

Forces International: smoking is good for you

**Non-profit organization
holds world's first annual
"Smoking Day"**

By Sean Palter
and Matt Hansen, Excalibur

A non-profit organization dedicated to ridding the world of "junk science" anti-smoking messages says smoking is actually good for you.

Forces International, which has chapters in Canada, the U.S., Europe and New Zealand, marked Oct. 12 the first International Smoking Day, celebrating smokers, smoking, and tolerance for the lifestyle.

The event was organized to show people that smokers are being mistreated. "Smokers are being persecuted, locked out of jobs, and [are] unwelcome anywhere indoors and sometimes even in parks," said Enoch Ludlow, president of Forces' U.S. chapter.

"Yet we're your neighbours and family members. The public needs to be reminded of that and start calling for an end to the injustice."

Cigarette fans took Oct. 12 to proclaim that smoking is a fun, social and healthy habit. Smokers say it is a breath of fresh air to celebrate the joys of nicotine. In fact, the historical reason Oct. 12 was chosen "International Smoking Day" is that Christopher Columbus came to the Americas 500 years ago and, in doing so, discovered tobacco.

"We hope that the 1.2 billion people who are the target of the largest behaviour control effort in the history of mankind gradually realize the tremendous dangers involved in not reacting against the state [which] forces us to think what is 'good,'" said Forces'

chief executive officer Gian Turci.

Although Health Canada claims smoking causes lung cancer, Andrew Randell, a York student and smoker, believes there are far worse things than having a few innocent daily puffs.

"My grandmother smoked 10 packs a day her whole life, and she was 81 when she got lung cancer and passed away. So how can I take the warnings seriously when I see that she lived for so long?"

Second-year mass communications student Parmveer Singh called celebrating smoking "utterly stupid."

Turci however, says it is important to commemorate smokers.

"We need to rid ourselves of a guilt that has been inculcated through systematic propaganda and misinformation because we hurt no one. The tobacco wars are but the first of an endless series of health-based impositions stemming from an old, frightening Nazi concept: being healthy is a duty of the citizen, who can be punished if he does not comply. It is not a coincidence that the first anti-smoking propaganda was part of the national socialist state program," said Turci.

While Forces suggests that smoking hurts no one, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) reports that environmental tobacco smoke kills between 40,000 and 68,000 Americans each year.

"Our government is nothing like the Nazis. We do not punish people who smoke by physically hurting them. We make laws. These laws are in place to protect the citizens who do not want to inhale second-hand smoke," said an NCI member who asked not to be named.

Forces is proclaiming 2002 the year of the smoker.

Hallowe'en heap

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- The Jack-O-Lantern originates from an old Irish folktale about a trickster named Jack. Jack trapped the Devil in a tree by carving the image of a cross on its base. In exchange for his freedom, Satan promised to never bother Jack again. When Jack died, he could not enter heaven, but was refused access to hell. Satan gave Jack an ember set in a carved out turnip to light his way in limbo.

- The world's largest pumpkin weighed in at 1140 pounds.

- The Catholic church based the celebration of All Saints Day (Hallowmas) on the Pagan

celebration of All Hollow's eve. The Christian celebration lasted two days; the first was devoted to the celebration of saints and the second honored the dead. This celebration is still in effect in Mexico, where the similar Dia De Los Muertos is celebrated.

- Originally, people would dress up to ward off evil spirits. Celts believed that the end of the fall season linked the land of the living and the land of the dead. Spirits were believed to possess bodies to avoid the spirit world. Tribal people would put out the fires in their homes and walk along village streets to keep the souls of dead ancestors away.

International News Bits

Europe

Portugal: Chernobyl has made medical history, accounting for the largest ever group of human cancers associated with a known cause on a known date, the European Cancer Conference heard in Lisbon on Wednesday.

Nearly 2,000 cases of thyroid cancer have been linked to the world's worst nuclear accident, which occurred in Ukraine on April 26, 1986, and the number is still rising, according to some of the world's most prestigious cancer researchers.

Professor Dillwyn Williams, of The Strangeways Research Laboratory, Cambridge University, told the meeting, "Four years after the accident, an excess of thyroid cancers was noted among children who had been exposed to fall-out from the disaster. That increase has continued and new cases are still being seen in those who were children at the time of the accident." (ENS) October 23, 2001

Africa

UGANDA: African countries have failed to utilize the free access to satellite broadcasting recently offered by the Egyptian government to counter what is regarded by some as adverse western media coverage, a top Egyptian official has said.

Nabil Osman, Chairman of the State Information Service, said access to the multi-million dollar Nile Satellite (NILESAT) was offered to African countries in the mid-1990s but to date no government has taken up the offer.

"The offer followed a long cry by our sister countries that Africa has always been painted negatively by the powerful and influential western media. We (Egypt) took up the request and made an offer, which has not been used at all," Osman told a group of African

journalists currently on a training course in Cairo.

Nabil Osman was speaking Oct. 13 at the El Moudaraat House, where the training of the journalists from 23 African countries, including Egypt, is taking place. The training is organized by the Cairo-based Union of African Journalists (UAF) and financed by the Egyptian Ministry of Information with support from the State Information Service and the Foreign Ministry.

He said the western media argue that their audiences enjoy stories related to disasters like floods, coup d'etats, wars, famine, epidemics and other human catastrophes. "The western media is driven by profit made from stories which suit their audiences. So Africa will never depend on these correspondents," he added.

"That is why they have always focussed attention on such things in Africa. So we came out to assist Africa in telling the other side of the story, especially on development issues," he said. "The opportunity for using NILESAT for this purpose still stands," he added. (The Monitor, Kampala) October 24, 2001

The Americas

BRAZIL: Swapping foreign debt for ecological protections could ease developing countries' financial burdens and save the rainforests at the same time, Brazil's environment minister said Monday.

"The International Monetary Fund and World Bank have started to worry about poverty but, until now, they haven't linked debt to the environment," Jose Sarney Filho said. "I must emphasize the need to reformulate debt-conversion mechanisms to reach forms of environmental activity including the protection of biodiversity, reforestation, and ecotourism."

Sarney made his remarks at the opening of the 13th Forum of Latin American and

Caribbean Environmental Ministers, where ministers from 16 nations are working on a plan of action to take with them to the U.N.-sponsored 2002 World Summit for Sustainable Development. The summit, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, is intended to take stock of the world's progress since the 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro.

He suggested that Latin America and the Caribbean, which are home to about two-thirds of the world's remaining tropical forests and about one-third of all renewable water sources, should be able to leverage these assets in exchange for economic benefits.

Sarney estimates that Brazil will need some US\$50 billion over the next 10 years to protect the environment and foster sustainable development.

Asia

North Korean: The United Nations World Food Programme announced this week that it is rushing emergency rations to tens of thousands of flood victims in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), following freak rains in the southeast of the country that caused massive damage to crops, homes, roads and bridges. Eighty-one people were killed, 33 people are missing, and 84 were seriously injured.

The World Food Programme (WFP) aims to mobilize and deliver one million tons of food aid to more than 7.6 million North Koreans. It is the agency's single largest operation worldwide, bigger than the urgent relief effort being staged in Afghanistan to deliver 52,000 tons a month.

"The rains that hit the east coast on October 9th and 10th were the worst experienced in the area in living memory," said Rick Corsino, World Food Programme country director for the DPRK. (ENS) October 22, 2001

Annual Harrison House pumpkin drop

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sacrifice has received attention from various media sources.

As explained by Harrisonian Iain Hollett, the night will proceed as follows: At about eleven o'clock the organ music will fire up and gradually the pumpkin processioners will make their way out of Harrison house over to Joy Kidd where the witches of Lady Dunn will be waiting. At that point the pumpkin will be blessed by our Bishop and then the processioners gather around the main lounge where the pumpkin proceeds up to the roof. At that point some speeches are made and the lit pumpkin is ceremoniously sacrificed to the world.

Abbie Brinkman added that the witches were incorporated because originally Harrison house was an all-male residence,

so they would take the pumpkin there as an offering to the females of Lady Dunn.

As you may have already heard, there is howling at the moon every night at 10 pm by Harrison's Huskies the week before the sacrifice to let people in the residence community know that the great pumpkin is coming. "The great pumpkin sacrifice has united Harrison House and members for generations" proudly remarked Hollett. Associate Director of residential life John Craighead remarked that the sacrifice is a "very positive contribution" and it "adds richness to community living."

The pumpkin's three eyes and curving mouth is a representation of the Roman God Janis and conveys the ups and downs of university life. "If you cover one eye you'll see a sad face and if you cover the other eye you'll see a happy face" said Ms

Brinkman and Mr. Hollett added "the sad face is supposed to be frowning down on those who don't take their academics seriously and the happy face is looking at those who achieve their potential and have academic success."

The event is always handled by Harrison house with true professionalism. Campus security says the Sacrifice has always been "well-organized" and there has "never been a concern in the past". Campus police are hired to watch over things and the robed Harrisonians have fire repellant clothing.

The residence and residential communities can watch from a safe distance while the ceremony takes place. It is the 29th annual Pumpkins Sacrifice and it is essential towards academic success. Give your emotional support to the fall of the great pumpkin.

Halloween Party

THE
CELLAR
EST. 1994

Pub & Grill

COMING SOON

Fri Nov 2

Crabbe & Wentworth
Mountain Promotion Party
Lots of Prizes/Giveaways

Sat Nov 3

GNU & The
Ragtime Millionaires

Mon Nov 5

Ember Swift &
Painting Daisies

Wed Nov 7

Funky Underpants & friends
(New weekly Gig)



1st, 2nd & 3rd Prizes for
Best Costumes