

VIEWPOINT

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1964

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Letter From New Britain

To The Editor:

I arrived at Central Connecticut State College on Sept. 14 and a week later managed to clear my luggage through customs. It is rumored that the United States has the strictest customs and immigration rules in the world and I am inclined to agree with this statement. Now, a month later, I am still signing forms and filling out immigration papers! I wonder how long it will take me to gain re-admission to Canada.

Central Connecticut State College is about one-quarter the size of the U of A and one of the oldest teacher-training colleges in New England. The classes are quite informal and are conducted on either a discussion or a question and answer basis.

Most of the people are not too well-informed about Alberta, but everyone seems anxious to learn what it's like "out West." Everywhere I go, I am plagued by dozens of questions concerning our province, our people, and our educational system.

Although there are only a few students at CCSC from other countries, an International Centre has been set up in Hartford, Connecticut, to help the foreign students from six of Connecticut's colleges to get acquainted. I recently attended a meeting of this

organization and was able to meet students from fifty different countries.

Outside the classroom, life in New Britain is very similar to life in Edmonton or any other city in Western Canada. In fact, I find it hard to realize that I am three thousand miles from familiar faces and surroundings. A few letters inviting me to various activities for "foreign students," however, soon remind me that a whole continent lies between me and the U of A.

Sincerely yours,
Sharon Schlosser.

Editor's Note: Sharon Schlosser is on an exchange scholarship to Central Connecticut State College. She is a second year education student. The exchange, held every two years, sent Sharon to New Britain, and brought Janet Orzech, now a Gateway staffer, to Edmonton.

Disgusted

To The Editor:

As fifty residents of the new Students' Housing Complex we would like to express our disgust with and disappointment in The Gateway's unfounded criticisms of the Housing Administration and House Committees. It is unfortunate that a publication which could initiate responsible and thought-provoking action has to resort to childish sensationalism.

Is Anybody Happy? Maybe, But Not With Gateway News Policies, U.S. Immigration Or Campus Politics

While we are pleased to note that you seem to be recovering from your chronic addiction to Sex Articles, we would suggest that you replace them with something more constructive (and maybe intellectual?) than tedious censures of our administrators, facilities and very necessary regulations.

None of us find residence living particularly unpleasant—we really enjoy it; Mr. Tauzer is not a despot—he is rather human and is even interested in the welfare of the residents; the rules haven't proved to be a hardship—they are extremely helpful for those of us who are unfamiliar with correct campus-dress and campus-activity.

Since it is the actual residents who experience residence-living, we would suggest that our knowledge of this matter is somewhat more extended than that of the Students' Council complainers and paintbrush-happy children. We are proud to be a part of the Residence community and appreciative of the fine work that Mr. Tauzer and his Housing Office Staff have done and are doing on our behalf.

Sixth Floor Girls,
Lister Hall C.

P.S. We realize that you may not get around to publishing this because it is *valid*, and that would never do . . .

Political Science Club Out?

To The Editor:

In reply to Nihilist's article of Friday, Oct. 29, which claims that the leaders of the campus clubs are more concerned with ego-flattery and partisan political

prestige than with the stimulation of political interest on campus—this situation does exist but I think the problem is more complex than simple failure on the part of the campus leaders.

Getting rid of the political clubs is no solution. It seems to me that those who are at all concerned with promoting political interest can work within the club of their choice without interference from the party leaders. Certainly there are people who are interested in National politics. This is a worthwhile vocation and there is no reason why they cannot make the political clubs serve a useful and real purpose in presenting political issues at the university level. The means are well-known: outside speakers, panel discussions, seminars, prof talks etc. No one is barred from attending these meetings and no one is barred from taking part, and, in fact, one of the main aims of the clubs is to get people involved.

The success of a campus political organization depends on a large, active membership. Their failure to do so is one of the prime causes of executive inbreeding among the campus clubs. The political clique which develops is extremely political and extremely partisan in outlook. Many of this "hard core" have personal political ambitions but this in itself does not condemn the political parties.

The student body is sluggish and the effort required to obtain a large political membership is far greater than it should be. Nothing illustrates better the need for the establishment of political dialogue than the fact

that the leader of the Alberta New Democratic Party managed to attract a whopping audience of fifty people.

Political views can best be presented by organized political groups. Each group theoretically represents a different fact of political opinion. The one does not come easily without the other. The campus political clubs are gradually coming to life and in the past two weeks we have witnessed a number of partisan political events. The Political Science Club, which the Nihilist presents as an alternative, and as a body of free political thought is all but defunct. What happened to the altruistic political philosophers who Mr. Nihilist sees as being the salvation of campus political interest?

What happened is obvious. The range of political thought is so broad that several organizations must exist to accommodate the various viewpoints.

In summing up, if the choice were to be made between the abolition of the Political Science Club and the abolition of the campus political groups, I would have to see the Political Science Club as the least necessary of the two.

The campus political clubs are not fulfilling their function, but this does not mean that they cannot.

If Nihilist, and by his name, he shouldn't be, the solution is not to be found in ill-thought-out polemic against the dirty-dog politicians but rather by a serious revitalization of the campus political clubs and bold student participation.

U of A New Democrats
Wayne Coulter

The Alienated Student

The Indictment--Unintellectual, Unconcerned, Inactive, Uncommitted

By Peter Boothroyd

Remarkably little research seems to have been done on the university student in western civilization (North America, at least). Except for some rather unenlightening articles on his sexual mores appearing in popular journals, and the occasional survey of his international and religious attitudes reported in brief and without an accompanying probing analysis, there is scarcely any material to use in beginning an examination of the student condition.

A number of developments can be discerned, though, from simple casual observation. Most of us would agree that most students are not in university because they have a thirst for knowledge. They are filling in time or preparing for a vocation, but they are not interested in getting educated.

We would agree too, that university students live personal lives and are scornful of the few who become active as public beings with social concerns. (Apathy, cynicism, immaturity, laziness, all these are the perjorative words used to describe this feature of university life.)

The student indulges himself in introspection, a morbid destructive introspection concerned with his motives, his feelings; he does not dwell on the agonies of the world around him. He maintains a close circle of friends with whom he commiserates, but does not actively search out new friends or acquaintances with whom he can broaden himself. He is a social actor within this circle and within the limits prescribed by the activities of that group; he will go to football games, be assistant social convener for a dance, get drunk at

both, and take a girl or several girls out fairly regularly.

As a rule, he will not work in the local settlement house, take an active part in municipal politics, carry a sign to ban-the-bomb, or concern himself more with "the starving millions" (a cliché and a joke on the campus today), than to contribute a dollar to the annual fund drive.

The student leads a personal life and it is a shallow personal life. He is not an artist, he is not religious, he is not a great lover. These too are jokes. His personal life is in rebellion against the old square values, the piousness, the phony concepts of love. But it is a rebellion circumscribed by mass standards of mediocrity and conformity. He is not a rebel burning with enthusiasm reacting with gusto and vigor. He is a disgruntled rebel shuffling along in self-pity or else with a too-warm smile and glassy eyes, waiting for the next fraternity party, to "really live" and "to have fun."

If he is cynical of public life, so too is he unconcerned with great success. The gracious yet cute wife, the two bouncy kids, the two modern cars and the house in the suburbs to home them all—these are the overworked symbol of American middle class life—represent his aspirations insofar as he has any.

The casual observer also notices the compartmentalization of the students' activities. There is a time for study—nay, a time for studying political science, a time for studying physics, a time for studying psychology, and when you're done each of these, bang, close the books and then get through with the next—a time for drinking, a time for visiting the family, a time for seeing the

movies. There is no integration of these activities, no unifying thread to tie together what he feels, what he thinks, what he reads, what he does. There is no commitment.

When politics, the starving millions, art, religion, and love are all jokes, what else can be expected? How can a lecture in psychology, "Judgement at Nuremberg", a family picnic, a good drunken bull session, be related. They really don't have any connection with the student's life, much less with each other.

So goes the indictment of the modern student. He is uninformed, unconcerned, inactive, uncommitted, uninspired. He's 'un' and 'in'. He is a rebel with conformity, a professional in mediocrity, a compartmentalized being. He's alienated.

So goes the indictment. But perhaps this is as superficial as articles on "The College Girl and Sex: You and Your Daughter Should Both Read This—", or the survey of student attitudes to religion and politics. What is behind the low-keyed cynicism, the alienation of us students?

Myself, I'm optimistic. While agreeing basically with the indictment, I would suggest that what lies beneath the cynicism is grounds for hope. In a word, I think the basis of the cynicism is idealism. The old religion, the old politics, the old values, the old life, are all seen as unsuited to the times, irrelevant to the individual, but most of all inconsistent within themselves and therefore subject to the most damning of all epithets, hypocritical.

I would suggest that students are not political today because the kind of politics offered them is seen as dishonest and un-

principled, and unless one is either unscrupulous or hopelessly naive they would be as participants in the political process, ineffective.

I would suggest that students are not intellectual because the institution called the university that is supposed to promote this intellectualism is hardly structured toward this end. The undergraduate student seeker of knowledge is one of the last people the university concerns itself with. The university is concerned with turning out professionals and technicians, providing a home for erudite scholars (i.e., biggest publishers), and turning out brilliant, but to the undergraduate, irrelevant research. The timetable, the course load, the syllabi, the facilities, the teachers, all hinder rather than stimulate intellectualism.

The university is irrelevant and it's hypocritical, and unless the student has by some stroke of luck the ability to overcome this on top of the hopeless high school education he has received, he will drift along with the stream of our universities' academic, but non-intellectual education. He'll study his isolated courses, and he'll pass the years, but he won't look for answers, while he's doing it, and he won't find meaning for his own life in the process.

I would suggest that the student retreats into his personal life because there at least he is minimally exposed to the hypocrisy and irrelevancy of the old institutions. The circle of friends can be trusted, the activities of this life force him to step one, it is not necessary to assert oneself and so "play the role". If you're not solving any problems in this tight little world at least you're not causing any more and most importantly,

you're not making a fool of yourself trying.

Of course there is no basis of religion in this world. Anybody in this day and age that would believe the hocus pocus is a fool. Considering how far the church is behind the times, its no wonder that the student absconds these connections. And yet . . . lots of students read zen buddhism and lots will become intrigued by existentialism.

And of course true love is a joke. A generation raised on Hollywood and pseudo-puritanical morality, if it has any brains at all, is going to reject what it conceives of a true love. But of course the biological urges aren't a lie, so just because you don't fall in love, does that mean you're supposed to be a monk? It would seem that we have been so imbued with this concept of "true love," that both still look for it, way down deep, and on the surface laugh at the whole idea because we know it's a phony concept. The boys are still looking for goddesses and the girls are still looking for knights on white horses, but we're not finding any so we're cynical and promiscuous and searching with every encounter.

If it is this idealism—an adolescent (our elders would call it) yet beautifully pure idealism coated with a credible cynicism that is the main-spring of the university student's behaviour, then there is good reason to be optimistic. We who are concerned about the student from one of a number of concerns, will find ourselves reaching through the cynicism to him, once we have something relevant, to himself and to the times, and something honest to say to him. That's radicalism.