



A SCENE FROM JOAN OF ARC

(L-R) GEORGE SWIFT, WALTER MCEWEN, WERNER MOSER, RHODA LONGAPHIE

ST. JOAN OF ARC

Any play by George Bernard Shaw would constitute a great event in a University's intellectual life, but *St. Joan*, regarded as undoubtedly his greatest, takes on a very special importance. This, the first major contribution to religious drama in England since Marlowe's *Faustus* was presented in the College gymnasium on Friday, April 10 with a cast of twenty one, drawn from the ranks of the student body.

There have been many "Joans" written both before and after George Bernard's. Many of these were stored away after the first performance, and rightly so. *St. Joan* is a dangerous subject for a play, because it is of its own nature so horrifyingly dramatic.

The story of *St. Joan* presents the quasi-unsurmountable difficulty of portraying her as she was: a peasant girl

who dared, in order to defend her own personal views on the nature of her "voices", to face the power and authority of the Church and State, and would not give in to either

The composition is rather unusual. Five relatively short scenes prepare the audience for the great trial scene, which in turn is followed by a final epilogue. Playwright Shaw did not consider as important only the historical fact of Joan, but also the theological history of the Lorraine girl. For that reason, the epilogue, a dream sequence, brings us to 1920, the year of her canonization by Rome. After the tense dialogues of scenes V and VI, the epilogue is written in a rather light vein. Technically this was required and was the only possible solution if the play were to include the events which followed the climatic burning of Joan in Scene VI, the end of her earthly life.