

Whole Earth Days: some slick propaganda

By CHRISTOPHER ROWLAND

Most readers are aware of the university-wide "Whole Earth Days" held at the York campus last week. Six major speakers were invited to lecture on "planetary responsibility."

I attended both the evening sessions billed as an opportunity for interaction with the speakers. Unfortunately, rather than taking a responsible position and inviting critical analysis, the speakers were only interested in presenting a monologue of propaganda about how wonderful an experience it is to live rightly and how beautiful all the people are who follow their prescription. The whole show was very, very slick, but its content contributed virtually nothing to the knowledge of mankind. During the discussion period, it became apparent to the panel that I was the antagonist in the crowd, and after my initial question the moderator refused to acknowledge me.

For myself, some of the speakers appear to see clearly what the surface issue of the technological, industrialized society is. They are aware that the speed and complexity of technology, coupled with the profit-oriented attitude of an industrial economy, has made the individual comparatively insignificant.

They see that society sacrifices the ordinary fellow to those systems and institutions which define it. But this not a particularly astute observation for modern man, for nearly every writer since before the Greeks has outlined and documented such apparent inequalities. Indeed, almost everyone expresses dissatisfaction over this fact of humanity, by the time he reaches puberty. On the other hand, the speakers, for the most part, have absolutely no idea how they see that issue in either its major details, or its historical perspective. Because of these shortcomings, their way of handling the issue is completely off-target for the majority of people, and is bound to fall dismally short of the required solution to the problem.

During the question period, I asked the speakers if they were prepared to acknowledge that the intellect is part of human character.

The answer was "certainly not".

All of the speakers are proponents of the communal

way of living, which inherently rejects the intellect. They believe that satisfaction in life derives from being physically and emotionally occupied. They imagine that the theory of communal living embraces an intellectual component, by researching the technical necessities which will further the survival of the community. Indeed, such an activity merely feeds off the scientific theories of the society which the communes reject — theories that have been produced through the development of intellectual self-discipline.

The "Whole Earth" participants, in their concept of an ideal community, leave no place for pure thought, for intrinsically theoretical endeavor. The failure to recognize the intellectual component of the human being is the main reason that their solution to the uncontrolled technological advancement, at the expense of humanity, is unlikely to succeed.

I am the first to admit that there are many people who can and do survive quite well within a communal environment. However, the limits of physical space and the production therein cannot support an ever-increasing population. Furthermore, mind alone is, and always has been, man's freedom from spatial limitations.

A SAVING GRACE

I would suggest that it is unfortunate that nearly \$4,000 (much of which was student money) was spent by the university on such an exercise. A rough calculation reveals \$300 per hour was spent. Nevertheless, there is a saving grace. Students were exposed to good examples of poor theories and dubious evidence. They need to see how influential the people who concoct such misguided systems can be. They need to try out their developing intellectual equipment on the self-professed messiahs who threaten the purposes of more enlightened minds.

Yes, "Whole-Earth Days" was simply a controlled virus in an inoculation programme and, like the virus which provides others with protection against itself, the guests never really knew what role they played in the infinitely great world of purely intellectual development which is so foreign to them.

Reduce obscenity pollution

In response to David Scott's letter (Gore's lofty obscenities, Excalibur, February 5), I would like to say that I too am concerned over the needless and irresponsible use of obscenities by the student body at York. Never should we allow obscenities to be used in a needless and irresponsible fashion.

Obscenities should never be used as adjectives for the quality of food, the concern of the administration for keeping tuition fees within reasonable limits or the ULC.

Let not obscenities modify the weather, the Yeomen football team, Excalibur or the art deco tunnel. Let's reduce obscenity pollution.

By the way, in some areas of the United States and elsewhere, the names of the Supreme Court justices are themselves considered to be obscenities.

John Thomson,
CKRY-FM

CYSF member knocks candidate

Excalibur is once again guilty of misreporting. In regard to your article on "presidential hopeful" Kevin Smith, I'd like to say that he has never been a member of the food action committee. Furthermore, the college councils in Complex I have hardly been instrumental in contributing to Commercial's exit, as they were preoccupied with making deals with Rill Foods, the caterer in their own complex. So much for co-operation between the councils in Complexes I and II for, unless their own stomachs are affected, they couldn't care less.

The food issue aside, Kevin Smith has not served on any other CYSF committees, not even the anti-cutbacks committee, despite his professed concern with this issue.

I might add that these com-

mittees are not composed only of ULC council members, but are open to all concerned members of the student body.

Kevin Smith has not even regularly attended CYSF council meetings, as a college rep, in order to keep informed and report to his council.

I find it remarkable that so many people who have shown so little interest in CYSF and the issues over the past year can suddenly find themselves not only concerned, but qualified to serve as president.

Mary Lochhead,
Director of University Services,
CYSF

Please don't dump on Barney Danson

I have no wish to become embroiled in the seemingly endless clash that has taken place within your columns between the various factions of Arabs and Jewish people. The nonsensical arguments that have been propounded by both "sides" to defend their respective positions do not merit further comment. Not wanting to enter the fray, and not being a member of any of the groups, races or religions mentioned, I am asking you to withhold my name from publication.

However, I wish to pose a question: When will the Jewish community stop dumping on Barney Danson? Can they not see that he is representing the interests of the Jewish people, as well as those of all Canadians, to the best of his ability as it is circumscribed by the position of federal cabinet minister in a Liberal government? Does the Jewish community wish to cut off their collective nose to spite their face?

Those who call Mr. Danson a "traitor", in my view, are being exceedingly short-sighted and narrow-minded. Try to see the broader picture and to consider

the disastrous consequences that would have arisen if Mr. Danson had acted any differently from the way he has done recently.

Mr. Danson is Urban Affairs Minister of Canada, not of Israel or of any other state.

The letter to Excalibur (January 29), signed by Hyla Goldstein, et al., was misguided and unfortunate.

Name withheld by request

Chinese students condemn racism

This letter is sent to confirm that the York Chinese students association is always in a strong position to unite all positive forces against racism. We have no doubt that all racist activities must be protested and stopped.

As far as the recent attack on the Oriental person (reported in Excalibur, February 5) is concerned, we have contacted CYSF president Dale Ritch and the witness himself. We have been unable, however, to identify the victim.

Any person with information about this or similar incidents is encouraged to contact us as soon as possible.

We, the Chinese students association will pay full attention to any further developments in this matter.

Roy Chan,
President, YCSA

Another man signs his name

Readers of Excalibur should be informed that an additional signer of the statement condemning the fascist defacement of Bethune college (printed in last week's Excalibur) is Abie Weisfeld, CYSF external affairs co-ordinator, who signed on behalf of the CYSF.

Robert Brickman
Abie Weisfeld

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