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Student Leaders—Irresponsible?

During the last few weeks the attitude towards Campus leaders that is taken at various campi has been brought to our attention. At McGill for instance there is an organization consisting of the campus leaders only. They meet regularly and discuss problems common to all organizations. At the University of B.C. the student community goes one step further. In a recent issue of their paper we found a news report concerning the "Student Executive Programme" that read: "SEP is a Wednesday evening training programme designed to give student leaders an opportunity to learn about leadership from B.C.'s experts in the field."

In an enumeration of the topics discussed during SEP'S of former years were mentioned such subjects as Parliamentary Procedure; Executiveship; Leadership, and other related subjects. The whole programme is under the direction of a number of faculty members and senior students.

Of late there have been a number of complaints concerning the behaviour and general aptitude of our student leaders. We therefore thought that a similar institution as that of the U.B.C. Executive Programme could be developed here at our university. This could be under the direction of some of the members of the Departments of Psychology, Sociology and other pertinent subjects and the President of the S.R.C. and/or other high level campus organizations. It would be an excellent way of bringing to the attention of the students who take on positions on the campus what their duties and responsibilities are and how to conduct general and executive meetings skilfully.

Too many organizations fluctuate greatly in activity and efficiency, an ailment that could be remedied by an annual series of discussions of the sort suggested. If the enthusiasm for such an activity would not be great enough at first, it could perhaps be made into a pre-requisite for any executive function.

Let us consider this seriously and even give it a trial run. It may prove to be of great value to our students as well as the organizations they represent. —G.B.

Player's Please

THE MILDEST BEST-TASTING CIGARETTE

The McGill Conference on World Affairs

Canada, NATO and the United Nations

by Stephen Fay

How can Canada aid in the formation of political and economic stability in NATO? To what extent does the United Nations fulfill the ideals of its original Charter? These were some of the questions asked by delegates at the McGill Conference on World Affairs. The international organizations were the subjects of much discussion at the three day meeting in Montreal early last month.

The object of these questions was to give Canadian University students an opportunity to discuss, collectively, aspects of Canadian foreign policy. To what extent it is possible to reach any conclusion on such questions never became clear; but there was little doubt that after two hours, misunderstanding became less frequent.

The basis of any discussion on the UN must consist of a battle between idealism and realism. After the failure of the great powers to agree following the Second World War it became impossible for an organization in which a security council held power to make progress toward world peace. Thus the United Nations became a field of conflict between two great power blocks. It now reflects the balance of power in the world, and must work within the limitations of reality. The UN will never bring about world peace, but it can stop an outbreak of world conflict.

Most delegates recognised

the fact that all nations within the body were motivated by self interest. In some cases the self interest is enlightened; we hope that Canada is one of the countries who could claim this distinction. Canada's position as a second class power makes compromise and mediation easier for her than for most other members. And while our delegation might not act as a conscience for the organisation it can, and does, adopt an enlightened and often a moral policy toward many questions in the United Nations. We might be called a useful sounding board of General Assembly opinion on many issues.

A suggestion that Russia be asked to leave the UN was not accepted because a large majority felt that the UN was not an effective instrument to end wars, either hot or cold, but that it is effective as an organ to control these wars because it provides a forum for discussion. Were Russia asked to leave the UN it would no longer serve this purpose. Delegates generally thought that admittance of Red China to the Assembly would be a wise move. It would enable other nations to recognise the existence of the Peking Government, as well as providing opportunities for better understanding and negotiation.

I suspect that it would not be unfair to sum the delegates attitudes as being more realistic than romantic. However there are still students who have not yet given up hope that the United Nations is the first rung on the ladder up to Universal brotherhood.

Similar sentiments were expressed during discussions on NATO. Although the alliance was formed as a defensive pact against Russian expansion some delegates seemed to believe that organisation might be instrumental in the formation of a Utopian western society. Most students were willing to recognise that NATO would benefit by increased political and economic co-operation. Lester Pearson was quick to forward this ideal in his opening keynote speech. This will, of course, demand certain concessions to nationality, but there is reason to hope that recent Russian scientific advances will tend to draw the Western Powers closer together.

Canada's position is slightly nebulous for she must satisfy trade demands that fall in the dollar rather than the sterling area; and must concentrate on North American rather than European defence. This conflict of commitment has been and will continue to be one of embarrassment to our national administrators. Again the realist and the idealist would propose different solutions. Let us hope that the present sentimentality of Canadian politicians towards our European neighbours is overcome by political realism should a crisis occur. Idealism is fine in a round table discussion during a Conference on World Affairs, but it tends to be a less effective means of expression when used by men controlling foreign policy.

The concluding article in this series will deal with Canada's relationships with the Commonwealth and the United States.

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