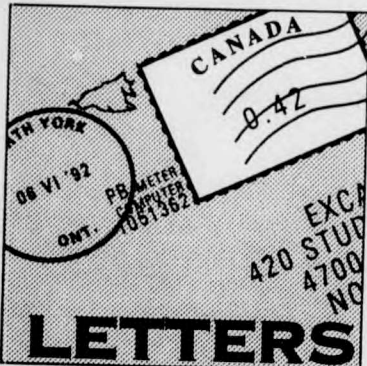


Dated rhetoric on Israel flat

Ira Nayman arrogates to himself the role of dissident in his piece ('Silent weeping bad for Israel's soul'). Yet, his rhetoric is not only dated (all the pundits were weeping for Israel's soul during the beginning of the Intifada, and besides, the Shamir government is out), it is also pretentious. Although the psy-



chology of Diaspora Jews has raised sensitivity to self-criticism, there has been no shortage of Jews willing to criticize Israel publicly — think of *Tikkun* magazine, or organizations like Jewish Women Against the Occupation. If Mr. Nayman has not had the fortitude to do what was within his power, he has only himself to blame, and not the Jewish community.

Mr. Nayman's gratuitous swipes at the Jewish Student Federation also fall flat. The JSF recognizes that there is a plethora of opinions on most subjects within the Jewish community; indeed, this represents a challenge to JSF programming, not an embarrassment. Mr. Nayman accuses the JSF of being 'pro-Israeli'. What did he have in mind — pro-Iraqi? And 'pro-militarist'? It's most certain that the efforts of Tsahai (the Israeli Defense Forces) have accomplished far more for Israel than have Mr. Nayman's crocodile tears.

Menahem Neuer,
JSF Program Director

Research both sides of Israel

After reading the Oct. 28 article written by Ira Nayman, on the attitude of Israelis dealing with the Intifada, I have to admit that I was moved, if not to say



Spike speaks to *excalibur*. Catch his words in our next issue.

Mr. Nayman began his commentary with his eyewitness detail of a Palestinian boy having his hand crushed with a rock, which in Mr. Nayman's eyes is one of the many "insensitive" acts performed on the Palestinians by Israelis.

This is a terrible act, and no one can condone it, but does Mr. Nayman know what the situation at the time was? Perhaps this young boy has just thrown a rock at someone's head, or perhaps even killed someone? We all know that pictures are deceiving, and this one was probably no exception, as a good journalist should recognize. The soldiers could have been caught brutally beating the child for no reason, or maybe the soldiers were trying to pry the rock loose from his hand, no one will ever know.

No one in the Western world can ever condone senseless beatings, but we must research the reasons behind every action. The Intifada is a symptom of a larger geopolitical problem, Israel's quest for security, and this must be taken into account along with the human rights concern. One thing we all know — to judge before we know all the facts is a far worse crime than beating someone.

Perhaps, we should all find out what the reasons behind these "inhumanities" are. I am, by no means, saying that Israelis are right in just going out and torturing Arabs, and granted, it does happen, but it happens both ways. Both parties are guilty of the same crimes.

Mr. Nayman may be correct in saying that "being on constant war alert ... have dulled the humanitarian instinct of the Israeli people," but he is incorrect in leaving out the fact that this is a two-way war.

I personally believe that loosing so many lives has made the rational thinking Israelis, as well as the rational thinking Arabs, want to end the war. I don't know on what ground you base your opinions, but, while working on an army base in Israel, I had an opportunity to speak to many soldiers about this very topic. These 18 year old boys would like nothing more than not having to attend funerals for their fellow soldiers every two weeks. Obviously, there are those who believe that war and inhumanity is the only way to run a country, but most would rather see the atrocities come to an end.

Mr. Nayman's comment regarding the Jewish Student Federation as a representative of the Jewish Community is very far fetched. The JSF is a representative for those who want to be represented. Mr. Nayman is not a member, and that makes him not represented. No one in the JSF attempts brainwashing and manipulation. I am a first year student, and I have my opinions like everyone else, but no one in the JSF ever tries to change them. If Mr. Nay-

• photo by Wayne Todd

man was truly against self-promoting anti-semitism (a Jew making anti-Jewish remark), then in future articles he would research both sides of the story, not only the one he would like to believe.

I agree that we, as humans, cannot just ignore the brutality of either side of the war, however, we, living in North America, have absolutely no right to publicly judge it.

I understand your desire, Mr. Nayman, for a say in Israeli matters. If that is the case, move to Israel. Go there and experience what both sides do, and then decide whether the force they use is "brutal". "People who really love Israel" should realize that this is not

only an Israeli war, but an Arab-Israeli war. Go to Israel and learn what it's like on both sides of the fence. Then, come back and write what you think. We, as Jews in the Western world, do not have to "excuse it" [the brutal behavior], but rather we must dig deeper into the reasons behind the actions.

David Holland,
1st year student

Clubs' joint work a big success

Last Wednesday (Oct. 28), York University was fortunate to be the venue for a very special event. About 140 people attended the screening of the film "Deadly Currents," that was co-sponsored by the YFS, the Jewish Students Federation, and the York Arab Students Association. Given the tensions that have existed between the JSF and YASA in the past (for example, during the Gulf war), it was good to see these two clubs work together for the

continued on page 7

We will publish letters up to 250 words. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name and phone number. Material deemed libelous or discriminatory by the staff of *Excalibur* will be rejected. The opinions expressed are those of the letter-writers and do not represent those of the *Excalibur* staff, Editorial Board, or Board of Publications.

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