

FRANK
GIORNO

Let's be Frank

There is nothing more humbling than coming to grips with one's self. After keeping it a secret from myself, from friends and relatives, the truth is finally out of the bag. Oh, the sleepless nights spent agonizing over the possible side effects of my revelations.

Of course, I will be ostracized from the peer group. No more invitations to parties, no more friends, no more respect.

But I can't take it no more. It must be admitted openly. Yes, it's true, I went to see The Marajan Bayer Dance Company and enjoyed every leap, pirouette and arabesque.

SLEEK WOMEN

The correlation of motion to sound was impressive. The stage was laden with sleek, slender women 'complete with all their physical attributes' garbed in skimpy leotards moving with the grace of a butterfly. The men, also in leotards, slight but muscular, waited nonchalantly for the women to throw themselves into their arms.

Perfection is a perfectly timed lunge and an equally well-timed catch. A gust of muted laughter arose from the dance whiz-kid sitting next to me. "He almost dropped her," she said. "No dancer who considers himself good ever drops his partner," she added, obviously from experience. Being a novice, I didn't mind. In any case, the music was particularly stirring.

MUSTN'T SHAKE

"They aren't moving in unison, and their arms shouldn't be shaking like that; they must be out of shape. Some one should show them how to execute an arabesque," the dance whiz-kid continued.

What's an arabesque?

The second number was a modified square-dance routine. It stirred my rustic blood. Banjos and harmonicas do it to me every time. "The lead dancer is pretty good," my friend commented. "Of course she is," I replied, "she's wearing a different coloured dress, isn't she?"

The third number admittedly was a trifle corny. "Too repetitive," opined the kid. "God are they lousy," she said to none in particular, or so I thought.

LIGHTS FADE

The lights faded, the last strains of Emerson, Lake and Palmer's Bolero died out. "Ah, at last, the entertainment! er, I mean the intermission," I said in my usual tongue-tied manner. "Let's get some refreshments, I really enjoyed the first half."

"I've seen better," the one-time child dancer said. "This coke's too warm."

The second half of the programme was devoted entirely to a dance choreographed around The Exorcist's theme Tubular Bells. An energetic dance which featured some dynamic movement.

"The men represent evil; see how they move," the kid said. "It's pure evil."

"I think the women symbolize evil," I said, as the ladies contorted to the particularly raunchy part of the song.

FOUR GRUNTS

The lights began to dim on the white clad dancers. I promised the dance whiz-kid that I wouldn't grunt at the barely dressed dancers. "That's the fourth grunt you've uttered tonight". I couldn't help it. As the dance concluded, the male and female dancers sortied off downstage.

"That represents good and evil co-existing together. You know, unity in opposites," she said.

Oh, I see.

Lee Lorch is finally recognized after 25 years of civil rights activism

By JULIAN BELTRAME

In September of 1957, Grace Lorch rescued a 15-year old black girl from state troopers and a jeering crowd blocking her entrance to a white high school, in Little Rock, Arkansas. The act of heroism brought her national attention and cost her husband, Lee Lorch, his job as mathematics professor in the town's university.

It was not the first time Lee Lorch had been dismissed by an American university for civil rights actions, initiated by either he or his wife. He had been dismissed by New York City College, Penn State, Fisk University and Philander Smith University, and finally was blackballed out of America.

All of which makes his recent award more than just satisfying, but a vindication of his past.

The York University mathematics professor was presented with a unique award, a plaque from Howard University, in Washington, recently, for "exemplary courage and personal sacrifice in the struggle for human rights", at the opening of a new mathematics wing at Howard University, a black university in Washington, D.C.

The wing will make Howard the first black university to offer a Ph.D. programme in mathematics, and it was only fitting that Lorch, whose black students while he was at Fisk were the first black Americans ever to obtain a Ph.D. in mathematics, be invited as the main lecturer at the event.

A quarter of a century after he first began to actively fight the system, Lorch bears very few of the battle scars. "I never really missed a paycheck," he says.

After his dismissal from Penn State, Lorch took a position at Fisk, and lost his job again when he tried to have his daughter, Alice, enrolled in a black school, near their home.

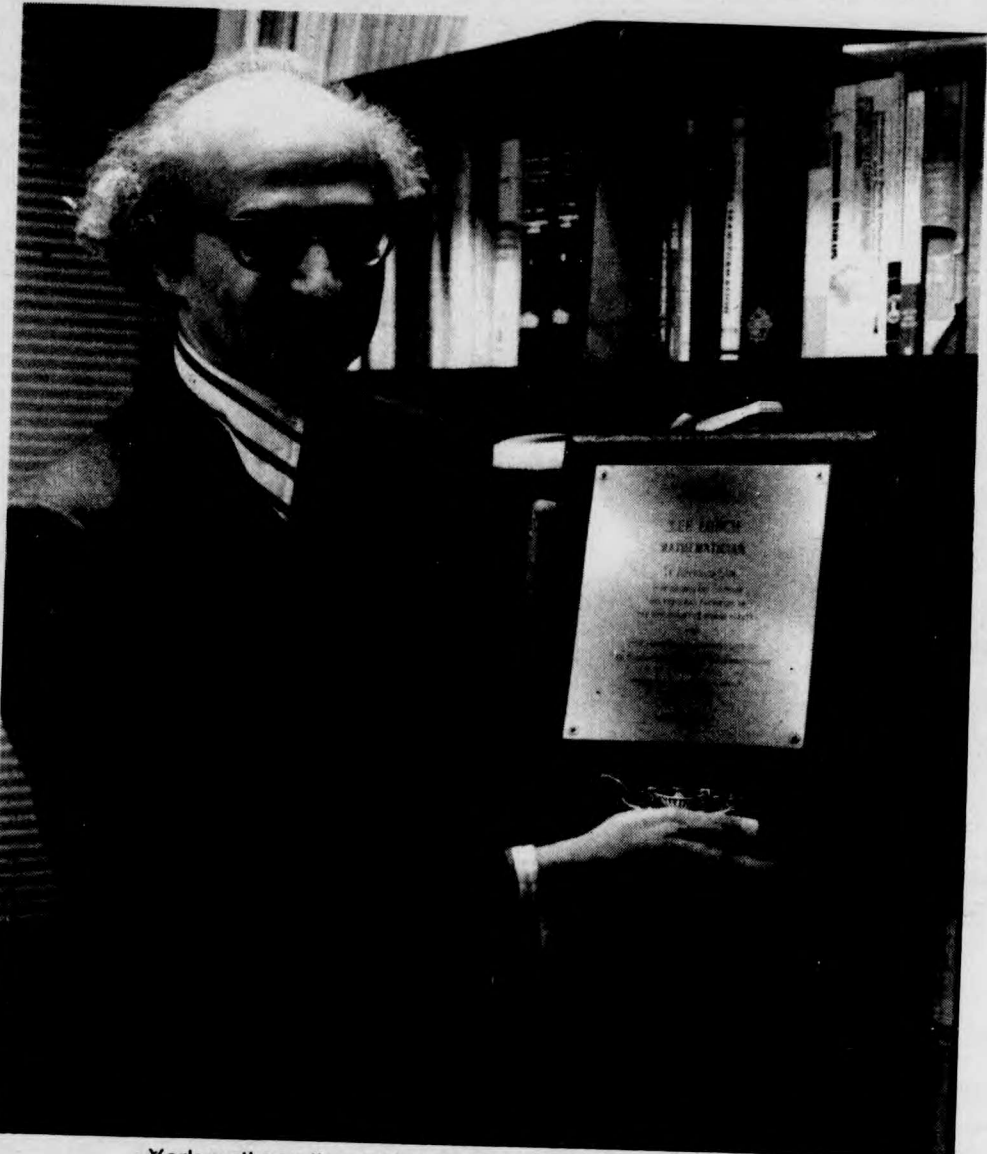
This was following "the great Supreme Court ruling that declared that segregation was unconstitutional," explained Lorch.

He was subpoenaed before the House Committee on Un-American Activities and was cited for contempt of congress for refusing to answer their questions.

"They ask you questions like, 'Are you now or have you ever been a member of the communist party?' and if you refuse to answer, you are charged with contempt."

"It was standard practice during the McCarthy era to take advantage of the hysteria against communists with the similar hysteria against civil rights groups.

"Of course they had no right to keep communists unemployed, but anyone



Peter Hsu photo

York mathematics professor Lee Lorch holding up plaque.

they wanted to get rid of, they called communists."

Lorch does not attribute racist ideas, past and present, to ignorance, but rather to a conscious manipulation of minorities by the educated and the powerful for economic gains.

"It's fashionable to blame racism on ignorance, but it was promoted by the well-to-do people on Southern papers, universities and the congress. The policy of racism came from the powerful people in society, not from the powerless.

venient tool for big business, because is kept poor people from getting together. If you have people with no rights, they could not protect themselves against economic exploitation."

An educated man, who could have lived comfortably teaching mathematics in any number of large American universities, Lorch chose instead to fight racism, irregardless of the consequences to his life and career.

"In my days as a student, the Western World was in a depression and in

Europe, fascism grew as the reply of big business to the economic crisis. There were many in my generation who wanted to change the oppression and racism that existed."

He would argue that little has changed in the interval. Although racism in his native United States is not as prevalent, he does not doubt it exists, nor, as was the case in the days of McCarthy, that racism is imposed by the powerful, not by the powerless.

"I would think so," he says when asked if this is a conscious act of the rich, "they don't give up that easily."

Having been in Canada 16 years, Lorch finds that although racism north of the 49th parallel doesn't exist quite to the level that it did in the south, it is still very much with us.

"I've been disturbed by Canada's recent immigration policies," he explains. "It looks like they (the government) are trying to blame the unemployment situation on immigrants."

The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Letters To The Editor

All letters should be addressed to the Editor, c/o Excalibur, room 111 central Square. They must be double-spaced, typed and limited to 250 words. Excalibur reserves the right to edit for length and grammar. Name and address must be included for legal purposes but the name will be withheld upon request. Deadline: Mon. 5 p.m.

Union action hinders peoples' freedoms

Regarding the letter by James Laxer, Howard Buchbinder, John Saul, Ian Lunsden and David Davies, which appeared in Excalibur last week, criticizing York University's establishment of an emergency mail service.

During times of duress (and the present mail strike is such a time), are we expected to turn over and play dead? Are we supposed to close our eyes and ears to the reality of the rest of the world? Are we required by our liberal interest to give up our freedom of speech and communication?

A MONOPOLY

The postal system is a practical monopoly. If we followed the suggestion laid down by the aforementioned political scien-

tists, we would be saying that this monopoly is good and just and that no other free enterprise on our part would be desired.

Consider the hypothetical (?) situation of a unionized medical profession and the further situation of Canada's medical doctors on strike. According to these writers, we should do nothing if, due to an accident, we were losing vast amounts of blood.

DIE PEACEFULLY

Since the doctors were on strike and our sympathies lay with the strikers, we should not apply a bandage or a tourniquet to the wound and die peacefully, knowing that we would never be called 'anti-strike' or 'strike breakers'. I, for one, am not about to do this,

and I think we ought to think twice about allowing our freedom of speech and free exchange of ideas.

Don Betowski

Postal union abuses power

Re. Mr. James Laxer's letter, in the November 13 issue of Excalibur, I would like to object to the vein in which his criticism was directed.

I would agree that postal workers and workers in general have a right to strike, but I draw the line when the postal workers affect the right of the small businessman to operate. After all, face it Mr. Laxer, it is

not big business that get's hurt the most, it is the small businessman.

The university temporary mail service was a good idea because it is time for us to stand up to the powerful politicizing unions. If unions were to stop abusing their power and if their workers were starving, or working in impoverished working conditions, then I would have more sympathy for them.

As it stands, the solutions is to legislate the workers back to work and then commit the two parties to binding arbitration.

Now Mr. Laxer, with the due respect I have for you, I hope you see my point of view. The postal union has too much power and the necessity to keep them in check is important.