

## ON MUSCLE-MEASURED MORALITY

If we are to judge by popular opinion, Mr. Kennedy was not only successful but eminently in the right when he moved to blockade Cuba.

WITNESS: "We congratulate the president on his great moral courage . . ." (attributed by a local radio station to A. Milton Harradence, provincial leader of the Progressive Conservatives—emphasized by the Edmonton Journal—echoed by the man in the street—October, 1962).

Is it moral then to perpetuate gunboat diplomacy? Is physical coercion moral? The big fellow's decision takes moral precedence because it is enforceable?

WITNESS: "It is well to seem merciful, faithful, humane, religious, and upright, and also to be so; but the mind should remain so balanced that were it needful not to be so, you should be able and know how to change to the contrary." (Nicolo Machiavelli—1513).

Apparently it is moral to pay lip service to the concept of a United Nations while trafficking in unilateral ultimatums. Morality, so it seems, lies in conspicuously bemoaning "communist tactics" while we use them ourselves when it suits us.

WITNESS: "The basis of communist morality is the struggle for the consolidation and completion of Communism." (V. I. Lenin—1920). Transpose "democratic" and "Democracy" for "communist" and "Communism".

Morality, in short, is the interest of the moralizer—and ends justify means. So what is the US interest, or "western" interest? Freedom, of course—the "democratic way of life" which must at any cost be preserved.

## ON NEGLIGENT NFCUS

Two weeks ago the provincial government invited leaders from various fields to discuss the relationship of government to people at a first annual Government Seminar. Sunday, the students' union sponsored a seminar of student leaders to deal with a campus problem, student housing. Annually, a handful of delegates attend regional or national seminars on timely topics.

The university, we are often told, is a center for discussions and exchange of ideas. A seminar builds on discussions of dissenting views and facts.

Why then are seminars not a major feature of our university activities? Why does the "average student" never participate in open seminars on topics of interest to him?

Leadership sessions are aimed at—and limited to—some 100-plus designated "leaders". Senior honours courses evolve seminar discussion on academic topics. National seminars, again, allow but limited number participation and specific themes.

Why not regular, informal seminars open to all students interested in, and willing to share

## ON TACTLESS TACTICS

John Jay Barr, leader of the controversial campus group Young Canadians for Freedom, has been wronged.

The injustice was done at last Wednesday's Oxford debate in Convocation Hall. Robin Hunter took the affirmative against the YCF leader in "Resolved that the policies of YCF are not an effective means of combatting Communism."

At the end of the debate a vote was taken, and—as expected—it was against Barr.

It was in the preliminaries to the vote that injustice was done.

Prior to the debate, Hunter had insisted that no vote be taken, feeling this would be unfair to Barr. Tom Wood, president of the Debating Society, agreed, and at the beginning of the debate a society spokesman explained to the audience that no vote would be taken.

During the audience-participation section of the debate, one student suggested that a vote be taken to satisfy the audience.

The chairman pointed out that the consent of both debaters would have to be obtain-

WITNESS: "One path we shall never choose is the path of surrender or submission." (John Kennedy—October, 1962).

Shall we agree that it is moral (and realistic) to accept this categorical soviet-type definition of the problem as an "uncompromising" conflict between west and east? It is moral (and intelligent) to assume and propagandize the notion that we are completely "white" while they are wholly "red"? And is "surrender" really the only alternative to "rocket-rattling"?

If we are to believe press analyses the west was poised a week ago on the very brink of that bottomless abyss called "ruthless totalitarian domination." Exigency then presumably justifies an immediate and ominous revival of the "retaliatory deterrent."

Presumably it is moral to spend millions of dollars on ICBMs while millions of men go to bed hungry. Presumably it is moral to risk the very existence of life on earth for the sake of dogma.

Meanwhile we pay pious lip service to Christianity.

WITNESS FOR THE MINORITY VIEW ON MORALITY: "Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." (Jesus—approximately 30 A.D.).

Have we finally sanctified that strange definition of the word morality which eluded both Jesus and Merriam-Webster? Is morality then really measurable in terms of muscle? Or are we just slightly queasy about admitting to power-politics?

or air views on campus, on world, on social, on philosophical situations?

Who could sponsor these seminars? Yearly our National Federation of Canadian University Students decries its vague identity on campus. Apart from the local committee and delegates to the national NFCUS seminars, few students recognize NFCUS as their organization.

It is evident seminars create the main source of NFCUS enthusiasm. Yet seminars are the one means our campus committee apparently never considers in its promotion schemes.

Not only would NFCUS-arranged seminars assist the NFCUS organization, they could be one means of offering something definite to its individual members. They could help to answer that first inevitable question from students newly acquainted with the federation: "What does it do for me?"

Such seminars could also contribute to the solution of another problem on our over-sized campus—the lack of opportunity for faculty-student exchange on the personal, out-of-class level.

ed before taking a vote. This should not have happened, as the terms were set out before the debate began.

The impropriety was confirmed by asking Barr (before Hunter) if he would consent to a vote. Barr (as Hunter after him) had no choice but to say "yes". Had Hunter been asked before Barr, Hunter would have replied—properly—"no".

Barr knew the vote would be against him by a wide margin. The audience knew this. Hunter knew it. And the member of the audience who asked for the vote knew it. A vote was therefore unnecessary, and the manner in which it was proposed and carried through was only embarrassing to Barr.

In effect, Barr was being asked: Do you have any guts? His answer was in the affirmative.

Students have suffered from injustices of this nature in past years. Chairmen at debates, rallies and other meetings should be more tactful.

## featurette

### HAND ON OUR CRITICAL THIGH

by Marie dal Garno

He placed his hand upon our critical thigh, and by the way we moved away he could probably tell that our devotion to literature was not quite perfect. And these are his words, called "Misunderstanding".

Irving Layton—hair long, trousers baggy, and exploiting the popular image of the artist—read his poetry to a polite audience in Convocation Hall on Friday night, and he didn't receive a standing ovation. It was fun, of course, but if the thing can be compared to an attempted seduction, it didn't quite come off. For the most part it was an old line, and to cliché, not having been born yesterday, we've heard it all before.

Perhaps three of the twenty-seven pieces read were very good, showed a true poetic ability to create in the mind of the listener something not directly stated in the poem. "A Very Old Woman," "Butterfly on a Rock," "No Wild Dog." These succeed. In "A Very Old Woman," Mr. Layton effectively sustains his theme by means of sensitive imagery and diction. It is all still and dark and wax, and death grows in her womb. And good.

"Butterfly on a Rock," to be published soon in a volume called *Balls for a One-Armed Juggler*, is considerably more mature than most of Layton's earlier works.

In this poem—the last to be read—the poet seems to have overcome his preoccupation with death, and to have discovered that the "giving" which forms a relationship lives eternally, independent of the existence of those involved in the relationship. Thus "there is no death in the universe!", he cries, as a rock moves beneath his hand with the life given it by a butterfly which he has just killed.

#### DISCREET DESCRIPTION

The other twenty-four poems might be discreetly described as fecal matter (the Anglo-Saxon word is shit). One does not demand originality of theme from any artist—poetry is a distillation of universal experience. But surely it is not too much to expect from a man of Mr. Layton's literary reputation some kind of creative imagery, some distinctive technique.

Unhappily, there was a lack of powerful description in the poetry read on Friday. Chokecherries are like "clusters of red jewels" in "Red Chokecherries"; frogs have "sensitive pianists' hands" and "white shirt fronts" in "Cain," and this is all pure tedium.

Not that there weren't flashes in "Birth of Tragedy" the poet is "a quiet madman never far from tears"—but generally one cannot help but feel that Irving Layton is just a Charlie Brown making a living. Which is all right for him, but rather sad for poetry.

He is middle-class, and despite great amounts of anal humor, he cannot escape this. If one is bred a Christian he can never, despite hideous sins, become a bad Buddhist or a bad Zoroastrian; only always a bad Christian. Thus his style rings at times of T.S. Eliot, in "Seven O'Clock Lecture," for ex-



ample, save that instead of alluding to Ovid or the Upanishad, Layton alludes to Richard II.

#### FIFTH GRADE AND CLUTTERED

This style murmurs of e.e. cummings, Auden, Dylan, Thomas—even Ginsburg. But somehow, it all comes out sounding like fifth-grade exercises and amateur philosophy. He is limited in scope; his poems deal repeatedly with death, sex, infidelities of various kinds, religious hypocrisy, and the cult of the dollar.

Irving Layton is surely a perceptive, intelligent gentleman, but he is rather too sane for poetry. He writes in "vers libre," but does not seem to have realized, to quote T. S. Eliot, that "no 'vers' is 'libre' for the man who wants to do a good job." Hence his verse, rather than being precise and pure, is cluttered and mediocre.

Layton's audience on Friday evening was certainly interested enough to return after intermission, but it is doubtful if anyone left Convocation Hall reaffirming Art.



#### ANYONE FOR WRITING?

To The Editor:

I had hoped that the dubious pleasantries of frat clubs rushing would quietly pass me by this year. An unfortunate event (my face) has thrust me inadvertently into the melee, however.

During last Saturday's annual run I found myself in the solicitous company of some fraternity lads, while I was ridding myself of a bothersome leg cramp. They encouraged me; they paced me; they may well have carried me; they mis-

took me. They mistook me for "Marty."

"Marty" must be:

- (1) a very fine fellow, or
- (2) the son of a brewery owner or
- (3) the son of a wealthy alumnus

for I received most concerned care. It is really too bad that "Marty" wasn't there to appreciate his friends' concern.

I, unfortunately, was not "Marty." I did, however, appreciate my benefactors and their solicitations on my condition.

"Marty," whoever and wherever you are, I am sorry if I got you

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