

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR . . . LETTERS TO THE EDITOR . . . LETTERS TO THE EDITOR . . .

I am not afraid to be a Christian

What a perfect title for the article about the recent Loosely Woven concert in last weeks Chronicle - "Wizardsry Absolutely".

While I enjoyed greatly the contributions, time and effort made by Kerry Hile, Liz Stuckings and Georgina Clarke and other locals, I am sure that I was not the only Christian at that concert that was highly offended at the wording of one of their songs they sang.

It was only out of respect for my mother to save her being embarrassed, that I did not walk out mid song and "endured" the rest of the concert after they sang "I am not afraid".

I have never been more incensed, offended and enraged in such a short space of time.

How dare these people, whose concert was promoted in Christian churches, who were holding it in a place where the Lord is worshipped and in front of people who were expecting some Christian content (the majority of the audience were Christians) insult our Lord, His Word and our Christian faith in such a manner.

I could not believe that I was hearing fellow Christians singing words like "I am not afraid of your Jesus, I am not afraid of your Bible, I am not afraid of your Sabbath, I am not afraid of your praying" and the worst lines "I'm afraid of what you do in the name of your God!" and "The spirit of the wind won't make a killing off of sin or Satan".

Anyone who does not know the Lord or anything about the Christian faith could easily misconstrue these words, and the manner in which they were sung, as a protest against, and a degradation of, the Christian faith.

When I brought my objections to the organisers' notice after the concert, I was told that I was misunderstanding the message, that

the message of the song was that it was a protest against people causing terrorism and wars and being cruel in the name of their God and religion.

While I certainly do not condone the actions of people who create and cause these atrocious acts, I certainly believe that these words were an insult not only to my Lord on His ground, but also to my Bible and my Christian faith, which I hold very dear.

Other Christians who were at that concert that I have spoken to since, all said that they did not like the wording of that song, but that out of respect for the people that were performing they stayed, but that they really did not enjoy the concert from then on.

Shame the respect was not a two way street. It was also pointed out to me by another Christian, that the symbol that was used alongside the words to the chorus in the programme that they wanted everyone to sing along with, had Satanic overtones.

When I re-read the words with that in mind, it was quite obvious where those words came from.

When I have shown the actual words to other Christians who were not at the concert (which I was given by the organiser in the hope of "convincing me to change my mind") I have had comments from "How bizarre for people to sing such a song in a Christian environment" to "How could Christians sing those words?".

I received a phone call the following day from one of the organisers saying that they had had a meeting and that in the future they will be reading a short piece explaining what the song is about before they sing it, so that they do not offend any more people. While I appreciate the effort they went to accommodate my objections, may I make a further suggestion - just rewrite the song or don't sing it at all. No matter what explanation is

given, those words are highly offensive to those of us who have a deep, personal love for our Lord and who treasure the Bible and its contents and value highly our Christian walk with Him and consider ourselves truly blessed when God uses us to "do things in the name of our God".

I am not in any way criticising the Baptist Church for holding the concert in their hall, as I believe they have been let down by the organisers of this concert.

I also bear the organisers of this concert no malice or ill-will and have actually prayed that the Lord will forgive them because, upon reflection, I genuinely believe that they did not mean to cause any offence, they were just trying to raise money for a good cause.

If this is an example of these peoples' work, I am sure that I will not be the only person who has a deep personal relationship with our Lord and is proud to be a Christian, that will never support another of their concerts.

Sandy White

Alison, Dungog

Editor's note: Below is a copy of the song Mrs White has discussed in her letter.

I ain't afraid (Holly Near)

I ain't afraid of your Yahweh,
I ain't afraid of your Allah,

I ain't afraid of your Jesus,

I'm afraid of what you do in the name of your God.

I ain't afraid of your churches,
I ain't afraid of your temples, I ain't afraid of your praying, I'm afraid of what you do in the name of your God.

Rise up, to the higher power,
Free up from fear, it will devour you,
Watch out, for the ego of the hour,
The ones who say they know it
Are the one's who will impose it on you.

I ain't afraid of your Bible, I ain't afraid of your Torah, I ain't afraid of your Koran, Don't let the letter of the lord

Obscure the spirit of your love. I ain't afraid of your sabbath, I ain't afraid of your culture, I ain't afraid of your borders I'm afraid of what you do in the name of your God. I ain't afraid of your children, I ain't afraid of your music, I ain't afraid of your stories, I'm afraid of what you do in the name of your God.

Rise up, hear a higher story,
Free up from the gods of war and glory,
Watch out for the threat of purgatory,

The spirit of the wind won't make a killing off of sin and Satan.

Tanks and recycling cheaper than dam

The advice I have received in regard to the Tillegra Dam project is that it is unnecessary because house tanks in Gosford and recycling is cheaper than the dam. Also Dungog Shire Council, already unable to give the shire services necessary for resident health and safety (eg. roads, sewerage etc), will not be compensated for lack of rates income, more costly maintenance on state government facilities such as parks, rivers and now dams an other costs.

So we pay for the state government's knee jerk election promises.

There is only one light in the tunnel for us and that is that the state government is cash broke and budgeting for a \$750 million (some say \$3.5 billion) deficit to be handed down in May this year.

In Sydney we are doomed to less public transport, disastrous health facilities, rotten occupational health and safety laws, insufficient policing etc.etc.

Now the state government after wrecking Sydney is out to ruin the country areas particularly the Dungog Shire.

Tom Smith
Bingleburra