

Morning Terror

By JOHN BLACKMORE

IT WAS TEN MINUTES AFTER TEN ON that fateful Monday — the first day of yet another eight-month sentence. I tried to recover from the previous 8:30, not having much luck. Somewhere it must have been discovered that people do not function before at least a two-digit hour in the morning, but science courses are always pushing the boundaries of human capacity. It's their nature.

Lying on the bed trying to rationalize the lack of importance of first classes, my body was lost in the throes of a lingering cold/flu. That was the cause, that or a final corporeal reaction to seven days of concentrated intoxication during frosh week.

I lit up a cigarette just to make me feel worse, maybe I could persuade myself I as sick as I felt. Of course it didn't work, merely kicked my head through a couple of smoke rings. The next class would be in the caves of the L.S.C., which is just about as good a reason anybody would need to skip an hour of higher learning.

I hadn't scouted the building yet to find the classroom and someone told me they had changed the numbering system in that mystery place. It took me two years to become comfortable with the logic of room 2815 situated next to 2805 and now it's different.

Strikes me like discovering 2 plus 2 actually equals 5 despite all those calc credits the Registrar claims I own. Bob Dylan said it first, "The times they are a'changin'."

Twenty minutes after, approaching the time of decision. I use the method of not deciding until that last moment when a choice becomes apparent. On this basis I still had a good 5 minutes of trouble-free thought before a point of no return.

I slid off the bed and gathered some loose-leaf not already soggy from spilled margaritas. In high school you didn't feel bad about using exercise books, now I've got miscellaneous notes filed everywhere just to make them easier to lose. This wasn't a decision yet, I was preparing for whichever way the winds of choice might blow. The bed remained close to a real alternative.

Two minutes 'til final commitment. I took a last sip of coffee too cold to actually drink and enjoy, then killed the cigarette in an over-filled ash-tray. Nothing left to occupy me except futile attempts to decide. I placed the random scribbles from the first class in an obscure corner I realized I would forget. My eyes roamed over to the closet in an unconscious search for a coat. I rode that wave and smiled as the decision was being made without input from my tired mind. This process has never let me down and always amazes me.

Ride the mad torpedo and damn the depth charges. Grabbing the keys and a clip-board, I prepared to leave. Someone in the hall saw me and remarked, "What's this, you're going to a morning class?" I smiled sheepishly, possessing little excess energy for a sarcastic retort. I stumbled down the stairs and out into sunlight too bright for eyes who wanted to be closed.

The chem parking lot was full of serious people trying to get to that 10:35 class. I straightened a bit, figuring I should walk as a determined scholar even if I didn't feel like one. Quickly the Life Science was upon me and I almost lost my resolve as I strode it's subterranean passages.

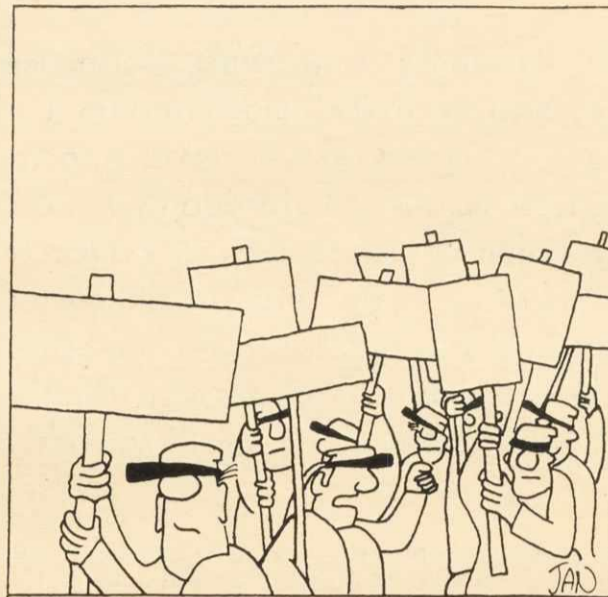
It was like "Aliens"; I expected one of those demented jelly creatures to leap out of any bio student's chest. Maybe the Grawood was open and I could pass a delightful morning there. But no: I slyly consulted one of those classroom maps in the L.S.C., trying not to look lost. I had trouble finding the 'You Are Here', but soon got the direction right.

There was a moment's hesitation before entering the class, this is natural when one is spelunking. I hoped there would be no bats in this chamber.

Maybe the rest of the mornings will not be as terrifying, but a tiny, sleepy voice deep within says, "You know they will."

OFF THE WALL

Jan Sykora



The sign painters go on strike



GAZETTE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 25, 12:30PM,
Room 410 SUB

ALL DALHOUSIE AND KINGS STUDENTS ARE MEMBERS OF THE GAZETTE PUBLICATIONS SOCIETY AND ELIGIBLE TO VOTE. TWO POSITIONS AS DIRECTORS ON THE GAZETTE PUBLISHING BOARD ARE OPEN. COME AND DISCUSS CONSTITUTIONS.

FREE COFFEE & DOUGHNUTS

Letters

Pen Pals

To the Editor:

I am presently confined at the Jackson State Prison, and I would be very grateful if I could perhaps establish a correspondence with anyone wishing to do so. Please understand that just because I'm in prison, that doesn't necessarily mean that I'm a criminal. We all can make a mistake, because imperfection is due to anyone who is not perfect. But nothing can really change a particular situation — unless there's a will to do so. Is God "the only one who forgives"? I hope it hasn't been accounted presumptuous if a man of low and humble station has ventured to have a friend.

Please address correspondence to: Alphonso Hayes 179535, State Prison of Southern Michigan, 49204.

Yours sincerely, Alphonso Hayes

Letters! Letters! Letters!

We've been wondering why we haven't got any "letters to the editor" yet this year.

Oh, sure, we get our weekly communique from a Mr. Mikhail Gorgachev who writes us from 400 Stewart St., Apt 1108 in Ottawa. And we do get "The week in review" from the New Brunswick Information Service. And, of course, there are those really weird letters that come from somewhere in San Diego.

But they don't quite add up.

There's nothing quite like a crumpled, handwritten note scrawled on lined paper during a quiet moment in "Human Communication Disorders 2001" that finds its way into our mailbox two minutes before the flats go to the printers.

Now we're going to have to compete with a lonely prisoner in Michigan for your affectionate or hostile missives (see below).

We can only assume that we've been doing everything right so far. Our stories must be so well-balanced, entertaining and informative that further comment is inconceivable.

But then what ever happened to the burning issues on campus? What happened to Star Wars, free trade, sexist calendars, the midi versus the mini, South Africa and engineers.? Did everybody just watch the Superchannel all weekend?

Doesn't anybody miss Mark Alberstat?

We do know the Gazettes are being picked up and used for something. Every second Tuesday some women pick up a stack and use it to cover over the windows of a room down the hall but we don't know what is going on in there.

Maybe there'll be too many white spaces next Monday and one of them will write just to fill up the gaps.

We'd sure appreciate it.

P.S. You are also encouraged to write commentaries for the Gazette on just about any topic you wish. Try to keep them below 700 words, though.

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As founding member of Canadian University Press, the Gazette adheres to the CUP statement of principles and reserves the right to refuse any material submitted of a libelous sexist, racist or homophobic nature. Deadline for commentary, letters to the editor and announcements is noon on Monday. Submissions may be left at the SUB enquiry desk c/o the Gazette.

Commentary should not exceed 700 words, letters should not exceed 300 words. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity may be granted on request.

Advertising copy deadline is noon, Monday before publication. The Gazette offices are located on the 3rd floor SUB. Come up and have a coffee and tell us what's going on.

The views expressed in the Gazette are not necessarily those of the Student Union, the editor or the collective staff.

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