

## Scenes from a miscarriage

**Impressions by Jens Andersen**

The Canadian University Press 46th Annual Conference. About 150 college and university journalists spending Christmas holidays in North Bay, conspiring openly to commit social change.

Endless talk. Semantic fanatics arguing whether we should be "agents of social change" or "agents of social awareness." The aforesaid zealots hurling abuse and tortured sophistry at each other in xeroxed posters and in the conference house organ "Newspeak" (an appropriate title considering some of its contents).

An innocent newcomer who was ambushed by a feminist for using the word "lady" in her presence ("That's on the record," she informed him). A group of self-styled "spinsters" who seized the "means of production" (i.e. the xerox machine) as a symbolic gesture to liberate women. A group of conservative paranoids who concluded that the spinsters were really lesbians.

Make-believe revolutionaries proving their resoluteness by putting up cute posters "advocating" blowing up factories. The same phonies making eloquent noises about western cultural imperialism, the capitalist patriarchy and eating the rich. Wimpoid liberals claiming that ideas are being forced down their throats, just because the ideas are expressed forcibly.

Yours truly, sitting on the Constitution Commission (actually a committee) and getting into legal reform. Yours truly, sitting back, and confining his input to a few

comments, because two strong-willed women are pushing to do all the work. Yours truly, not giving a damn, because the women seem capable enough, and he is having fun doodling the traditional cartoon-cover for the commission report. Yours truly, putting an oblique comment about homophobia in the cartoon. Yours truly, being told by the two terrified women that the cartoon might be seen by others as homophobic, and hence shouldn't be used. Yours truly, shrugging and resigning himself to the climate of paranoia. Yours truly, reading the spinsters' newsletter about how men dominated the conference, and indulging in a good belly-laugh.

Guilt-ridden men flogging themselves in the men's caucus, and ritualistically chanting, "sexism is not just a women's issue, it's an issue that affects us all." The woman who called men "the raping class" and a second who equated Hugh Hefner with Hitler. Rebels against the men's-women's caucus system who refused to talk in these caucuses and formed their own "people's caucus" in order to (brace yourself) "increase communication."

Ten thousand other acts of passion and irrationality. Caucuses, plenaries, and seminars that ran until all hours of the morning. Heavy sleeplessness and concomitant increase in emotionality. A few accomplishments, mostly routine internal business. A new Statement of Principles, the result of heroic labour by countless individuals, but no better or worse than the

old one.

Anger, frustration and despair. Cynical amusement.

Listening to some leftists who believe that the right has taken over CUP.

Listening to some right-wingers who believe that the radicals are more firmly in the saddle than ever.

**Conclusion:** These doctors want to cure society?? Physician, heal thyself!

**At the CUP 46 conference a new Statement of Principles for member papers was passed. In addition to passing the new Statement, it was resolved at the conference that members should print it in their papers and discuss it among staff. To start the ball rolling, here is the new Statement — in boldface type — with comments by Jens Andersen.**

**We, the members of Canadian University Press, affirm that we hold the following principles in common:**

**That the major role of the student press is to act as an agent of social change, assisting students in understanding and acting against oppression and injustice, and emphasizing the rights and responsibilities of the student.**

The phrase "agent of social change," a holdover from the old Statement, is supremely vague, and doesn't even exclude support for Nazis or Stalinists, as many before me have pointed out. This criticism, since it hasn't been addressed, is still devastatingly valid. In essence the phrase is meaningless — all it says is that journalists should not be motionless, which goes without saying. Ditto for the slaps against oppression and injustice; has anyone argued for oppression and injustice recently? No, they all speak for freedom and justice, even when they are slipping the knife into your back. In the same way they "emphasize the rights and responsibilities of the student," even when they are

brainwashing students to serve their own ends.

The question then is: which social changes are desirable? What acts constitute oppression and injustice? What specific rights and responsibilities should students have? By reducing such thorny questions to a series of glib platitudes and empty motherhood statements CUP condescends to student journalists and insults their intelligence.

**That the student press must, to fulfill this role, perform both an educative and active function, and critically support the aims of groups serving as agents of social change.**

Again, a total lack of specifics. A person might justifiably ask what the hell the difference between an educative and an active function might be. Is education a passive process? The big change in this clause from the old Statement is the addition of the word "critically." This word guarantees that papers which were almost encouraged to be uncritical in the past, will never, ever again be uncritical, and will

WE NEED HELP TOO!  
WE NEED HELP TOO!  
WE NEED HELP TOO!

STUDENT HELP is in need of volunteers for this semester. If you want to help people with their academic or personal problems, then STUDENT HELP may be what you're looking for. This is our purpose in life. Stop by our office and ask one of the volunteers what the job is like, and then, if so inclined, fill out an application. We will be accepting applications until Friday, Jan. 13.

STUDENT HELP ROOM 250 SUB 432-4266

Is this the way it happens?  
With no warning...  
No mercy.  
The lights go out.  
The telephones go dead.  
The cities are gone.  
The future is cancelled.

# TESTAMENT

WITH AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE · A LYNNE LITTMAN FILM · JANE ALEXANDER · TESTAMENT  
WILLIAM DEVANE · MUSIC COMPOSED BY JAMES HORNER · BASED ON THE STORY  
"THE LAST TESTAMENT" BY CAROL AMEN · SCREENPLAY BY JOHN SACRET YOUNG

**TOWNE**  
Cinema 118 Ave. and 124 St. 454-5168

Starts Friday, Jan. 13!

7:00 and 9:00 pm

All student cards accepted at \$4.50



### FORUM ON WORLD RELIGION DAY

Sunday January 15 at 2:00 pm.  
in the Meditation Rm., S.U.B.

Representatives From 6 Religions will discuss the Resolution.

*"That religion is a radiant light and impregnable stronghold for the protection and welfare of the peoples of the world."*

EVERYONE WELCOME!

SPONSORED BY THE UNIVERSITY BAHAI CLUB

All students are invited to a

# Public Meeting

of the visiting

# STUDENT AFFAIRS

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Minister's Advisory Committee on Student Affairs is composed of post-secondary students and public members across Alberta. It reports to the minister of Alberta Advanced Education on issues of concern to post-secondary students.

You are invited to present your views and suggestions on student issues to this Committee at a meeting scheduled for

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 20, 1984**  
**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**  
**Room 3-15 (Board of Governors' Room)**  
**University Hall**  
**9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon**  
**1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

For your convenience, should you wish to arrange a specific time for a submission or presentation, please contact Donna Anthony, Executive Secretary, Minister's Advisory Committee on Student Affairs

7th Floor, Devonian Building, East Tower  
11160 Jasper Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 0L1  
Phone 427-8921 (call collect)

**Alberta**  
ADVANCED EDUCATION