

## Media not bloodthirsty

A report on CFNC-TV (Calgary's CTV station) talked about what the foreign media thought about the recently completed Winter Olympic Games held in Calgary. The statement made by the report was that surprisingly, the print media from overseas loved the Olympics and were enchanted with the people and the sights of Calgary during the Olympic Games.

The reporter went on to say, "this came from print journalists, who are paid to write bad things."

Not only was this statement a cheap shot but it is also untrue. If it were true, there wouldn't have been pages and pages of stories about successful athletes like Alberto Tomba and Matti Nykaenen; those pages would be filled with how the "unexpected" wind blew all but one of the ski jumping events to another day, or how the overall play of the Olympic hockey tournament was second rate compared to the National Hockey League.

When journalism works at its best, both the good and the bad events get reported. The job of a journalist is to inform the public — good or bad.

When the free trade deal with the United States was being hammered out, would Canadians have been informed if journalists only stated how it was going to give Canadians more spending power and more chances to sell our goods below the 49th parallel? Conversely, would Canadians be informed if all that journalists told them about the free trade deal was that our sovereignty was being bargained away just for selling a few extra barrels of oil to America's industrial heartland? No.

What the print media has done with the free trade issue is tell both sides of the story. Newspapers have talked to informed people throughout the country, on both sides of the issue, not only to inform the public, but to spark debate between citizens, so ordinary people can speak their minds about free trade.

What that report said is that print journalists are bloodthirsty character-destroyers who roam around an important event like rogue sharks prowling the depths of the ocean, looking for a tasty meal. What that report did was repeat an old and hackneyed stereotype of the "media slime". Promoting stereotypes like this is exactly like saying an athlete is a dimwitted jock who pops steroids in between trips to the weight room. Both stereotypes are completely inaccurate and both stereotypes are equally dangerous. Lumping a label on a large group of people has caused the problem between governments and our Indians. Hitler used this same policy to murder millions of Jewish people during the Second World War.

When the report on CFNC-TV said that the press are paid to write about bad things, they should be thankful that an impartial press can give them the chance to see a "good" story and a "bad" story.

A "bad" story can only be identified when it is contrasted with a "good" story. The press must be doing its job — the job of being impartial — when someone says that we only write about bad things.

## The Gateway

Alan Small

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The Gateway welcomes letters to the Editor.

If you have a comment which would be of interest to the students of the University, please do not hesitate to send it in. Letters must be signed. Addresses and phone numbers are required but will not be printed.

Letters may be edited for length.

Mail or deliver your letters to Room 282 SUB, or drop them at any SU information booth.

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## LETTERS

### Activism needed

I was delighted that the academic community is publicly deploring the fiscal nightmare facing our youth (*Fiscal Surgery Needed 18/2/88*).

The University community will be in the new Federal riding of Edmonton Strathcona, and I suggest you start a campaign today to elect a candidate who will fight the suicidal rush to bankruptcy so succinctly deplored by writer Ken Bosman.

Don't underestimate what even one determined academic can do. I attended a forum to which your students invited the M.P.'s, and was shocked by the name-calling, diatribe and evasiveness which followed mature concerns of students who were promised "Jobs, Jobs, Jobs."

I'm sure there'll be a federal election this year. Why not have your professors assist in setting up machinery now? I appreciate the constraints of time, but I beg each of your 25,000 readers to budget just a little of his/her energy towards assuring a future where the quality of life will be paramount and government, now morally bankrupt, will again be accountable.

I campaigned in the early sixties on the sacred trust of public office after three professors were arrested in our court chambers for exposing political skullduggery. With our publicity campaign, we successfully challenged the intemperate Gainers' injunction which forbade even peaceful assembly of students across the highway.

This was democracy in action. Don't lose the momentum of interest you have generated.

Alan Welsh, Humaning Director  
 Alberta Human Rights & Civil Liberties Assoc.

### Not a proper spokesman

I would like to respond to a letter by Daniel Aarons' South Africa as it is, Gateway, Feb. 18.

Black people are defined as those who are by law or tradition, politically, economically and socially discriminated against as a group in the South African society and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realization of their aspirations.

South African Indians not only fit into this definition of black but also consider themselves as such. May I know if Daniel Aarons is the spokesperson of South African Indians.

Another mistake he made was in describing the oppressed people in South Africa with negative terms like non-white. We are black, not 'non-something'. Just describe us in our terms. Whiteness is not the standard by which other races are judged. A 'friend' wouldn't use negative terms when referring to his/her allies.

South African blacks have always spoken out against self-appointed trustees of their aspirations but it is apparently hard for other people to understand that. Some of us who have lived in Crossroads and Soweto know exactly what it is like to live there and anybody who has never stayed there can't articulate that oppression better than we can. You purport to represent an uncensored view. Uncensored by who? The Apartheid regime?

Sam Ditshego  
 Kiome Lungu

### Palestinian question muddled

Arabs claim that the plight of the Palestinians is the heart of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which will not end unless the Palestinian question is solved. The truth is that the Palestinian question is the result of the conflict not the source. The real cause is the refusal of the Arab nations to acknowledge Israel's right to exist as an independent Jewish state. There never would have been a Palestinian question if the Arab governments had been ready to live in peace with Israel.

The West Bank and Gaza were under Arab rule from 1948 to 1967, but the Arabs did not set up a Palestinian state, nor were they asked by the Palestinians or by non-Arab sympathizers. In fact, there already exists a Palestinian state — Jordan. Jordan's population is divided between those who lived in Transjordan before 1948 and those who moved eastward due to the 1948 and 1967 wars. All Jordanians are, by geographic definition, "Palestinians". About 1/2 of the 2 million Jordanians on the East Bank have their origins in Western Palestine, and approximately three-quarters of the Jordanians living in Amman come from Western Palestine. These figures show that Jordan is actually a Palestinian state. It must be stated that both King Hussein and the PLO agree that Jordan is Palestine, and that Palestine is Jordan.

If the Arab states and the Palestinians would recognize Israel's right to exist in peace, there would be no Palestinian questions, and the Palestinian Arabs could then be resettled among their

own people, in the vast Arab lands which extend over five million square miles, and which have the oil, soil, and most important — the money to rehabilitate them.

Yuval Barzel

### Stick to the news

Re: We O for Cal-gary (Gateway, Feb. 16/88)

Randal Smathers should stick to telling it the way it is and keep his ignorant opinions to himself.

The first point he brought up was the Olympics were a fraud because they were no longer performing grounds for amateur athletes. It can be argued that there is no such thing as an amateur athlete. Why knock a format for determining status (pro/am) that will cut through all the red tape. Let's send the best available athletes — pro or amateur.

Secondly, R.S. felt that "flag-waving and medal counting" hampers sportsmanship and competition. What does flag-waving really have to do with the athlete; it is something that the spectator is usually involved with. And spectators should be allowed to get involved, whether by creating a wave or "waving a flag."

In sport someone has to win and someone has to lose. Medals are symbols of success for athletes, so keeping track of which country's athletes have the most medals, leaves the losers a target to aim for. If anything, it helps kindle the spirit of competition.

Thirdly, R.S. says the winter games lack major sports. True, but it's the "who really cares sports" as R.S. called them, that make the Winter and Summer Olympics. And somebody must care about the lesser known sports (ski jumping, and nordic combined) otherwise they would not be so competitive. If you don't like-em, don't watch-em, and don't use the power of the press to knock-em.

As for ice dancing, tell a skater what they are doing is not athletic enough to be considered a sport. And how can you compare ice skating to a piano competition?

As for judges being biased in ice dancing, maybe R.S. should watch more hockey, football, and baseball. He might come to the conclusion that bias is a trait evident in all judges.

If a reporter has nothing good to say, he should put down his pen. He should be there to help promote, not demote sport.

Pat Gowen