

The "University" and "Society" By Totis Pittas

We more or less know what we mean by the word "university", but I have my doubts whether a greater number of us mean the same thing by the word "society". During the past few years I myself encountered several connotations of "society". Do you think of society as people co-operating to produce the necessary foodstuffs, clothing, housing and other necessities of life? If you do, you are on the way to understanding society. Or maybe "society" to you means the people who hold power political economic, etc, or to some of you it means cultural forces of tradition.

Well, all these have something to do with society but they are not it. Society, and in particular the Canadian society, is the totality of the people, the institutions and the various complex relations among people and institutions in Canada. So Dalhousie University and its students are our part of the Canadian society.

From this, it follows that we can consider students' problems and the problems of the university, seeking solutions to such problems apart from the society in which we exist.

We face problems every day, as does the university, although we may disagree about the nature or the importance of the problems. Because of this, we may disagree sometimes violently on the solutions to the problems.

Yet no solution can be found until we discover the

source of these problems. They are hidden in the inter-relationships of our society. Thus, the first step towards the solution of these problems is an understanding of the nature of the society in which we live.

Through this, we will see how we relate to the university and to society, both as students and individuals. As well, we shall see how the university relates to society as a whole, and in particular, to the various classes and institutions of society.

Without suggesting whether it is good or bad, I must observe that the university and most of the other institutions in Canadian society are dominated by the capitalist class. Our society is a capitalist one or more pointedly, an oligopolistic society. This means, as Yale University President, Kingmorn Brewster Jr., explained to this freshman class last month, that an oligopolistic society is one which is "largely dominated by conglomerate giants."

I must ask you, does the capitalist class face a housing problem, or an unemployment problem? The answer is no. They usually have beautiful houses, eat delicious food, and can afford excellent medical attention. Their children will have a job, with or without a university degree.

Do you see any motivation for this class to use their power to solve the problems of the university of its students?

YOU ANSWER THIS ONE.

Representivity & Democracy

The main objection to CUS, according to many of the organization's critics, is that it speaks as if it represents the point of view of the majority of Canadian students, while in fact it is only the mouth-piece of a small, but active minority.

In theory, CUS operates within a democratic structure; delegates from member universities formulate policy at Congresses and between meetings, the Secretariat and National Council collaborate in making decisions on matters of immediate concern.

In actual practice the Union is not democratically representative. At some universities, such as Dalhousie, the delegates are chosen arbitrarily by the executive of the Student Council, or some other body.

They should in fact be elected by the people they represent far in advance of the Congress so that they can communicate with their constituents. The Constitution leaves the responsibility for this to the individual Councils.

It is therefore up to the students on each campus, and not to the regional fieldworker or the Secretariat to en-

force such a step. If students feel that they are not represented they must demand such elections and justify them by: (1) becoming fully informed on student related issues, both educational and social, (2) voicing their opinions to their delegates and Student Councils. Critics also maintain that at the individual universities, it is the responsibility of the Secretariat to see that policy decisions are carried out. But this is impossible, especially on a limited budget.

Delegates come back to their university hoping to inform the students of various issues that were discussed. The fieldworker is available to advise and inform interested students. A considerable amount of literature is available to those who request it from their Student Council, but it is up to students to seek out information, to study the pertinent questions, and to attempt to have their point of view heard by their Council and ultimately the CUS national Congress.

In trying to be representative of Canadian students, CUS was and is very idealistic. It realizes that it can only begin to be truly effective at the national level to the extent that the Councils of the member student unions

DEAR MOM...

Dear Mom,

I thought you knew me better. Wondering if I would join one of those clubs and wear a little metal pin? I was asked once or twice last year, but... well, too much secrecy. Guaranteed social life. Assured friends. I don't need, don't want that.

You see, I have friends. And can make more. Anyone might become my friend.

With the world so full of sun
with ribs to tickle
and such soft rain to wash the air
lips to speak
taste
to kiss and remember
with random hopes
of eyes making friends
hands becoming lovers
armpits
dreams
Even now
in loneliness
I can imagine
minds moving closer
thought together
walking, watching her toes mimic mine
— and when we sit
when we rest
we'll know why
and later, leaving
after one day's good-bye
almost turning away
then
fingertips grasp
for tomorrow's hello.

Rick

are representative of the interests of their students. This requires reform of structures on local campuses, but no structural reform will be effective until students begin to actively study, debate, and demand action on educational and social issues.

Some Dalhousie delegates have complained that it is extremely difficult to argue with "leftist" students at Congresses and have pointed out that the reason is that they are so much better informed about issues, and so much more experienced in political action.

If this is so, then those students maintaining other points of view, must bring themselves up to the level of their opponents; otherwise they have no grounds for complaining about the one-sided policies of CUS.

Whether CUS is voted out of existence or not, and national organization which replaces it will be impotent until wide-range student involvement is attained.

WE GET POLEMICS...

Residence Food

To the Editor:

Food, since the first of the university year, has been bad and is growing progressively worse. Breakfast, lunch and dinner do not go well with streaked forks, knives and spoons! In the mornings, the toast is stale, and plain yech! That is a compliment. More fresh fruit should be served. In lunches and dinners there should be more variety, better preparation, and no use of left-overs in soups and other courses. Main courses and the smorgasbord should be better, with more variety of salads, dressings and cold cuts. Cakes and buns should be fresh daily, not stale and dry.

To cite specific incidents; on September 26, the lamb and fish should have been tender but they were not.

On September 27, the single pieces of grilled minute (mi-noot as in small) steak were a bit tough. That afternoon the beef stroganoff and stupid salisbury steak were miserable. On September 28, the western omelette was blah. On September 28, I am sure I smelled sauerkraut being prepared. On September 29, we were served beef brisket and sauerkraut. The next day the instant fried rice was yech; fresh rice makes a big difference. The saute of

veal was over-seasoned with green peppers obviously to hide the flavor of the veal? Oh, for Mom's home cooking. Quick bring out the Bromo Seltzer!

Yours sincerely,

David Yip

Telegrams

To the Editor:

Re: the telegram sent to Trudeau by D. A. G. S. Council's reasons for abhorring the test were, in part, emotional as opposed to entirely scientific. Clearly one abhors testing for military purposes, but atomic power can be used for peaceful means.

But it is also clear that underground deployment of nuclear bombs could conceivably reduce the possibility of a serious earthquake as opposed to causing one. It is suggested (Emillani et al in the most recent issue of Science) that a bomb exploded in an area where elastic stresses in the crust are increasing, could release these stresses in a controlled manner. Thus one could avoid these stresses increasing to the point — where a force 5 or greater earthquake occurs.

The most recent Aleutian test was not designed to test these suggestions. However the emotional

response to the tests has largely neglected the positive possibilities.

I would suggest that any further telegrams sent to Trudeau or Nixon demand the end to military testing, but also demand that testing underground be directed toward recognizable geologic ends.

One only hopes that the A. E. C. has considered such questions as circulation of underground water, and eventual geologic erosion of test sites in its decision to permit any underground tests.

Yours truly,

Alan Ruffman
Graduate Student

Static

To the Editor,

This is to raise a question about the noise level which we must expect to tolerate in the S.U.B. I am personally rather annoyed by the flood of sound which comes through the intercom system at all times of the day and night — in the morning, "Muzak", in the afternoon and evening, the jolly business of our radio station. One cannot expect to turn it off completely however. I do complain and I have heard members of the student body complain, about the pervasiveness and the volume of such noise. The cafeteria in the S.U.B. is especially unpleasant

in this respect. The ceiling is a grid of speakers, and the effect at high noon when "Muzak" dies and Dal Radio comes alive, is conducive to those feelings of mind rot which Mr. William Burroughs has described with nasty precision.

Is it necessary to play "Muzak" throughout the building during the morning? Is a high degree of volume necessary? Are there not parts of the building which might be spared this horror? Would users of the cafeteria in the S.U.B. be more or less happy if the speakers over one side of the cafeteria were turned off? Is "Muzak" during the morning to be considered a desirable feature of the building? What if there were silence?

The same questions can no doubt be applied to the operation of the radio station in the afternoons and evenings. This is not the place to inquire into a more basic matter, the quality of the programming.

Yours

Robert Morris

Open Door?

To the Editor

You may have noticed what happens when some oafs get too much power. I mean it seems to go to their heads. They start doing fun things like pushing people around

and beating people with sticks and stuff like that.

But you may not have noticed that some of the disease has been contracted by the yellow-coated thugs who guard your SUB.

As I was on my way to your office last week two of these animals attached themselves to me and informed me that I was not allowed to enter the building.

It took me some ten minutes to convince them that I was sufficiently responsible to be escorted to your office and vouched for by Neil Harrison. Then the whole process had to be repeated for two of my staff who had come with me.

But there was the further complication that Neil could only sign in two of us and the third seemed destined to sit outside for the time that we were in the building.

But things were resolved without the necessity of one of sitting outside wailing to the moon.

However, enough of the chronology. The purpose of this letter is simply to inform you of some of the difficulties inherent in trying to maintain interpaper communications and to ask you if something might not be done in the future.

I remain,
Editor
THE JOURNAL
Saint Mary's University.