

# People's Forum

## Jews for Jesus article queried

Dear Editor:

The article "Jews For Jesus Extend Special Invitation," had some inaccuracies I feel should be corrected.

The Trinity and salvation through a personal relationship with the Messiah are NOT implied in the Passover Seder.

Jews believe the Messiah is yet to come and when the Messiah comes we will have peace on earth.

The Passover Seder is observed by ALL Jews, not only Orthodox Jews.

The feast in Jewish homes taking "four hours" is not quite accurate.

Passover is the story of the Exodus from Egypt and the freedom

from being slaves under the Pharaoh. When the Israelites were told to leave Egypt they could only gather their personal belongings and flour and water to take with them into the desert. The matzoh (unleavened bread) which is eaten for eight days of Passover is symbolic of the bread made from the water and flour the Israelites took with them.

The story of Passover is told before the meal is eaten in almost every Jewish home on the first night of Passover.

Nowhere in the story can be found the Trinity or anything relating or referring to it.

The fact that Christ and his disciples last supper may have

been the Passover Seder is the only reference to Christ and the Passover.

As for the Passover meal it does not take any longer to eat than any other. The four hours referred to in your article also includes the grace before and after meals as well as the Passover story I have already mentioned in the above paragraphs.

Sincerely,

Ron Shames, Georgetown.

P.S. - Jews For Jesus are Jews who have converted to Christianity and should be considered Christians, not Jews. One cannot be both a Jew and a Christian any more than one can be both a Moslem and a Catholic.

## Petro Canada cost us plenty

Dear Editor:

In the Globe and Mail, Page B2, March 8, the headline reads 'Gas probe extended nation wide.' The article goes on to say a federal investigation of gas prices in Sudbury and Ottawa has been expanded to other parts of the country. However, people should not expect quick results of the probe.

As a Libertarian, since when could we ever expect quick results by a government body? It seems these types of things benefit the participants more than the people paying the bill - taxpayers.

Since we own our own gas company, which at the time it was

purchased was to give us info on oil and gas prices, I wonder why we do not use this info? One problem, I suppose, is that Petro Canada prices are sometimes more expensive than other brands. However, we did purchase Petro Canada for this purpose. Perhaps a phone call could get the information on prices, and eliminate the cost of this probe. I assume we still do call the shots at Petro Canada. After all, the company cost us plenty.

Thanks,  
John Shadbolt,  
Libertarian,  
Acton, Ontario.

## AIDS tied to homosexual acts

Dear Editor:

A few days after a letter of mine was published by the Toronto Sun as the Letter of the day on Dec. 27, 1989, I was invited by Wayne MacLean to participate in a CFRB phone-in show, together with Toronto councillor Jack Layton. The question was homosexuality and AIDS. From statistics showing that 128 men but no women died of AIDS in Toronto (in 1988) I was implying that AIDS is strongly correlated to homosexual activity. Of course councillor Layton did not want to agree. He also did not "believe" that probabilities multiply (i.e. if the rate of survival from HIV infection, using condoms, is 90% per year, it is only 81% for a

period of two years and less than 50% for seven).

Now, statistics from the Federal Center for AIDS in Ottawa (AIDS in Canada, dated Oct. 1, 1990) show how homosexual/bisexual activity remains the most frequent risk factor: 3,241 cases or 83%. The next highest identified causes are blood transfusions: 3.9% (is our blood supply really safe?) and injections by homosexual/bisexual drug users: 3.4%. Injection by "straight" drug users accounts for only 0.8%! Even more surprisingly the number of homosexual/bisexual women infected was 0, or 0%. The total number of infected women was 227, the highest percentage of whom were

infected through sexual contact with a person at risk (presumably bisexual).

In view of these facts, would it not be reasonable to try and save lives by introducing strong measures such as routine testing and contact tracing? These techniques helped us long ago in the fight against syphilis, but they seem to be politically unacceptable today. Would an epidemic of cholera be handed this way? Is it possibly because of "modern taboos" about sexual behaviour?

Sincerely,

Giuseppe Gori,

Executive Vice President,  
Family Coalition Party  
of Ontario

## Youths are warned about deadly vices

Dear Editor:

Of course I smoked, and drank too much, when I was really young, but fortunately I gave up both before my lungs and liver went up in smoke, and worse.

I know how difficult it is, to stop either vice; but after cancer of the throat hit me, the specialists warned me of the consequences that could follow unless I ceased.

The best cure and advice I can

give to the young people today is, never start; it may look smart and "cool," but believe me kids, it certainly isn't. In other words, it isn't worth risking your future years for the few moments your young lives think you really look grownup!

Sincerely,  
Joseph Stamp,  
Georgetown.

## Opinion

# Spicer predicted Citizens' Forum fiasco

OTTAWA - When Keith Spicer agreed last November to head the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future, he did say that the whole business had the potential for fiasco.

Right now, it's beginning to look as though he enjoys the gift of prophecy.

While it's too early to predict a fiasco by the time the forum's July 1 deadline rolls around, there is clearly an element of the absurd in the way things are going at the moment. When you get politicians calling for a commission to investigate another commission, you can tell something's wrong.

There were such calls after it was revealed that the Spicer group might spend \$27 million, or 2½ times the original estimate. While this may seem in keeping with the usual government overruns, the bickering that's going on certainly isn't in keeping with anything.

What we must keep reminding ourselves is that the forum was established to find ways of

holding the country together. So far, the commission seems more preoccupied with holding itself together.

It's obviously not easy - not when you have members spouting off in all directions and it's necessary for the chairman to issue press releases about apparent dissension in the ranks.

The latest kerfuffle - as this column is committed to paper - began with comments from commissioner Robert Normand about the per diem being charged by other members. Although claiming his remarks were misinterpreted, Mr. Normand left the impression that some of his colleagues were charging \$600 a day for time not spent on commission business.

### STRONG REACTION

Naturally, there was an outcry in Parliament. Ever since a group of breakaway MPs formed the Bloc Quebecois to advance the cause of independence, anything involving national unity generates a noisy reaction.

Ottawa Bureau  
by  
Stewart MacLeod  
Thomson News Service



Actually, it's rather amusing to see the Bloc members so concerned about unity issues.

But it's not just Bloc members. Sheila Cops, the deputy Liberal leader, wants the Commons public accounts committee to take a close look at the forum's administration. "The commission has no credibility while this cloud is hanging over its head," she says. "There are allegations of padding expense accounts and misuse of public funds."

Mr. Spicer, naturally, doesn't

agree. "People don't give a sweet you-know-what about the administration of the commission," he says. "They are more interested in Canada."

One supposes it's not beyond the ability of many Canadians to be interested in both.

Anyway, it all meant the commission spent another day behind closed doors, working on its own unity problems. There were reports that Mr. Spicer offered his resignation. Things ended with a prepared statement about there being "no evidence of abuse of public trust."

This aside, the forum seems to be having more than the usual share of problems as it crisscrosses the country, from town hall to town hall, trying to gather and digest the opinions of one million Canadians.

Whether any new ideas have emerged is anyone's guess.

### BAD START

The forum got off to a shaky start last November when Prime Minister Brian Mulroney heard

that a group of Liberals planned to establish such a forum. He made a pre-emptive strike and hurriedly announced a 12-member group under the guidance of Mr. Spicer.

Some members were asked to serve only hours before the announcement. A couple of members quit shortly afterwards.

And there was no end of confusion in the first few days. It seemed no one knew what the group would do, or how it would do it. In fact, it's still not absolutely clear these questions have been answered.

At first, the commission indicated it wouldn't go into Quebec, where a provincial commission was looking at Canada's future from a decidedly different vantage point. There was an outcry of disbelief and, for whatever reason, the commission plunged into the province - where it didn't get a highly positive response.

It's a mad scramble that begs controversy.

# Bankers are criticized in special report

Business people say bankers are slow to lend and quick to call in their loans. Bankers say owners of small businesses don't understand finance. In the ongoing war between entrepreneurs and their bankers, the bankers appear to be waving a white flag.

The Canadian Bankers Association (CBA) asked two professors from the University of Western Ontario to study their members' dealings with small business customers. The resulting 376-page report concludes that bankers explain themselves poorly and change lending officers too frequently, among other things.

But while they may have been arrogant in the past, bankers say they are determined to do better in the future. Their small

business customers may be forgiven for sounding skeptical.

"The banks continue to treat small business accounts as a nuisance," said Brian Gray, of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB). As a result, more of the federation's members are turning to credit unions, he said.

### BLAME BUSINESS

While the CBA study criticized bankers, it also had a few sharp words for their customers. Entrepreneurs have limited awareness of other sources of funds, bankers charge. As well, they wrongly believe that banks should take risks. But the banks say their business is to provide low-risk loans; banks are not in the business of providing venture capital.

Your Business  
by  
Dianne Maley  
Thomson News Service



"We are lending not our capital, but depositors' funds," said Helen Sinclair, president of the CBA. A cynic might wonder why bankers freely lend depositors' money to Third World countries, real estate speculators and takeover artists. This policy

has cost them billions in bad loans. Whatever the case, bankers do not seem inclined to make a bad situation worse by losing money on loans to small business customers as well.

Some parts of the CBA study will not be made public, which annoys the CFIB. For example, the study's authors analyzed credit files of the Big Six banks as well as problem loan cases and inquiries from small business. They will not reveal which banks served customers better, or worse.

In some ways, the gap between lender and borrower may be too wide to bridge. Each borrower knows in his or her heart of hearts that the business will fly if only he or she can get enough capital; bankers are not in-

terested in financing their customers' dreams - unless the customer already has a substantial business.

Meanwhile, bankers are so leery of entrepreneurs, and so eager to cover their own hides, that they bother their customers at the slightest sign of trouble, real or imaginary. Bankers are quick to call in loans, thus causing the very insolvency they so fear.

The solution, if there is one, will be found in the changing times: prudent business people are shifting from debt to equity, and entrepreneurs would be well advised to do the same. If you have to rely on borrowed money, your business will always be vulnerable to rising interest rates and tight credit.