

THE PRESS OPINIONS

Free Afghanistan

To the Editor:

Mikhail Gorbachev's recent attempts to portray himself as "Mr. Nice Guy" are laughable when one looks at what the Soviet Union is doing in Afghanistan.

Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan on Christmas Day, 1979, the Soviets have pursued an agenda of kidnapping, terrorism, and genocide. One example of this kidnapping is that the Soviets actually kidnap Afghan children from their parents and take them to the Soviet Union for Soviet indoctrination. This will insure that those children will forget their own heritage, and become subservient to Soviet ideology.

The worst example of Soviet terrorism is the toy bomb. The Soviets fly helicopters over Afghan villages, dropping pretty "toys" for the children. These really are not toys at all, they are bombs that explode in the children's hands.

I have seen the results of some of these toy bombs myself, and I assure you they are a very real thing. Paralysis and loss of limbs are a comparatively mild result of these "toys".

The Soviets are also engaging in genocide in Afghanistan. That is, they are systematically trying to wipe out the Afghan people. Toy bombs, MIGS, and gunships are only the beginning. Because of this, the Afghans seek refuge in neighboring Pakistan and Iran.

In fact, over one-half of the world's refugees are Afghans. But even in refuge the Afghans are not safe. Just last week the Soviet-controlled Afghan airforce bombed a refugee village in Pakistan.

You would be correct to ask why the American people do not hear more about the Afghan issue. It is basically because the American press sees it as old news. It is not old news, however. In fact, it is a crisis for America, because humans are dying. Many groups in Washington, and across the nation, see this crisis for what it is.

One of the most outspoken of these groups is the Committee for a Free Afghanistan in Washington. They work closely with the Mujahedeen, a primary Afghan rebel force, to seek justice in Afghanistan. One member of the CFA, Moriah Lucas, snuck into Afghanistan last November to see what was going on for herself.

She was there for eight days, no small feat considering the Soviet promise that any Westerners found in Afghanistan would be executed as spies. Moriah survived (unlike one member of her party) and is now lecturing on what she saw inside Afghanistan. Please watch for her, and enlighten yourself on the Afghan issue.

We Americans need to become enlightened on the plight of the Afghan people. Then we can write our legislators and ask them to pressure the Soviets for a free Afghanistan. Please do not be fooled. The Afghans are in a terrible situation and they are only asking you to listen to what has happened to their homeland.

Kevin Berry
Chairman, College Republicans

Vote yes for SASU

To the Editor:

This coming Tuesday and Wednesday, April 14 and 15, there will be a referendum on campus (in the Library and Corey Union between 10 a.m. and 9 p.m.) to decide if Cortland will maintain their chapter membership in the Student Association of State Universities (SASU).

A Yes vote will be to increase SASU's membership dues \$.50 per student per semester to \$2 per student per semester. A No vote will discontinue SASU's funding and presence on campus.

SASU is a state wide student advocacy organization which unites the Student Associations around the state. SASU works in the State Legislature and SUNY Central to ensure that the cost of a SUNY education is as low as possible while maintaining high quality and accessibility. SASU also organizes campuses annually to resist cuts to financial aid and tuition increases.

This past Saturday was a fine example of SASU's influences, they organized a Financial Aid Rally on campus and brought Congressman Boehlert and two Syracuse television stations to campus.

SASU's president is, by virtue of his position, the only SUNY student Trustee which gives students across the state, including SUCC, direct input into the rate of tuition and dormitory costs as well as many other policy issues.

I encourage you to vote yes next Tuesday and Wednesday to keep SASU on campus. If yes, SASU will have a campus based budget and a part time organizer on campus to ensure active SUCC students involvement and representation in Albany. So vote student power, vote yes to SASU.

James Cullen
CCSA President

In the April 3, 1987 issue of the *Press*, it was incorrectly noted in "Nicaragua threatened by contras," that "all" contras are ex-guards, when in fact only the military leaders of the contras are ex-guards. It was also incorrectly stated that 15 percent of the population is younger than 19, while in fact it is 50 percent which is younger.

SASU benefits many

To the Editor:

I found Clark Tiger's letter to the editor in last week's *Press* to be quite interesting. It brought back a distinct feeling of déjà vu, with Clark accusing NYPIRG once again of its unfair funding process. It almost appeared to me that Clark used parts of a letter to the editor from last year, only this time, after the word "NYPIRG," he inserted "and SASU."

Clark seems to think that having NYPIRG and SASU present budgets to the Financial Board will solve CCSA's "supposed" financial troubles. Having been involved in CCSA for a total of four years, serving as CCSA president last year, I don't see how this would help. Clark makes some statements that I have some serious doubts about.

Clark asserts that NYPIRG and SASU "are no better than any other organization on campus..." They never said they were; but they are no doubt different. The reason why SASU run referendums on its member campuses is directly related to SASU's philosophy.

First of all SASU, the Student Association of the State University, is a membership organization. As the nation's oldest and largest statewide student association, SASU represents over 350,000 SUNY students at the SUNY, State and Federal level.

They can say they represent these students because the students themselves decide whether or not to pay membership dues through the Mandatory Activity Fee.

Students, through their student association, actually pay dues to belong. Also, by using the referendum, the process is fully democratized. Every student at Cortland has the opportunity to decide whether or not Cortland should be members of SASU.

And students at Cortland will have the opportunity to decide this Tuesday and Wednesday whether or not to remain members of SASU. (On campus students vote in Corey Union, off campus students vote in the library.)

As someone who experienced Cortland without SASU, and Cortland with SASU, I would hope that students vote yes to remain members of SASU. The reasons and benefits are many.

The most important reason is that SASU has direct influence on SUNY student issues. The president of SASU is automatically a member of SUNY Board of Trustees and has a large say in the tuition rate, dormitory rates, and many other policy issues affecting SUNY students.

SASU has successfully worked to defeat numerous attempts to increase SUNY tuition, while at the same time has worked to see increases and expansions of financial aid programs, especially TAP. SASU has also worked successfully with UUP, the professor's union, to eliminate proposed faculty cuts in past years.

SASU advocates high quality higher education at the lowest possible price. SASU has always placed access to SUNY as their number one priority and will continue to do so in the years to come.

On March 4, 1986, the New York State Senate passed Resolution number 494 commending SASU as the positive and responsible voice of the students throughout SUNY.

This resolution was introduced by Senator LaValle, who is Chairperson of the Senate Higher Education Committee. The New York State Senate recognizes SASU for its work for SUNY students, and Cortland students should as well.

By voting yes for SASU on Tuesday or Wednesday, you will help to see that Cortland students stay members of SASU. And if Cortland stays as member of SASU, you will help to ensure the students of SUNY a unified voice, fighting for their rights as SUNY students.

Lisa Codispoti
1985-86 CCSA President

Cultural educational project seems promising

To the Editor:

Last week in a letter to the Editor, Joel Shatzky stressed the importance of experience over ideology and book knowledge in making international policy decisions. The letter expressed the sentiment that we too often advocate positions regarding foreign nations before we understand the cultural context in which we are operating.

Unfortunately as students we are seldom afforded the opportunity to gain first hand knowledge of other cultures. Travel is costly and time seldom available. How then can we deepen our understanding of peoples from foreign nations?

Although students and administrators have tried to increase the diversity of cultural experience available to students, the campus remains sadly limited in its exposure to cultures other than its own.

Perhaps the most successful attempt to broaden cultural awareness is the study abroad program. This program has provided many students with an indepth look at the lifestyles of others.

For the students who are accepted into the program, this culturally enriching experience may change their lives. But what about the other students on campus that do not get a chance to travel abroad? How can we increase the cultural awareness of the entire student body?

Obviously we cannot afford to send 5,000 students on a cultural education trip. What we can do is send a few students as campus representatives to a foreign nation to learn about their culture and then report back to us. A program has been designed that would enable students to do this.

If passed and adequately funded, the State University College at Cortland Student

Cultural Education Project will allow three students per year to travel over spring break to a foreign nation with all expenses paid.

Under the program a committee of students, overseen by CCSA and faculty representatives, will select a country whose culture we know little about. Any interested students may then submit a short "project proposal" stating why they wish to travel to this country and what aspects of the culture they will study.

From the proposals, three will be chosen as winners and the student authors will receive the travel privileges.

The trip will be highly structured (based on the project proposals) in order to make optimal use of the allotted time. Upon returning to the campus, the students will begin preparing for a required group presentation to the entire student body, allowing everyone to benefit from the experience.

It has been suggested that the students receive one credit through a faculty sponsor for the presentation. All materials collected by the students including photographs will become the property of CCSA and will be stored in a "Cultural Resource Library" available to all students.

If passed by student government, this program will be the first of its kind anywhere. It will cost each student 30 cents on their activity fee — a small price to pay considering what we'll get in return.

CCSA will be reviewing the program during the month of April and if approved, will appear as a question on a referendum in late April or early May. Students can then vote and decide if they would like to fund a program of this kind. I urge you to vote "Yes."

Jay Schneiderman
Graduate Student
Secondary Education

Letters to the Editor and opinion articles submitted for publication must be typewritten, double-spaced and received at *The Press* office in Room 111, Corey Union no later than 3 p.m. on the Monday before Friday's edition.

Letters should be no longer than 250 words and opinion articles must be no longer than 750 words.

The Press reserves the right to edit all submissions for brevity and clarity. *The Press* will attempt to edit in such a way as to preserve content.

Only one response to a Letter to the Editor or opinion article will be published per edition. Responses must be devoid of personal attacks or they will not be published. Anonymous letters and opinion articles will not be published.