

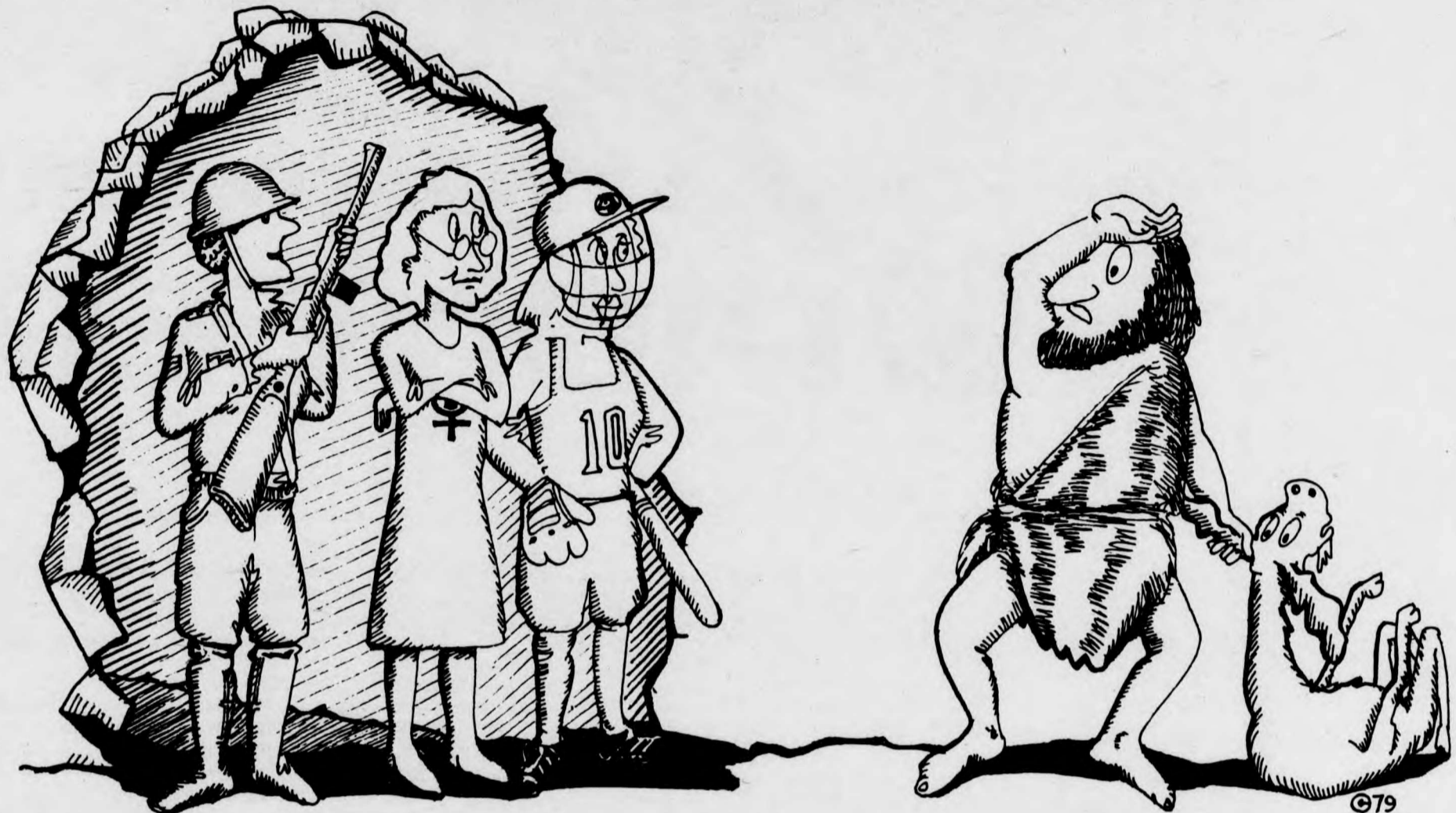
# Excalibur

Everything secret degenerates; nothing is safe that does not show it can bear discussion and publicity  
—Lord Acton

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O.K. folks, how about this... I do the dishes tonight

## A global view of women's rights

By Alan Marantz  
of The Georgian

(CUP) Women's movements around the world enjoyed varying degrees of success mixed with failure this past year.

In Spain, the Ministry of Culture has formed a committee on woman's rights and is drawing up laws for submission to Parliament calling for, among other things, economic equality and greater protection against rape. Most women holding the same jobs as men earn less. Proof of guilt in rape cases must be so specific it is almost impossible to get a conviction.

The proposed law would ease the women's burden of proof and perhaps encourage Spanish women to put aside fears of being ostracized by the traditionally puritanical society.

But activists in the women's movement feel cheated by Spain's new constitution, which makes no reference to abortion, day care or simple incompatibility as grounds for uncontested divorce. Some women are also upset by the constitution's failure to change the country's rigid custody law, which gives husbands the absolute right to custody of children in cases of marital breakup. The constitution does provide for legalization of contraceptives, although a doctor's prescription is still necessary.

The biggest problem facing Spanish women, however, is the attitude and social fabric of this macho-style country. Voicing the prevailing attitude, one man told an American correspondent, "Our women are flying the coop. And did you ever try to get a bunch of chickens back in? I guess it's all part of this democracy thing. You give them the vote, and the first

thing you know they want freedom."

Violence in Nicaragua against the Somoza regime has triggered organization within the women's movement there. Support for the movement mushroomed after the National Guard used tear gas against a small group of women demonstrating in front of the United Nations building in early 1978.

The movement began a year ago with a few informal meetings of about 15 women concerned with the mounting violence in the country. Since then, the movement has spread from the upper and middle classes to the wives of peasants and workers.

The movement, called the Association of Women Concerned with National Problems, has given priority to organizing committees of women in slum areas of the cities. Noisy demonstrations have been held and on one occasion two women were killed when National Guardsmen tried to stop the protest. The movement also helped

plan a "hunger march" of peasant women and that, too, was repressed, resulting in two deaths.

In Italy the growing women's movement contributed to the rise of Tina Anselmi, the country's first woman cabinet minister, who was appointed Labour Minister in mid-1977. Also in Italy, women are moving into a job once thought to be the bastion of males — terrorism. A dramatically increasing number of women, dubbed by the Italian press as "guerrillas with skirts", are not any more the submissive companions of terrorist men as they were once believed to be.

About 1,500 women in Greece early this year enlisted for 14 months in the Greek military, much to the displeasure of women's liberation groups who said volunteers would offer themselves for further exploitation in the traditionally male-dominated society. It was the start of Greece's first-ever female volunteer army.

Throughout Greece, 20 women's groups have joined in opposing



women's military service. They said they will not accept equal responsibilities with men when they do not have equal rights.

The status of women is coming under close study in Israel. A government-appointed study which produced 130 pages of recommendations showed widespread neglect of women's rights. The most important recommendation is for the creation of a government office to administer to women and to monitor their status.

The study also recommended that women's right to birth control be recognized, family planning services be made available as part of the nation's public health services, women who claim personal or social hardship be allowed to have abortions and rape proceedings be held behind closed doors, with women being assigned to hospitals and police stations. It proposed that judges of both sexes preside over rape cases.

The study made no recommendations on such issues as

religious restrictions on marriage dates, women's rights in divorce proceedings and child custody, because of irreconcilable differences between religious and non-religious members.

The study found unequal training is given to women from childhood on and that few occupy high-paying positions. Generally, Israeli women's salaries are only 60 per cent those of men. The study recommended a law guaranteeing equal opportunity for men and women and prohibiting discrimination in salaries, job availability and promotion.

In Afghanistan, where women are among the least liberated in the world, the government is trying to help women break free from their traditional subservience to men. Women are beginning to make revolutionary decisions, such as trying to get a job or discarding their chadri, a shroud covering their faces while in public. As a sign of its commitment to women's issues, the government is sponsoring the Women's Organization to aid the transition, and since mid-1977 the constitution contains the first specific guarantee of equal rights for women.

### The way we voted

Well, we've always said the staff of Excalibur was a mixed bunch, open to every kind of political ideology, and the result of our Monday editorial meeting on the Board of Governors candidates proves it.

After 90 long minutes with four student politicians who tried to gain our support (sound like fun?), fifteen members of the Excalibur staff trooped off to the ballot box and secretly voted for our favorite political hack — and we couldn't agree.

Nobody got the 40 per cent plurality necessary to get Downsview's most feared sword of journalism crusading on his or her side.

The results: Peter Brickwood (5); Paul Hayden (4); Ingrid Lutter (3); Michael Deverett (0). One ballot was blank, one spoiled.

So don't ask us who to vote for — we're just as much part of this blank, uncommitted generation as you are — we can't decide. The candidates statements are on page four.

We hope you'll read them and make a trip to the ballot box yourselves on March 14 and 15.

**Staff  
meets  
today at  
3pm**