

SPECTRUM

Pride, a deeper love... by J.

Remembering...
 "In Flander's Field, the poppies grow, between the crosses, row on row, that mark our place... mark our place, crosses that mark the place of those who died during World War II. People who fought for freedom, regardless of race, religion, gender and sexual orientation.

November 11, 1994 will once again honor Remembrance Day as the day that thousands of people died in two World Wars, giving their lives so that we could live today in a world free of oppression, tyranny and inequality. Although Remembrance Day marks World Wars 1 and 2, the major emphasis is on the Second World War. In 1945, that particular year brought the horrors and fears of thousands of people straight to their doorsteps, as Nazi Germany, under Adolf Hitler, began a ruthless European genocide in the name of the "Master Race". Under the banner of eugenics (genetic purity - a.k.a. "survival of the fittest" in the worst possible way) the Nazis put to death thousands of people in their concentration camps. Most of us have heard the horrific accounts of the Jewish people, the group most held in contempt, and most hunted by, the Nazis. Accounts of gas chambers, torture, gruesome

"experiments, all in the name of science and purity. However, the Jews were not the only ones to be persecuted. Hitler's regime also hunted and exterminated prostitutes, alcoholics, the mentally and physically challenged, and those considered "unfit". Among those considered "unfit", were homosexuals and bisexuals.

Gays, lesbians and bisexuals were also subjected to the depraved "entertainments" thought up by the Nazis. Thousands of homosexuals and bisexuals in Germany and the surrounding areas fled when the Third Reich came to power, but a number of them remained behind or were trapped. As a sign of their "impurity", the people placed in concentration camps were branded in some manner. Gay men were required to wear the pink triangle, while lesbians were marked with the black triangle. This helped identify the different groups within the concentration camps, and it was also an attempt to dehumanize and ridicule them.

Homosexuals and bisexuals were not just victims in World War 2, but were also a part of the Allied and Axis forces. Hiding their sexual orientation for fear of discovery and either death or dismissal, these brave men and women fought alongside the general population, experiencing the pain, hope, anger and sadness that the world endured during World War 2. The belief that everything was hunky-dory at this time, is a rose-coloured dream, for even during the war, factions

within various countries were still arguing about the homosexuality and bisexuality issue. For example, Winston Churchill attempted to compile a list of the known or suspected gay, lesbian and bisexual members of the British government and military. Thinking that only a small portion of these individuals existed, and therefore were easily dismissed from taking part in the war effort, he was not prepared for the fact that most of his cabinet, the British military and other related agencies, contained an enormous number of homosexual and bisexual men and women. In fact, his private secretary and others closely attached to his office were homosexual or bisexual. Needless to say, the idea was quickly dropped.

Homosexuals and bisexuals are also a part of Remembrance Day. Like the rest of the world, who seem eager to cast us out from the "normal" societies, gays, lesbians and bisexuals have endured as much pain and suffering as everyone else. It is a poignant reminder that our brothers, sisters, immediate family, relatives and friends died for ALL of us. The Wars were fought so that everybody, regardless of race, religion, gender and sexual orientation could live free. Today, the homosexual and bisexual communities across the world have taken the oppressive symbols of Nazi hate and made them into symbols of pride and unity. We are just as proud of, and thankful for, those who died cherishing the belief in a free and equal world. It seems a damn shame then, that equality and freedom to be oneself is still greatly lacking in North America, in terms of sexual orientation. Maybe, we should take a really good look at what Remembrance Day REALLY means, and remember that homosexuals and bisexuals died alongside heterosexuals, fighting for the same ideals, beliefs and principles.

Metanoia by John Walk

Swords into Ploughshares
 For quite a few years my family and I have attended Remembrance Day observations on November 11. I especially want my three sons to experience them. The cancellation of classes provides ample opportunity to take in the brief ceremony. That's not asking much to honour those who fought to maintain our freedom.

The ceremonies make the greatest impression on me when the weather is particularly wet, cold and miserable, something one would not get in the middle of July. As I shiver in the wet and cold, the stories of battle become striking and poignant: warfare in the trenches, wounded lying in the mud, imprisonment in cold and damp cells.

Sometimes we glorify victory. That may be due to the need and desire to forget the horror undergone to achieve it. True, there are countless stories of immense bravery. It has been said that suffering and hardship reveals true character. World Wars I and II produced some incredibly strong, brave and honourable men and women. It also indicated the depth to which humans, individually and collectively, can sink.

Many say that no one benefits from war. The arms industry appears to indicate otherwise. Here short-term thinking clouds our vision, as we view the manufacturing of weapons as simply another business venture. Strange it is that we accept in our society, when we affirm that business is strictly business, profiting from the sale of weapons of war, even to the enemy. How many North American and Western European industries gained handsomely from equipping the Iraqi military machine?

The Hebrew prophet Isaiah lived in a time of national insecurity. The survival of Israel as a nation in the 8th C. BCE was precarious at best. It was besieged by the powerful and imperialistic Assyrian army. The words of Isaiah must have sounded rather odd in that day. He spoke of a time when all nations and peoples would say, "Come, let us climb upon the mountain of the Lord." Then they shall "beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:3-4).

It is clear that we have not yet reached that time. Remembrance Day reminds us, however, that it is well worth working quickly to that end.

The Pigeon's Right Wing

by Ezra Levant, guest columnist

The University of Alberta: "Anti-Racism" Racism

Note: Ezra Levant is currently studying law at the University of Alberta. He has written in several west coast publications generally on the threat to academic freedom presented by the political correctness movement. Peter W.C. Seely.

Scientists can do funny things. For example, I'm told that if you throw a frog into boiling water, it will jump out immediately because of the pain. But if you put a frog in tap water, and heat it up slowly, the frog will boil alive without moving.

We humans are the same. Let's take taxes: if the government today decided to increase the tax burden on each Canadian by 40%, there would be mass demonstrations in the streets.

But if the government slowly, steadily, almost imperceptibly increased taxes by that amount over a decade, Canadians would not resist. How do I know? Because this is exactly what has happened in Canada.

Or how about traffic lights? Doesn't it always seem to take a terrible accident before city officials put in pedestrian crossing lights? But taxes and traffic lights are small issues compared to race and sex equality. Unfortunately, the same rule of thumb applies.

If outrageous racist policies were ever implemented in a single move, no nation would accept them. However, if a racist system were to evolve slowly, irresistibly, bureaucratically, many nations would succumb.

Again, how do I know? Because it happened in the period leading up to racism in Nazi

Germany and Apartheid South Africa. The desensitizing, legalistic approaches to racism were so innocuous, that the good people of these lands slept.

The Nazis campaigned for a decade before seizing power, and Apartheid evolved from a series of labor laws over the years. They were not overnight revolutions.

What would we have done in pre-war Germany? Would we have opposed the early stages of South African Apartheid? We'd like to think we would have; but I'm not so sure.

Because most people are too busy doing more important things than to fight every infringement on their freedoms. Most people leave the rights battles to others. Most people, like the frog, will only react when there is a crisis.

Again, how do I know? Well, it is happening today, here at the University of Alberta. A legalistic, bureaucratic document called "Opened Doors" is going before the Board of Governors for final approval in December. This document, among other things, calls for racially-based hiring policies and campus speech codes.

How do you feel about U of A choosing students based on race? Well, on page xii of the document, there are plans to "ensure that designated groups are reasonably represented in the student body." Those assurances are racial quotas.

How about a racist/sexist hiring policy for professors? Check out page 58, where each race is guaranteed a certain number of positions. Take the category, "University Teachers". In the next five years, six aboriginal and eighty-eight women must be hired to reach quotas. How utterly condescending, how humiliating to women and aboriginals. How racist.

So, if you are interested in teaching at U of A after you get your degree, you'd better get in your proper line. There is a line up if you are aboriginal. If you are a woman, there is another line up—both of these are fast tracks.

But if you were unfortunate enough to be born Ukrainian, Jewish, Italian, Polish, Greek... well, your race is not one of the "designated groups."

Should we be worried about this racist, sexist plan? Well, again on page 58, we read "it is important to note that neither numerical nor proportional targets should be considered as anything more than a first step..."

I knew that already, for I have studied the implementation of racist laws in Germany and South Africa. There always has to be a first step, and it is always the mildest. In Germany, the Jews went first, then the Gypsies. Then came the trade unionists and the Catholics.

In "Opening Doors," the racist hiring quotas are first. Then the racial student quotas. Then the speech codes.

So will we allow ourselves to be slowly, irresistibly enslaved by these new merchants of racism? Will we boil alive like the frog? Or will we stop the cancer while we still can?

Freedom is not something that can be handed down from one generation to the next. It cannot be bequeathed from father to son or mother to daughter.

It must be fought for and preserved every day by every generation.

So what will you do? Will you sit idle as many did in Germany? Or will you take your turn defending freedom and racial equality? I thank God that we still have the choice.

The Grad ZONE

by Timothy T. Buskard, President

This week I would like to talk about how the Executive communicates with the graduate student body.

Currently, the Executive is comprised of the president, two VPs (2nd VP is vacant), treasurer, the secretary, and eight faculty representatives (currently there are only five faculty reps since no one has come forward from Arts, Education, nor Forestry). These representatives are responsible for communication between the Executive and the students. If students have any questions or topics to discuss

with the Executive, they should contact their respective representative. The representative should be known to the students and the departments for which they are responsible. The representatives will try to post information regularly in the same location so that students stay informed, but with a wide variety in Faculty size and the missing representatives, the task is difficult and some departments may be missed.

To increase the contact with each department, we have proposed that a fundamental change in the membership of the executive may be made. Instead of faculty representation, we will be seeking depart-

mental representation. This will triple the number of seats of the executive and will lead to better representation and an increase in information transfer in both directions. I realise that we will probably have more vacancies, but the total number of bodies on the executive should increase. I would like to think about this proposal as it requires a change to the constitution. Also, I ask you to think about two very important points, namely 1) if you think that is a good idea and 2) if you will be that person representing your department. If you are not willing to be that person, who will? If you don't have a rep, then how can you stay informed? Think about it! →

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

CAMPUS

CONTINUING, ADULT, MATURE & PART-TIME UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

18 November 1994
10:30 A.M.
Room 104 SUB

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