

(sic) has consistently been ignored or minimized while disruption of the Levy lecture is condemned as an infringement on freedom of speech.

Headings supplied by the Gateway, such as that prefacing Jessica Levental's letter (Dec. 8/82) - "Loudmouths vs. free speech" - seem to further this bias, as does the *Edmonton Journal* photograph of a cat crushing an insect beneath its paw in association with letters concerning Levy's speech and captioned "Strong-arm tactics preclude open discussion" (Dec. 22/82, p. A7). Such editorial additions do not contribute to objective readings of the associated points of view; rather, they predispose the reader to a particular interpretation. Similarly, letters such as Levental's invite us to believe that "wall-pounders, floor-stompers, and rabble-rousers" disrupted not only Levy's speech but actually posed a threat to Christmas as well (note the carolers down the hall, the Peace on Earth sentiment she wishes us to believe the protesters have ignored while Levy and the Israeli military are, by implication, presented as champions of such a sentiment).

Such biases, omissions, and implications all contribute to an image of supporters of the Palestinian cause as uncivilized fanatics. While disrupting Levy's speech was not the best means of getting their point across, one can understand the frustration of those who feel they are denied fair expression of their own views.

A final note concerns the fact that many of the letters written about the issue single out Oscar Ammar as the instigator of these attacks on "freedom". By using Ammar as a scapegoat, the issue is personalized and the wide support for the Palestinian cause is converted into one man's "anti-Semitism" (sic) rather than the expression of the views of many students.

John Sorenson, Grad Studies

Oscar's freedom attacked

The Hillel decision to take legal action against Oscar Ammar for his alleged disruption of their recent political forum may be the most significant event of the year in terms of university politics. As was pointed out in the Lauerma's letter in Tuesday's Gateway, the move is an obvious attempt to discredit Hillel's most vocal and visible political foe on campus. Come on, folks! This is power politics - university style. Let's not whitewash it with elegant rhetoric about "freedom of speech"!

Freedom of expression is not a zero-sum game! You don't gain the right by denying or suppressing that of another; and this is what is happening here.

Freedom of speech? Ask Oscar Ammar about that; don't tell him! I have known Mr. Ammar, a fellow political science student, on a casual basis for more than a year. Although I often disagree with his political views, I have found him to be a fair and rational person. As an executive member of the Political Science Undergraduate Association, Mr. Ammar has often chaired political forums. He has consistently acted competently and fairly in this regard. At a recent forum, an Arab sympathizer attempted to interrupt questioning of the PLO guest by a Jewish professor. Mr. Ammar acted firmly to silence the interruption - risking his own reputation within the Arab student community. His action speaks for itself.

It is possible that Mr. Ammar overreacted at the Hillel forum. An apology for his breach of decorum may indeed be appropriate. The Hillel action, however, goes too far. Severe disciplinary action by the University and/or legal proceedings in the courts are uncalled for. Mr. Ammar's emotional outburst is understandable in the aftermath of one

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impoverished state. If ad revenues drop drastically next year, however, it could just as well mean jettisoning the welchers for being a dangerous drain on resources and imperiling our all-important social crusade.

This is especially probable if the welchers happened to be someone ideologically doubtful (like the Gateway) rather than the present deadbeats, who tend more towards a "share-the-wealth" philosophy.

But as well as being inserted into other topics, the "Statement of Principles" was given time of its own since the *McGill Daily* saw fit to draw up a revised one for CUP's approval. The redrafted "Statement" was identical to the old one except for minor stylistic points like wording, and its proponents were forced to praise it with lines like, "It's more focussed than the old one."

Eventually the *McGill Daily* proposal was tabled till next year because it had been submitted very late and there had been no time for discussing it among the staff of individual papers ("Democratic discussion of such an important document is an absolute necessity," to quote just about everybody).

The problem is that to be acceptable to everyone the "Statement of Principles" must necessarily be a motherhood declaration. It is almost that now, despite a few references to the capitalist system and class analysis. Even these mild slaps against the empire make the more conservative CUPpies squirm, and the squirming in turn (along with the Statement's namby-pamby leftism) irritates the more resolute leftists. No maneuvering is possible.

Nevertheless, next year the CUP National Conference will probably consider another 20 or so proposed modifications to the "Statement of Principles." It will take three-quarters of the Conference's time to hammer them all into one acceptable document, which will be virtually identical to the old one: a motherhood statement with a few touches of leftism. Such is progress.

Like boycotting and many other activities and declarations, CUP's "Statement of Principles" is mostly ineffectual posturing. It gives the goody-two-shoes the comforting feeling of actually doing something while the rest of the world simply ignores them.

Other "accomplishments" of the CUP 45 Conference which will likewise fail to make the world blink are a resolution condemning Israel for violating the academic freedom of Bir Zeit University, a resolution supporting gay and lesbian rights, and the establishment of regional Women's Rights Co-ordinators within CUP. The latter, however, will further alienate newspaper men from feminism, I predict.

At present even the most accomodating (pussywhipped?) men often leave women's seminars at CUP conferences muttering, "What do those women want from us?" (while the women bitterly complain that the men merely pay lip service to feminism). A licensed busybody like the Women's Right's Coordinator will only aggravate the situation, especially if she is as tactless, stupid and paranoid as the Western Region's last Human Rights Coordinator, who screamed blue murder at a photograph of a woman in football shoulder pads.

The sad thing is that the feminists have heaps of legitimate complaints which they discredit every time they bash *National Lampoon* or do something equally imbecile. If they continue in the same vein, as seems likely, the day will come when the fable of the little boy who yelled "wolf" will be replaced by the fable of the little girl who yelled "sexism."

PS: If the CUPpies ever want to do anything about the world's evil-doers rather than just talk, the first thing they will have to do is abandon that awful leftist jargon they spout. This jargon, I believe, and not ideology itself, is the real reason why so many students loathe CUP, and why CUP can't even knock off sitting ducks like Nestle's. Once the CUPpies learn to speak clear English, rallying support and crucifying the sinners will be child's play. But judging from comments I heard at CUP 45, most CUPpies are actually proud of their jargon. God help us all!

Study in Israel

Graduate and Undergraduate students interested in study opportunities in Israel are invited to meet Randy Spiegel, Director of Academic Affairs, Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University for information on programmes, scholarships and awards:

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CHOPPING BLOCK

by Jens Andersen

I haven't been subjected to so much hot air and idealism since... well... since I last edited the earnest drivel that appears on the letters page. The painful experience I refer to is the 45th Annual National Conference of Canadian University Press held in Ottawa over the Christmas holidays.



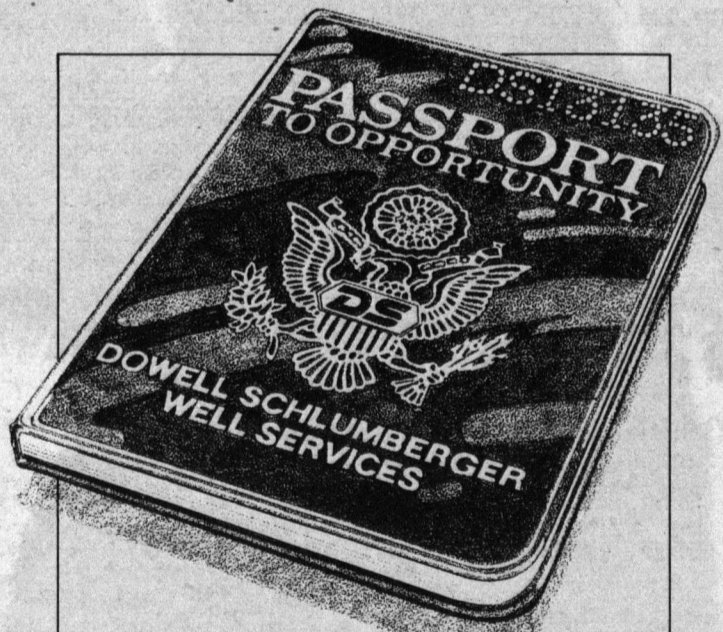
Don't get me wrong: the CUPpies I met in Ottawa were as nice a bunch of people as you will find anywhere. They are a pleasure to drink, dance and carouse with, or learn about libel and double-entry book-keeping from (as I did during the many conference seminars). But God help you when they start talking about their solemn vow, enshrined in the CUP "Statement of Principles," to act as "agents of social change," fighting against injustice, the oppressive capitalist class system, and bad guys in black hats everywhere. At that point you can count on meandering through the ozone for a few hours and accomplishing not very much.

A good example of how CUP wastes time was the lengthy debate over a National Ad Boycott Policy. The proposed Policy was eventually defeated when it was discovered that a nation-wide (or rather, CUP-wide) boycott of ads from companies with South African connections along would cost CUP 15% of its advertising revenue, in a year when revenue is desperately meagre and CUP gingerly approved its first deficit budget in living memory.

But this hasty abandonment of social activism for money came at the end of the conference, and not before discussion wandered all over the landscape, usually in high, astounding moral terms. Anyone who attempted to inject practical considerations into the debate, like the questionable effectiveness of ad boycotts (which in themselves are invisible), the greater effectiveness of publicity in combatting evil-doers, or the problems inherent in requiring CUP to get 2/3 approval of papers before boycotting (or the problem of getting the approval only once a year, or the problem of the disgruntled 1/3 who would resent having a boycott imposed on them)- anyone who brought up these legitimate questions would routinely have their social consciences and bona fides questioned, and the pro-policy types who cast the aspersions would go back to their impeccable syllogism that certain advertisers are bad, that this is reason enough to boycott them, and the hell with whether this has any desirable effects or undesirable side-effects. This name-calling and moralizing went on for agonizingly long periods of time until the providential 15% price tag was revealed and mercifully cut it short.

An even better example of time-wasting was the time given to the CUP "Statement of Principles." Some of the time was actually wasted during the discussion of other subjects, like the problem of CUP papers who chronically fail to pay their membership fees, the election of CUP National officers, whether to establish a Women's Rights Co-ordinator, how to trim the budget to keep within revenues, etc.— subjects which tended to get boring unless someone got up and made firebrand speeches about the "Statement of Principles" and our noble mandate to act as agents of social change and fight oppression, blah, blah, blah.

The beautiful thing about such stirring exhortations is that while they send thrills up and down the spine (in some persons anyway) they are vague and general to the point of being meaningless. On the issue of fee welchers, for instance, being an agent of social change presently means forgiving or deferring the fees of our comrades in arms who support our great struggle for social justice despite their



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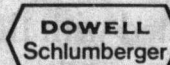
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