

On the Smoking Ban

By David Gallant

It was a sad moment for human rights at UPEI when the Vol College banned cigarette smoking on all its premises. Before accepting the total ban of smoking on UPEI premises, students at UPEI should do some soul-searching and grasp the implications of this discriminatory action.

Medical research claims, with the "proof" of statistics, that smoking is harmful to all living creatures. Any conclusion based on statistical manipulation can not be truly scientific. Not too long ago, coffee was said to cause pancreatic cancer by some medical researchers; now, the same researchers state that no link exists between coffee and pancreatic cancer. Before, salt was undoubtedly supposed to cause high blood pressure; recent medical reports indicate that salt causes high blood pressure only in some susceptible individuals.

Statistics can only show a possible causation; they are not an irrefutable proof. The statement

that cigarette smoking causes cancer is purely based on statistical arguments and therefore cannot be accepted as absolute scientific proof by any true scholar. For those who are paranoid about the effects of cigaret smoke, there are two possible solutions: either the individuals will organize to ban cigarette smoking for all people in their immediate surroundings, or the individuals can wear gas masks to filter out cigarette smoke. They naturally want to take the easy way out by totally banning smoking.

In the past, only men smoked cigarettes and no one complained about it. Today, more women are smoking than ever before and everyone talks about the evils of cigarette smoking. Is smoking considered to be "unladylike"? Is this anti-smoking campaign a manifestation of sexism among men?

Smoking seems to be conducive to the solitary life, for it makes the hours spent in isolation more

tolerable. It is my belief that in the past without great individuals who led the solitary life, Western civilization would not have progressed as it has. Western civilization was passed on from the ancient Greeks to the Renaissance scholars through the efforts of Christian monks, who spent much of their solitary lives reading and copying the knowledge contained in priceless ancient works. Little wonder that great thinkers such as Bertrand Russell, Winston Churchill, and Sigmund Freud were heavy smokers. Despite their bad habit, these great individuals lived to very old age. It appears that among great thinkers in our culture who contributed much to our cultural heritage, many enjoyed smoking tobacco. Can we dismiss such great individuals as sick smoking addicts without a second thought?

To ban cigarette smoking without due consideration is a serious violation of human rights. Except in Iran, smoking is still allowed

Reagan Shouldn't Meet Gorbachev

The twentieth century is a century characterized by the human struggle towards attaining and maintaining democracy. Millions of lives have been sacrificed in this noble struggle against various forms of dictatorship by either the right or the left. The democratic system may not be the perfect political system, but it is the least evil of all forms of government. It has over two hundred years and has served our people well.

It is the wish of many people in the world that the United States and the Soviet Union will come to an agreement for a mutual reduction in their nuclear arsenals. Many have placed their hopes for world peace upon the results of future summits between President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev.

However, based on the democratic ideal and principle, I oppose President Reagan's summits with Party General Secretary Gorbachev. This is an affront to our democratic ethic. As we know, Mr. Gorbachev is only a party boss of a political party and does not occupy an official government position. From a legal point of view, any agreement between Re-

gion and Mr. Gorbachev is not legally binding, as Gorbachev is only a private citizen. Even if the Soviet government can be coerced to accept what Gorbachev negotiates on its behalf, this process contributes to the deterioration of democracy in the world. To plant the seeds of democracy in the Soviet Union, we must oppose this unwise action of President Reagan. (Of course, if the Soviet Union were to send its government leader to the summit or Mr. Gorbachev were to take over the position of government leader, then I would welcome the summit.)

I wish to make myself perfectly clear: I am not opposed to world peace; I am not opposed to a reduction in the nuclear arsenals of the world; I only want to uphold the sacred principle of democracy. I believe my opposition will not harm the prospects for world peace. Besides, both President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev are insincere in their peace negotiations. They only want to gain an upper hand in the war of political relations and win the praise of naive people who think peace is within easy reach.

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Letters

On behalf of the World University Service of Canada — the UPEI Organization — I am pleased to have the opportunity to welcome all freshmen and returning students.

WUSC is a non-profit, non-governmental organization involving not only students and faculty members but also the island community as a whole in social and international development.

The organization is administering and organizing projects to meet the objectives of international cooperation and development. The most major of these projects is the refugee sponsorship program. The program enables a student refugee to escape often squalid conditions and provides him/her with a chance to study at UPEI.

To provide a funding base, a referendum has been established at UPEI. The referendum enables every student to contribute \$2 each to the refugee scholarship program.

Since the organization is open to students, faculty and everyone who is interested in international development, anyone is encouraged to participate and volunteer by working a few hours on some particular projects; anyone can take a coordinating position and

organize an activity and secure a higher executive position. WUSC's people: JOIN US. The UPEI WUSC office is situated in Main Building Room 141. For more information, please call 566-0426.

Very truly yours,
Sam Okello

Dear Students:

Yet another school year has begun, and undoubtedly you are getting back in the swing of things—both academically and, for a few of you, socially. As in all other years, interested students are needed to sit on various Senate Committees. These committees provide you with a valuable opportunity to learn the internal workings of the university while serving your fellow students. If you're interested in learning more about these committees or, in actually sitting on these committees, please feel free to drop down to the S.U. Barn or call 566-0648. Thank you for your time.

Paul Ledwell
VP Academic

A Message from MAPUS

I want to welcome you at the beginning of this new term. Do you know that you are part of a growing trend across Canada, that an increasing number of older people are returning to school, often on a part-time basis? Do you know that you make up over thirty percent of the student body at UPEI? Do you know that you are important to this university?

MAPUS is an organization of part-time and older-than-average students. It's your organization: to help iron out any wrinkles you might encounter during the term, to help meet your needs, and to make the way easier for those who follow in future years. But — we can't help you if you don't tell us what you want or if you don't give us any feedback, so come to the monthly meetings and participate in making MAPUS effective. Get involved.

Jackie Schofield
MAPUS President



Editor:

I object strongly to the article "Three Women Are Better Than One," by Oliver Twit, published in the first issue of the Gem. The article is blatantly sexist and the title is pornographic and misleading. It portrayed women as being neurotic and secretly wanting men to worship them. In addition, the article contained many disgusting double entendres.

My girlfriend called the Gem a sexist newspaper and threatened to break up with me if I do not attack that article. Of course, I was unaffected by her threat and am writing this on my own free will.

I looked up the Psychology Today article mentioned in Twit's article and saw that it had nothing to do with female personality whatsoever. Mr. Twit must have a grudge against Dr. Sternberg, whom I happened to meet once.

Obviously, this Twit fellow has a severe insecurity problem with respect to women and resolves it by trying to downgrade them. I am thoroughly disgusted by his article and am surprised it was not censored. If the Gem does not mend its ways, I will not write any more letters to the Gem, in protest of Mr. Twit's degrading article.

Kevin McLean