

Antagonisms of War Years Are Forgotten At Bouvigne Seminar

It was the first evening at Breda, the site of the ISS Seminar. A small group of students were gathered about the piano, they were singing songs unfamiliar to us and only after a time did we realize that they were in German. They were German students. All the students about the piano were Germans. They were singing their songs, German songs.

At another end of the large lecture hall was a small group of Canadians and Britishers. Near the centre where the tables had not yet been cleared from dinner a Dutch student and a Norwegian were battling wits over the chess board. The canteen doors stood open and from within a French student could be heard in broken English explaining to a group of Danes the theme of his thesis for his doctorate degree in Economics.

The little discussion groups hummed away but above all these rather hushed voices echoed the loud clear chorus of the German song "Faria, Faria".

It was the second evening . . . the evening of the first social. A German student sat beside a Dutch girl—a girl who had her brother go to German labour camp and never return, whose Mother had been forced to go underground because of some unfavourable non-aryan strain in her blood and whose Father had been at various occasions summoned by the Green Police.

Her hate toward these Germans was natural . . . her difficulty now in trying to associate with them seemed almost an insurmountable task. To have to face these students, to eat with them, to discuss with them and even to share a room with them, to try to put aside past experiences, knowing that these very students had been in the Luftwaffe or SS and had perhaps even had a hand in the bombing of her hometown, seemed at first impossible.

The German too, had a problem. What attitude should he adopt? What position could he take as a member of a defeated nation, as a member of the German people and as an ex-member of a U-boat crew that had had a hand in the sinking of a British troop ship? There was the Danish lad and the Norwegian group who had known occupation forces and loathed them — with every right. There was the French student who had witnessed SS gentlemen cockily stand under the Arch of Triumph in Paris and there were the "Limeys" who remember only too well spending nights in the air raid shelters and days at the factories. There were war veterans both British and Canadian whose memories of prisoner of war camps and all its cruelties have not yet faded. There were others who had lost friends and loved ones in fighting and through executions.

Now all these students were brought together. They had come from the Scandanavian peninsula and from the warm Mediteranean, from Canada and Dutch Indonesia, from DP camps, from a country now behind the Iron Curtain and from Germany. They were all brought together for a period of five weeks not only for the purpose of exchanging and comparing views and ideas but also and perhaps more fundamentally to weaken and break down those barriers of hate which have been in the making for many generations.

The German and Dutch student sat together . . . finally they spoke. At first the strain on both sides was strong, each regarded the other somewhat suspiciously. Yet after a certain time this hatred and suspicion was overcome and they found that their differences were transcended by a common aim to understand and work together toward an end worthwhile.

Certainly our group of Germans were for the most part active in Nazi movements before and during the war. Several of them had been leaders of the Hitler youth, some had been in Occupation Force right here in Holland, others had been in the Russian prison camps. To what extent they were really Nazis or Nazi sympathizers we

A Torontoian Sees Dal

"Dalhusie must seem very different from Toronto", you say. You can be rightly proud of your beautiful campus, and dignified buildings. Your lawn is a gracious sweep of green, not a clutter of soccer fields and parking areas. You are not confronted with starkly modern science buildings cheek by jowl with an elaborate Norman castle.

"Toronto is so big! Didn't you feel lost?" Our own faculty or college within the University was our territory pretty well from initiation to graduation. College initiation might mean wearing Victoria College colours, or being wound in every kind of bandage the medical sophomores could devise. There was the occasional frosh party, but never the wild and wonderful whirl of initiation week here. Everyone went to the college parties, sipping tea at Saint Hilda's or mobbing the local burlesque house to hear the Engineers election results announced from the stage. Generally you presented your physics professor with a bubble pipe and your biology professor with a brace of rabbits, and wound up the evening by rendering, fortissimo, the college yells.

Toronto's theatre, swimming pools and symphony orchestra are simply signs of a bigger University with many actors, athletes and musicians. For its size, Dalhusie has more people in the University doings than Toronto ever had. There the actors were found only on stage, and the badminton team only on the courts, so that each became an isolated clique. Here, I dare say, is only a second flute has turned out for practice only to be fast-talked into a game of basketball.

I welcome the chance, here to sit and talk. At Toronto, you can gossip for a minute, shifting from foot to foot in the main hall of University College. Here you can loaf at the gym and watch the University pass before you. The fellows with bathing suits and purple faces are the basketball team. A defeated soul cursing his flashbulbs works with the "Gazette". At Toronto, they would be speeding off in all directions but here they will stop for a spot of chit-chat.

You ask if I find it different. Some things I miss and some things I prefer here, but just as at Toronto, I find at Dalhusie, the good times, the University spirit, and the friends that make you a part of University.

shall never know . . . nor shall we ever have proof as to how far de-Nazified they are at present. But what we do know from what we ourselves saw was the co-operation by each and everyone of them in all phases of the Seminar. A willingness to try to look at the world with a new perspective and to try to interpret the events of the past, in a light unknown to them until now, and furthermore to take a hand and share with all of us the responsibilities which may lie ahead.

This night the "Faria, Faria" was perhaps not as well sung as it had been the previous night. Some of the notes were flat and the words weren't as clear, it was easy to distinguish among the German faint traces of Danish and French accents, as well as Finnish, Italian, Dutch and English accents, as well as . . . cents; but the group around the piano, arms linked had come to embrace not merely one delegation but the entire Seminar group.

Sam Peeps--

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cerning the various methods of running such places. He did tell me that in the colonies, on a recent visit, he came upon a quaint aboriginal custom. It seems that males are allowed to enter the inmates' rooms, provided the beds have been removed. Upon hearing this, a certain Miss Cutit, who was present with us at the time, commented "How inconvenient", and fell to laughing, and so did we all.

Thence, home early, where I considered the merits of such a practice in Dullhusie, but decided it impractical. And so to bed.

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The Campus Roundup

by Windy O'Neill

The other day a friend of mine was speaking of an article in Maclean's Magazine about the extremes in lying that the two Toronto papers, The Star and The Telegram, attained during the recent federal elections. The fight between the two papers became a national scandal and hit a new low in journalism. Our friend commented that it is debatable whether this situation is more dangerous than the one, now existing here, in Halifax, where one paper has purchased the other to create a monopoly.

With no competing paper, the matter of giving the news is of secondary importance to that of increasing circulation, and holding it. A person of even the minimum of perspicacity who has read The Halifax Mail-Star, during the last six months can see their pussy-footing, offend-no-one perspective to provincial, if not national affairs. A newspaper should be like a person, it should have a mind and it should have a soul—the Halifax papers have neither. They refuse to take a stand on anything of any import—it might lose subscriptions.

However, since Stalin turned from a good guy into a bad guy, there is one thing certain—they are against communism, but definitely. Red communism is to the Daily Monopoly like a red flag to a bull—almost. The editorial columns came bravely to the fore, last winter, and fixed some insignificant B.C. law student up good, when he said he was a communist. A little later, after this monumental defence of democracy a strange thing happened. It came to pass that there was a strike, on the east coast, between the S.I.U. and the C.S.U., the latter being, patently, a communist-led union.

These courageous heralds came out breathing fire in defence of democratic principles. Did they? Like Hell they did. The voice of right became strangely tongue-tied while an undeclared war made the Halifax dock-front into a No-man's Land, with the Monopolies' photographers and reporters scurrying for cover under hails of buckshot. The editorial columns forgot all about the skirmishes and put it off as a group of Chinese celebrating the advent of the Year of the Rat. There was a brief admonishment against violence, but then, all those being subjected to violence are against it.

Don't think that the editorial columns don't bring to public attention anything important because they don't, but we hear all about the lack of accidents in Peoria, and the sparsity of snow in Oshkosh, which, of course, are very important in their own ways, especially to the inhabitants of those distant places. Take for example the issue on or about Thanksgiving Day.

Here, there was a piece of casuistry about hitch-hiking. We are with the Monopoly against hitch-hiking, because, if it were prohibited, we would not be bothered by a horde of visiting, hungry relatives. Everytime Uncle Louis takes a long trip, he gets a sore thumb. Also, there was an epitome of the evils of homework. Children should not do their homework, the monopoly declared (they might grow up to be bank presidents and oppress the workers). It might be suggested that they should listen to the children's programmes, read minors' periodicals and write compositions on the best way to disembowel policemen. More people around the Monopoly should have done their homework.

It is a pity, with the expert reporters and the fine writers that the two papers have, that they pursue this weak-kneed editorial policy. We wonder if the staff approve. All we readers hope that they give up this useless pursuit of Al Capp and Chic Young.

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