

Dents' complaints refuted

I would like to take exception to the manner in which the students critical of the Faculty of Dentistry (The Gateway Oct. 3) handled themselves.

As dental students, we have several channels of communication between ourselves and the 'administration' and I feel that the way in which they presented their criticisms was an insult to both their fellow students and to the staff.

If they are afraid to approach the faculty administration personally, they can have their class president act as their spokesman.

Another avenue of communication open to them is through their student reps (of which there are eight) on the Student-Staff Liaison

Committee—which is chaired by the Dental Undergraduate Society president.

This committee was set up precisely for problems of the type they mentioned. By choosing not to act through their elected representatives implies to me, that they lack confidence in their reps' abilities to perform the duty for which they were elected.

The faculty has been extremely cooperative in accommodating our desires for improved student-staff communications and actions of this type make a mockery of our efforts in this area.

What this small group of students has said to the press reflects upon all of us in the faculty—without any consideration for our views.

I feel that the majority of dental students disagree with what was printed and also with not giving us the opportunity to try to resolve the "difficulties" within the faculty.

Pete McLennan
dent 4

Max cynical idealist?

An inaugural address of a new university president in these critical times is too important to pass without comment. It is not only a statement of personal philosophy, it is a statement, however indirect, of what may be in store for all of us. For this reason, I wish to comment on Max Wyman's speech as reported in The Gateway (October 7).

CYNICAL IDEALISM

All knowledge is not a lie. To hold that it is a lie is a cynical and idealist view. There is no mention in this speech of "praxis" or "pragmatism" or any idea related to them. It is not that the difference between the assumption that disease is caused by evil spirits and that it is caused by germs is a matter of "generations", as Max Wyman would have us believe. Following the former leads to qualitatively different results than if the latter is the basis for practical activity. There is a truth in a germ theory of disease which is not found in a witch theory, partly because the former concurs with other knowledge and partly because it keeps us alive. Thus, all knowledge is not a lie.

An idealist position avoids the politics of science. Does Max Wyman see the relationship between the great moonoggle (Monthly Review, September, 1969), which he applauds, and the world-misery, which he bemoans? In the same way we read of the lack of a generation gap in the physical sciences, and then in the next paragraph we are given to believe that the social sciences suffer from historical disjunctions and generation gaps. Seemingly so, but far from the truth. A politics of social science might enable us to see and understand the status or lack of status in contemporary establishment social science of such exciting and relevant scholars as Marx, Veblen and Mills, to mention a few. Could it be that if their ideas were put into practice as have those of Newton and Einstein things would be different for that Establishment and those who support it? (And, by the way, are there no generation gaps in physical science; no forgotten or suppressed ideas? Velikovsky!)

ESTABLISHMENT CONTROL

Here is the crux of my criticism. While I agree that social science has not provided answers to social problems (not "sociological" problems; this latter refers to grand theorizing, methodological involution and other obscurantist vocations, which are partly responsible for world-misery), it is not because, as Max Wyman implies, of lack of scientism or whatever he believes the physical sciences have. It is because social science has been for so long an aspect of Establishment control of society through its corporate funding and uncritical university support. C. Wright Mills, Alvin Gouldner, Kathleen Aberle, and Christian Bay, among many others, have pointed out how sociology, anthropology and political science provide the mechanisms and rationale for topdog control and manipulation of underdogs.

OBSCURES KNOWLEDGE

An idealist view of knowledge obscures these relationships. And I believe Max Wyman not only obscures the context and nature of knowledge and especially the

social sciences, he is dangerously confusing himself and all of us. Our deepest humanist concerns will never be realized as long as we allow ourselves to be so confused.

To paraphrase Elridge Cleaver, if social science is not part of the solution, it must be part of the problem. We engage in studies of the poor to enable the corporate state to control the poor. Why not reverse the priorities? What if it were proposed that the discipline distinctions among the social sciences be abolished, that a separate school or institute be established with a focus on problems, not disciplines, and, furthermore, that these problems be defined by the mother seeking a piece of bread with whom Max Wyman ends his speech. In other words, and this is only a small beginning, as in the PSA department at Simon Fraser, where problems and research are not defined by the corporations, the rich, the obscurants, but by the poor, the Indians, the people! Would Max Wyman actively support such a proposal?

Richard Frucht
Assistant Professor of
Anthropology

Failure man's

I was interested to note the editorial comments that preceded Dr. Wyman's (or Max, as you call him) installation speech of last Monday night. Your remarks about the failure of the system as opposed to the failure of man are the exact reason why I dropped out of the Democratization Movement two years ago.

In studying to be a radical, I always found that they tended to confuse reform of the system with reform of man's nature; even the venerated Eric Mann fell prey.

I have always felt that there must be a change in man's basic nature before extreme democratization of the system will do much good. I do not share the confidence of some of my contemporaries in the rationality of the human mind. As Robert Ardrey writes: "In conflict with instinct, human thought becomes a wish."

But I am concerned by your ambiguous statement as to where to draw the line, as you put it. I suspect that your line lies much closer to: "...imposing' on others what you know in your very soul to be true..." than to: "No, no more..."

And this smacks to me of fascism.

It's funny that my friend Mann never was too clear on this point either.

Rin Verstraten
Law I

CRLA fleecing poor students?

The poor unsuspecting student is getting fleeced again! How come the students' union main floor Information Desk should be flooded with "Take One Free" folders of CRLA promising good things on payment of a membership fee—but—

Two weeks later, the Friday, Oct. 3 issue of the Edmonton Journal carried the startling head-

line that CRLA had Gone Broke, Defunct, Bankrupt—all members had lost their money. How come?

Isn't there some screening done by the students' union reps or somebody in this university to keep such bankrupt groups from coming on campus to collect fees from unsuspecting students who came dewey-eyed to these halls of learning to study, etc.?

C. Crane

Frucht, Marx and company: will you feed the world?

Frucht & Co. are the villains keeping the world hungry.

Roosters are known to have just one message to the world. Every so often one of our roosters on Campus climbs to the top of the nearest dunghill and sings the rooster song which he learned from Mother Hen in Moscow.

The rooster in this case is Professor Richard Frucht, a prominent member of a local Karl Marx Institute for Biased Anthropological Studies.

In the Monday, October 6, Issue of The Gateway he calls Professor Bentley on the carpet for an article which he admits that he does not understand.

But he claims that the capitalistic system is to blame for the hunger in the world. He gives a list of starving nations, beginning with India.

It is too bad that the Karl Marx Institute does not keep their handbooks up-to-date, because he could easily have seen that India, thanks to improved equipment, improved techniques, and improved seed varieties now is getting in a position to feed its starving people.

What did the trick?

The capitalistic system.

And what have the nations in his non-capitalistic Paradise done for the world? The huge Russian grain purchases in Canada do not seem to indicate that the non-capitalistic Paradise after 50 years of communist regime has advanced far enough to feed their own people. I bet a good dose of capitalistic system would do the non-capitalistic farmers a lot of good; it is more fattening than propaganda, anyway. And when he further speaks of "the sphere of capitalistic interest, where profit is more important than people..." I bet that he forgets about the millions and millions of Ukrainian farmers who were butchered by Stalin and associates—as revealed in a famous conversation between Stalin and Churchill: it seems that in the non-capitalistic Paradise there was something much more important than people.

Come off it, Professor Frucht. You speak about dupes. Who is really the dupe?

G. Hermansen
Classics

Truth for all of us

Dear Chairman Max:

I understand you were interested in seeing how the assessment of 1969 by our generation differed from yours. We are still living with concepts like knowledge, truth, freedom, and dissent. We realize that not every man seeks the truth that is true for all men, but that there are those who live for many and varied dreams. We recognize those who live all their life in a world that is non-existent for all men as phonies. In short, Chairman Max, we are a generation that has lived past Nietzsche. It was in 1873 that he wrote the following:

We still do not know where the urge for truth comes from; for as yet we have heard only of the obligation imposed by society that it should exist; to be truthful means using the customary metaphors—in moral terms: the obligation to live according to a fixed convention, to live herd-like in a style obligatory for all...

When we keep before us that vision of truth that is true for all men we obtain knowledge. Our generation has made a distinction between facts and truth which is essential in understanding knowledge. Let me illustrate: If I ask a dozen people, "What is ice?" most of them can give me the fact that it is frozen water. By a Greek tradition in our civilization this fact is called true. If I could ask a man of another tradition, the Hebrew man, "What is ice?" he would tell me, "Ice is water you can walk on." By the Hebraic tradition this is called true. In these two traditions lies a distinction that leads us to conclude that rational fact is secondary to truth and sometimes very irrelevant to truth.

We are a generation that demands freedom. We are looking for the Law of Freedom. We dissent when we find this Law of Freedom broken by silly rules—by silly laws. In short, we recognize laws and freedoms as relative, but hold absolute the Law of Freedom.

Jerry Vriend
grad studies

This is Page Five

An anthropology professor gives and receives his knocks today; while some dentistry students, Max Wyman, the editor, and the Canadian Renters and Leaseholders Association mostly receive. There has only been one page five this week as the other issues fell one page short of the minimum. However, some say there is no virtue in consistency so next week watch for page five on page two or three or four, or considering the trend last week, maybe even page one.

