

Editorial

Shcharansky symbol of hope

The general consensus following the latest Geneva summit seemed to be that nothing concrete arose out of the session, but that the climate of East-West relations had been substantially warmed. Cautious optimism became the dominant attitude among observers and participants for perhaps the first time since (horror of horrors, but yes, it's true) Nixon sat in the White House.

Following shortly on the heels of the summit was a Soviet proposal for disarmament talks which offered to discount French and British missiles in preliminary negotiations, something previously unheard of in international circles.

Then, faithful followers of *ABC Nightwatch* heard rumours of a real sentiment in Moscow to extract Soviet forces from the war in Afghanistan. Not only is the war universally condemned in the West, it is proving a burden on Soviet military much like Vietnam was to the United States in the sixties.

Now, the Soviets have released dissident Anatoly Shcharansky in an East-West "spy" swap.

Numerous human rights groups around the globe have been petitioning the USSR for Shcharansky's release for a decade, following his internment in 1978 for allegedly endangering Soviet security by speaking with Western journalists about Soviet non-compliance with the human rights provisions of the 1975 Helsinki agreement.

Though the Soviets have bowed to international pressure in releasing Shcharansky, they could not have reasonably been expected to grant Shcharansky a pardon, and they continued to insist that he was, in fact, a spy. However, they did agree to release Shcharansky before the other participants in the spy swap, a symbolic gesture demanded by the West to suggest Shcharansky was not guilty of espionage.

The significance of Shcharansky's release cannot be underestimated. With the exception of physicist Andrei Sakharov (who will most likely never be released), Shcharansky has been the most celebrated Soviet dissident of the past decade. His release cannot be anything but suggestive of a new attitude in Moscow... or very shrewd politics. At any rate, it offers the possibility of genuine negotiations leading to the lessening of world tension between the two superpowers.

I, for one, hope that Reagan and the United States' body politic accept this Soviet gesture as sufficient cause to bargain in good faith and to abandon the policy of public relations oriented bartering on the nuclear question.

The ideological rift between these two nations is something that can never be closed by anything as simple as the release of one man who wished to immigrate to Israel, and it is too broad to imagine it closing within this century. But perhaps the United States and the Soviet Union are prepared to discuss some method of insuring that they, and the rest of the world, exist into the next century, when such an outlandish reconciliation might be considered possible.

We have only to examine the West's new relations with China (oh God, Nixon again) to admit that it is possible.

Mike Evans

Macabre media

Just how many train crashes WERE there in Hinton? Glancing at the newspapers or listening to the radio over the last six days, one gets the impression there have been several, each bigger and more horrific than the last.

How else can you justify the full page color photographs the *Sun* has been sporting for days on end? The perpetual body counts and the front page who-dunnits?

I find the sensationalistic coverage both insulting and insensitive. Hinton's crash was a tragedy. It definitely is news.

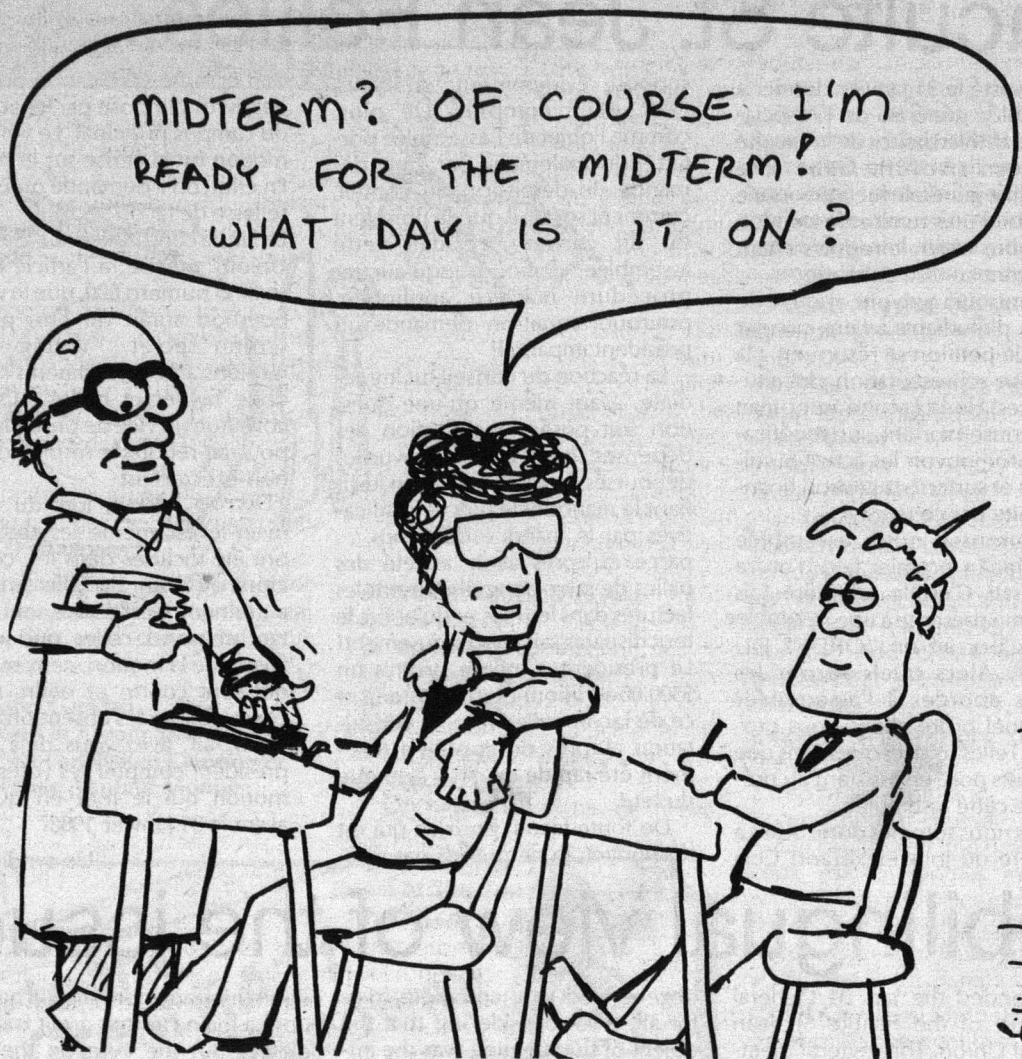
But to publish photo after photo of wreckage and to count down the dead like the top ten is about as effective in conveying the sadness of this situation as a story consisting of nothing but "blood, death, gore" repeated 500 times. (How effective is that, you ask? Try saying "carnage and waste" over and over in bed sometime - it'll put you to sleep.)

Somewhere there are 29 (or 28 or whatever the number is now) sets of friends and family grieving over their loss. How are they to feel when they see pictures of people crowding each other to get a glimpse of the crash site? It must be hard for them to believe that curiosity stems from sympathy.

The macabre has a way of stirring up morbid interest in everyone, but there are people who are suffering as a result of this accident.

Let's have some respect for the bereaved.

Cindy Rozeboom



Silipchuk - GATEWAY '86

Letters to the Editor

Hell's horror

Pretty Young Girls

— for Brenda McLenaghan, 21
raped and murdered in Edmonton,
January 1986.

Pretty young girls
they are
and I can see them everywhere
eyes bright and steady
though souls falter.

Pretty young girls
are naturally so
I do not know
how they were yesterday.

Today
I see glances of terror
hear whispers of fear
"...raped her...murdered her...
tied her naked body to a tree..."
— what closer place to hell's horror
than such
on a prairie's winter night.

Pretty young girls
they are
afraid to go out in the night
in the light
to be alone at home.
Borne by weaker women grown strong
pretty young girls will take
up the fight.

Innocence their right
Naivete their fate and now they know
it was too late
when they found her body
too late
before they found her...
too late
before he took her?

Look...there...in the snow
drops of blood.
Warm, they do not seep through
the ice crystals.
Her death lacked dignity
screamed disgust
outrage,
screamed sorrow
and always
the foreboding of tomorrow —

Who will be next?
Who will be next?
Who will be next?

Joyce Jackman
Education III
February 1986

With thanks

Dear Gateway,

Re: Darcy Johnston's letter (Feb. 6 Gateway)

Usually when I see letters the length of Darcy's, I ignore them and go on to the next letter, but I'm glad I stopped to read her letter. Her letter faces the issue of sexual harassment from a fresh and open-minded point of view. I'm glad that someone has finally expressed interest in solving the problem instead of just pointing fingers.

As a male student of this university, I'm tired of feeling guilty for just being male. The actions of a minority of males have served to ruin the credibility of all the males on campus. In her letter, Darcy points out that we should be concentrating our efforts on removing the source of the problem. This is such a basic strategy and yet it seems to have been overlooked.

Sexual harassment affects all of us directly. It is a problem that both males and females should be working together to solve. Thanks to Darcy's letter, I feel a little less guilty for just being male.

L. Cloutier
Science II

SPCA concern

To Whom It May Concern:

As a spokesperson for the Edmonton S.P.C.A., I would like to comment on the story, "No one got the joke say chicken killers" (Jan. 23, 1986).

I suppose that it is understandable that some people might feel that concern over the apparent deaths of five or six chickens involved in a student prank might be considered overreaction. After all, we do live in a generally omnivorous society that kills and eats thousands of chickens every day. While issues regarding the morality of eating poultry at all might be debated elsewhere, the bottom line in the recent prank is that these animals apparently died totally needlessly.

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The Gateway

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Fun-loving Emma Sadgrove and Andrew Phillipots glued Greg Whiting and Greg McHarg to Gilbert Bouchard. James MacDonald, Regina Behnk, Blaine Ostapovich and Carolyn Aney lifted the trio into a vat of peanut butter and Tim Enger sold tickets to Audrey Djuwita, Rob Schmidt and Alex Miller. Then, attention-starved Bruce Gardave, Shaun Cody and Kathleen Beechinor tied themselves together with shoelaces and jumped into a tar pit. "Humph" said Ken Hui and John Watson simultaneously. "Anyone can do THAT" sniffed Natalie Colleson. Meanwhile in Paris, Edna Landreville and Louise Hill were skinnydipping in caviar.