

In Argentina

Attack on academic freedom

"Until we can cleanse the teaching area, and professors are all of Christian thought and ideology, we will not achieve the triumph we seek in our struggle against the revolutionary left".

General Vilas - Deputy Commander of V Army Corps Bahia Blanca, 4 August 1976

Since the coup of 24 March there has been a systematic ideological purge of the academic community in Argentina. A new law passed by the military junta at the end of March, authorises the summary dismissal or suspension from duty of any state employee for unspecified reasons ...

According to a recent report in *New Scientist* (29 July 1976) "Between March and May, more than 2000 university academics lost their jobs as well as 700 from various research institutes. Members of the Argentine Physical Society estimate that a quarter of this number have lost their jobs."

As there have been sweeping dismissals in the field of Psychiatry and in all other sectors of education, there is considerable doubt as to the accuracy of the official statement by the civilian Minister of Education, Ricardo Bruera, that about 3,000 academics, administrators and teaching assistants in national secondary schools had been dismissed since March. (Report *New York Times*, 5 August 1976).

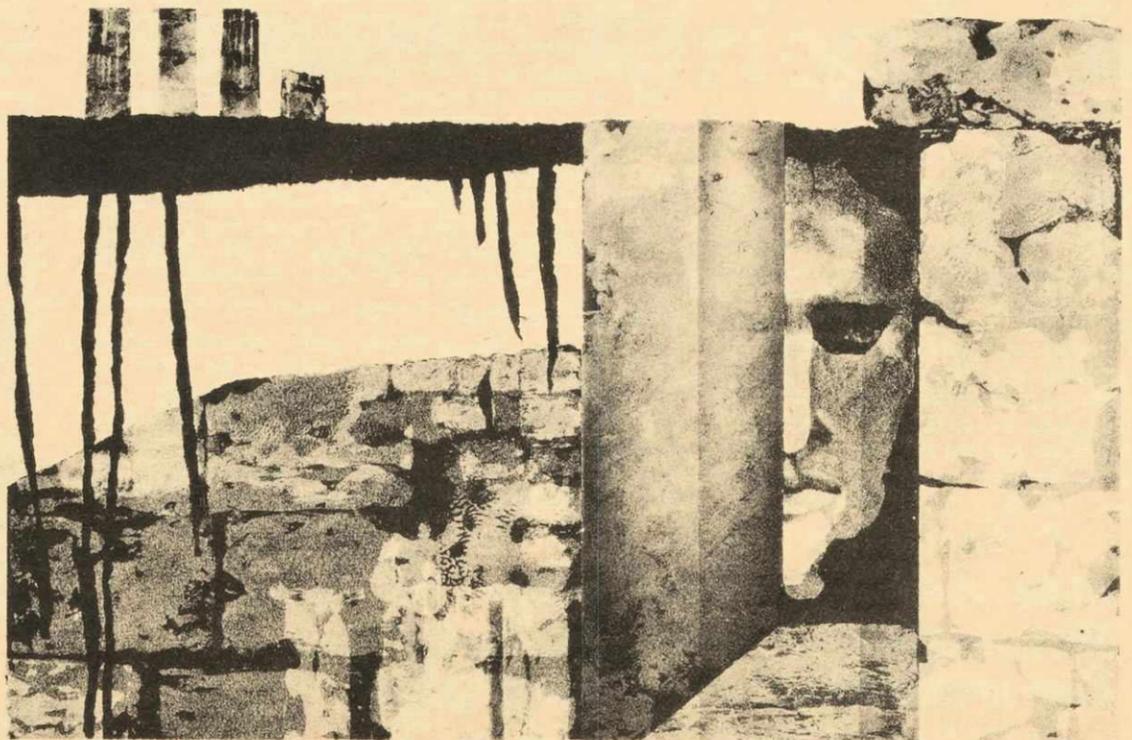
Some of Argentina's most prestigious scientists have been dismissed or detained; centers most affected include National Science and Technology Research Council, the National Institute of Agriculture and Cattle Breeding Technology. (According to reports from three scientists at the **Centro de Investigacion de Estudios Avanzados del Instituto Politecnico Nacional** in Mexico City).

The *New York Times* (5 August 1976) reported a military investigation of academic "subversion" in the National University of Bahia Blanca. Seventeen professors have been arrested and the army issued a list of 31 other persons who were wanted (some of these are living abroad). The academics, mainly from the economics faculty, will be tried on charges of organizing subversive instruction. They include the former rector of the university Victor Benamo.

In the present atmosphere, few hold out real hopes that the purges will discontinue, nor, given the opinion of the military can one be optimistic about the outcome of the trials of academics and students by military courts.

"In the universities, the post of vice-chancellor, dean and even director of studies have been taken over by the military men, who are also in charge of research institutes. Students and staff have to submit to regulations governing political behaviour in their private lives. University libraries have been purged of "Subversive" books. Those of Marx and Freud -branded "ideological criminals" by the new secretary general of the National University of Cordoba, who is an Air Force Officer, have even been publicly burned." *New Scientist*, 29 July 1976.

Further insights into the mentality of the new regime were gleaned from the statements made on 16 July 1976 by the new director of the University of Buenos Aires, Senor Alberto Constantini, who regretted that the police could not be removed from the university faculties at



present because of the risk of subversion and he added that wherever ideological penetration is present there was no possibility of establishing respect for academic freedom.

Amnesty International has asked its

members to write to General Jorge Videla, the President, and the Minister of Education, requesting the release of all academics and students held without trial. **However, it is very important that students and academics write on behalf**

of a few individuals. The Halifax Group of Amnesty International has a long list of detained students and individuals and anyone willing to help may call: Lynn Stow - 422-2505 or Anthony Woods - 469-8472.

Future of third world students

by Ursula Wawer

Canadian and foreign students and educators concerned with the future of foreign students especially third world students in Canada, were asked to carefully scrutinize Canada's commitment to the third world at a conference held this last weekend at the University of Ottawa.

Proposals made by the provincial governments of Ontario and Alberta with respect to differential fees will in effect limit the number of foreign students able to attend Canadian post-secondary institutions. The differential fee structure triples tuition for visa students.

Dr. Pauline Jewett, president of Simon Fraser University, suggested that provisions should be made for third world students that come from countries with very low GNP and high illiteracy rates. Dr. Jewett felt that a priority list of third world countries and those most seriously affected due to natural disasters and war should be compiled and that greater assistance in the form of free tuition and travel should be extended to students from these countries.

Dr. Jewett said that she was not concerned with American students who come from a highly advanced and wealthy nation and make up only 19.6 percent of the foreign student population.

It was generally felt by conference members that the average Canadian is unaware of a foreign student's status in Canada and that an educational campaign was necessary.

Myths surrounding foreign students include: that their numbers are rapidly

increasing when in fact they comprise only 5 percent of the student population and are actually decreasing in proportion to Canadian students.

Those proposing a differential fee have suggested a substantial saving for the Canadian tax payer. This saving amounts to less than a dollar for each tax payer but would place a tremendous burden on individual students.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funds 1500 out of about 16,000 foreign students in Canada. Should differential fees take effect the number of students funded would drop to accommodate the overall rise in cost per student. The conference also examined the immigration acts dating back to 1967 to understand the differential fee policy. In 1967 a revised immigration act took effect. Considered a humanitarian act, in the final analysis it led to its own destruction.

It made entry into Canada a simple affair. It was only one further step for individuals to apply for landed immigrants status from within Canada. Canada became a country of accessibility for people from across the world.

Simultaneously foreign student numbers rose but for different reasons. Grants and scholarships for studying abroad had become more numerous in their countries.

Then in 1972 the walls caved in with the Green Paper on immigration. This paper revealed the paranoia of many Canadians concerning the settling in the midst of so called "visible immigrants", blacks and asians. The federal and provincial governments, while protesting against these accusations, made attempts via the Green Paper, to curtail the number of immigrants from "problem areas" such as Africa and Asia.

Economic growth in Canada was slowing down during this period. It was sensible to restrict immigrant inflow in

the light of poor job opportunities but the Canadian government used the visible immigrant as a scapegoat to relieve the tension in the Canadian Labor market.

No provisions were made for foreign students who lost their rights to summer employment in Canada. Logic dictated finding jobs for Canadian students first but the 10,000 visa students did not present a grave threat to the Canadian community.

Presently foreign students must guarantee \$3500 before gaining entry into Canada. Should the money run out due to problems with the home government or family problems the Canadian government will ask the student to leave the country. In other words, the person is deported.

"There is a popular misconception that all foreign students come from rich families or are funded by CIDA. This is not the case. By implementing differential fees we will be restricting education even more to the wealthy and privileged as well as limiting cultural exchange," said Dr. Cadieux, the president of the Universite de Moncton as well as president of World University Services of Canada.

Other topics considered during the conference were; campus services and the means of cultural adaptation. It was generally agreed that more accurate and adequate information should be available to the foreign student in his home country.

In his closing remarks Dr. Cadieux said, "This has been a colorful gathering not because of the many races present but because of the diversity of people present and the issues discussed. It is now our task to reach the Canadian people and help them understand our responsibility to the Third World student in Canada and the Third World itself."

FOREIGN STUDENTS

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