

# Silent weeping ultimately bad for Israel's political soul

by Ira Nayman

The last time I gave any serious thought to the State of Israel, I was watching Israeli soldiers holding down the hand of a 12 year-old Palestinian boy and crushing his fingers with a rock. This was around the time the Israeli army was bulldozing



## BEARPIT

Palestinian houses, regardless of whether or not Palestinians were in them at the time.

I wept for the soul of Israel.

Being on a constant war alert seems, to me, to have dulled the humanitarian instincts of the Israeli people. Many have become completely insensitive to the suffering they inflict on others.

What would be referred to as an atrocity if directed towards a Jew has become a political necessity when directed towards a non-Jew.

It is easy to make the mistake of assuming the pro-Israeli, pro-militarists like the people who run the conservative Jewish Students' Federation speak for all Jewish students at York. This is certainly not true; they speak only for themselves. I know because I am a Jew who feels unrepresented by their views.

Although many Jews feel this way, they are reluctant to speak out. There are many reasons why. I, for instance, am a Zionist (which, as I understand the term, means I believe in a Jewish homeland in the Middle East). Criticism of the Jewish State does not come easily to me because I recognize some people will use my arguments against certain political policies in Israel to argue against the legitimacy of the State itself.

For another thing, I am painfully aware of an increase in racism in Canada, particularly anti-Jewishness (hatred of Jews, as opposed to anti-semitism, hatred of all Semitic peoples, including Arabs); all I have to do is read the graffiti in some campus bathrooms to encounter it. Statements by Jews criticizing Israel can be used to promote anti-Jewishness (racists think along the lines of, "If he's a Jew and he's got problems with Israel..."). As somebody who is opposed to racism in any form, I am sensitive to the possibility of contributing to racism against my own people.

Finally, there is a serious personal cost to opposing well-organized conservative Jewish groups. Conservative Jews have been known to attack Jews who disagree with their policies, calling them everything from "traitors" to "self-hating." Even to suggest that there is a division of opinion within the Jewish community is discouraged because of the risk it will increase anti-Jewish or anti-Israeli sentiment.

These are powerful emotional inducements to silence. But, silence is a form of complicity, and as the Israeli military becomes more and more brutal, it becomes harder and harder for concerned Jews to excuse it. Conservative Jews argue that friends of Israel must support it in all of its actions, and that North American Jews have no right to judge it; I believe loyalty to a cause should never blind you to the call of your conscience.

People who really love Israel cannot sit idly by and watch it become an oppressive police state. They must speak out against the Israeli government's use of excessive force, particularly in the Occupied Territories, and strongly argue for the Israeli government to start bargaining in good faith for peace.

Jews in Israel enjoy full participation in political dialogue affecting the state, regardless of their political beliefs. Jews in North America should be allowed the same rights.

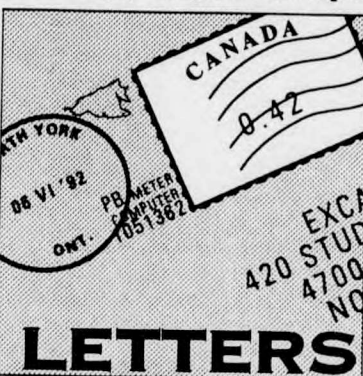
(Ira Nayman is a Creative Writing major and an Excalibur staff member.)

# Glossy mag strikes back

It was with great interest that I read your story on student magazines (Oct. 7), and I hope you will allow me the opportunity to respond.

Although every story has two sides and I welcome constructive criticism, the story by Doug Saunders has a number of glaring factual errors that taint his piece.

Mr. Saunders' claim that Campus Canada is a "magazine without journalists" is simply wrong. Far more impor-



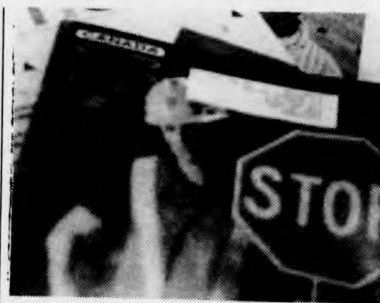
tant than my own journalism degree is the journalistic training of our writers, many of whom are students. I haven't asked them, but I can't imagine many of our student writers would agree with Mr. Saunders' contention that Campus Canada has "no use for critical or creative journalism."

Mr. Saunders also states that our magazine has "never published that which could even obliquely offend an advertiser." Has he spoken to our advertisers? Obviously not, because if he did, he would learn that this statement is also wrong. It may interest him to know that if the quality of a publication is judged by how it offends advertisers, then Campus Canada is filled with excellence.

Perhaps what is most offensive in Mr. Saunders' story is his accusation that "writers from literally dozens of papers have seen their stories paraphrased weeks later in either of the two magazines." While I can't speak for Looking Up, Campus Canada has never "paraphrased" from the student press. Obviously we cover some of the same events and stories, but independently of the student press. It should also be noted that stories from Campus Canada have appeared in student newspapers.

I also found it interesting that Mr. Saunders' claim that "Editors of the University of Toronto Varsity have had their photos reproduced," was omitted when his story ran in the Varsity. If it was true, why would the Varsity editors take it out?

Finally, if Mr. Saunders believes



that Campus Canada is filled with nothing but advertisements in the guise of editorial, that it does not portray the reality of student life, and that we do nothing but exploit students, then why do so many students on campuses coast to coast continue to read the magazine?

Sarah Moore  
Managing Editor of  
Campus Canada

Editors' note: Moore told us last week that Campus Canada has no salaried writers. All their articles are freelance, 'on spec.' This is what we meant by "a magazine without journalists."

Kim Locke, publisher of Campus Canada, said in a conversation last week that his magazine has never lost an advertisement because of anything it has printed. He claims that one distillery told him they should have been warned about a recent article on "the new sobriety," although the article appears to be a promotion for responsible-drinking group Bacchus Canada, which is sponsored by a major Canadian brewery, advertising in that issue.

Campus Canada regularly paraphrases articles from the student press in a section which is now titled "Report on Campus," which used to be divided into "College report" and "University report."

Naomi Klein, editor of the University of Toronto Varsity, says her newspaper omitted the "photos reproduced" line from the Doug Saunders article because they have a policy of not running self-referential material. Otherwise, Klein says, the Varsity has "no problem" with the content of the article.

As for whether Campus Canada is actually "filled with nothing but advertisements in the guise of editorial,"

We will publish letters up to 250 words. They must be typed, double spaced, and accompanied by the writer's name and phone number. Material deemed libelous or discriminatory by the staff of Excalibur will be rejected. The opinions expressed are those of the letter-writers and do not represent those of the Excalibur staff, Editorial Board, or Board of Publications.

we'll leave that to the readers' judgment.

# Greece supports human rights

I would like to clarify the letter which appeared Oct. 7, concerning alleged human rights abuses in Greece, and the actions of York students of Greek origin. The author of this letter offers a rough draft of a U.S. State Department report, as proof of human abuses in Greece. The passage is quoted completely out of context, and the letter goes so far as to say that in Greece, unlike in Canada, the human rights abuses are the accepted norm. For the record, I would like to point that in addition to being a signatory to the Helsinki Human Rights Accord, and several other international agreements concerning human rights, Greece is also a member of the Council of Europe and the European Economic Community, and guarantees the rights of all its citizens.

The author draws a connection between these slanderous accusations and the activities of York students of Greek origin. It is implied that not just these students, but all Canadians of Greek origin are, in some way, agents of a non-existent rights abusing regime in Greece, and carrying out its agenda on Canadian soil. Needless to say, this is completely absurd, and clearly an example of race "baiting". The only purpose a letter of this kind can serve is to promote hatred. What disturbs me the most about this letter is the fact it was printed in a newspaper whose official policy is to reject letters which are racist, sexist, or homophobic. In order for Excalibur to maintain its integrity, an unequivocal apology should be extended to the sizable number of York students of Greek origin.

P. S. — I am curious as to how the author was able to determine that it was students of Greek origin who were "verbally accosting" other York students at a student club booth on Sept. 16.

John Tsoukas

# Conflicts of interest & ISU

A few comments on the ISU debate. I find the level of debate from both sides of the issue unimpressive and offensive. Character assassination is no substitute for good argument. It usually says more about a lack of confidence in one's own position than it does about the supposed shortcomings of one's

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