peaceful foreign policy. A quick read of the UN Charter clearly shows that

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This is our LAST issue for this semester. YES we too have exams. Start next semester off right, WRITE to the Gazette. All copy must be double-spaced typed. Letters no more than 300 words, opinion 500 words.

Someone to watch over me

To the editor:

In reference to the article which appeared in last week's Gazette

(Nov. 22) Reverend section. We would like to take this opportunity to apologize for the actions of the Smith Resident who wrote the article. I would also like to emphasize that his words represent the view he only "enjoys", not the view of all residents of the house; especially those of the Smith House Council. I hope you can forgive us for not watching over all our residents but we assume that they have a certain level of maturity and intelligence.

We would also like to mention that the average person should not be able to place articles in the Gazette which express the views of a society when he has no basis to do so.

Vivek Sood
on behalf of the
Smith Council

Chauvinism has no place

To the Editor:

During the week of reflection I was encouraged by the liberal attitudes expressed in your paper. I took this to mean that the outmoded male chauvinist pig had no place on campus. However, I was disgusted recently when I walked past the demeaning quote posted on the wall of my dorm floor; "I would rather fuck a dead chick than a fat chick."

How disappointed I was when this incident brought to my attention that degrading, anti-feminist sentiments are still prevalent on the Dalhousie campus.

I am incensed by the sexism reflected by this and other incidents in my CO-ED house, and personally would like to see the author of the quote, and the pre-pubescent miscreant who thought it deserving of public display ROT IN HELL!!

Name withheld upon request

Apology in order

To the editor:

I am writing in regard to Alex Burton's article that appeared in the Nov. 22 edition of the Gazette, entitled, "Insensitivity Leads to Subtle Racism". My name is Rochelle Owen and I am the photographer who composed the front cover piece for the Women's Week of Reflection tribute.

In his article Mr. Burton humbly apologized for my work without ever consulting me concerning my artistic intention or what the photo represents. It does not represent nor was it ever my purpose for this piece to represent "every woman" as the article says. The composition, like all artistic compositions in any medium, was a personal statement and reflection upon the tragic incident. It was my desire to present the feeling of victimization and the transition of this phase for individual women.

I had composed another photograph showing fourteen women from various ethnic backgrounds that was intended to represent a

broad view of women. The Gazette chose not to use this piece, however - instead they asked me permission for the photo in question.

As the photographer I am highly offended and upset that the Gazette had the temerity to apply their interpretation - not mine - and then throw the interpretation back in my face by apologizing for the piece on my behalf. In doing this, the Gazette has audaciously presumed to speak for me about my work without even consulting me.

I do not apologize for this photograph. There is nothing to apologize for. This photo was a sad reflective comment on a series of events. It does not represent all women, nor was it ever my intention that it was supposed to represent all women for the reasons I stated earlier. The model in the picture was a friend who just happened to be caucasian.

Before calling himself a journalist proper, Mr. Burton should learn the benefits of doing advanced research, rather than practicing biased clairvoyancy which he tries to pass off for objectivity. If this photo was so completely objectionable to him, for whatever reason, he could have used his editorial authority and rejected it as has been past practice.

I would caution him that in the future if he does not understand something, he should bloody well ask. I think it only fitting that Mr. Burton and the Gazette publicly apologize for their mistake and print a full and complete retraction.

Rochelle Owen