

The Gateway

member of the canadian university press

editor-in-chief Al Scarth

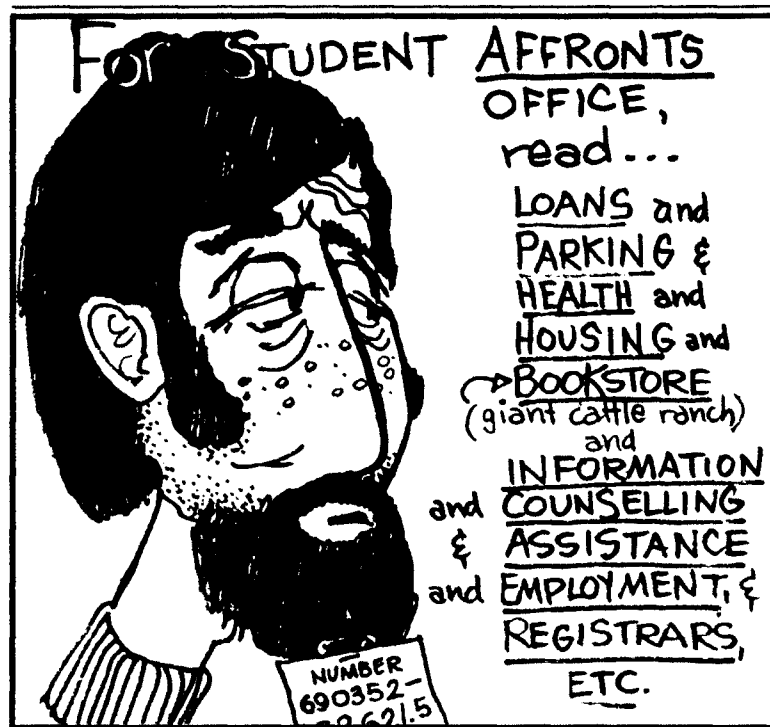
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STAFF THIS ISSUE—Slaving away in the desert this ever so dry night were Dorothy Constable, Dick Nimmons, Ron Dutton, Doug Wardell, Ron Turnaway, Dan Carroll (the newly released), Myra Davies, Cathy Morris, at least half of the U of A Symphony, Winston Gereluk, Jim Carter, George Drohomirecki, Barbara of the glue, Miriam McClellan, at least two editors objectifying off into the sunrise, and yes, but of course, yours so ever truly (I'm not a politician) Harvey G.

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The last time they stiffened the laws to cure a "drug epidemic," they called it Prohibition.

It didn't work.

In Friday's Gateway, a personal statement from the head of psychiatry at the U of A and president of the Canadian Psychiatric Association, Dr. Keith Yonge, took us right back to that era of thinking.

Dr. Yonge would like to see "loitering" include "neglect of educational and occupational opportunities, and persistent and unwarranted idleness."

Perhaps this is simply a working paper but for a leading psychiatrist to say that the courts should decide what constitutes a worthwhile life and then penalize the individual who transgresses those bounds by putting him in a "work colony" betrays gross disrespect for individual rights.

While Dr. Yonge may claim he is not asking for stiffer drug laws by stating "attempts to stem the epidemic of non-medical use of drugs simply by prohibiting supplies of the drugs... will not be effective," his suggested loitering laws would give the courts tremendous control, not only over drug "offenders" but over anyone

the judges cared to lock up under such a catch-all piece of legislation.

What is particularly frightening is the possibility that the association, whose recommendations would carry much weight considering its composition of highly trained professionals, might accept this extremely dangerous proposal.

If Dr. Yonge's statement is any indication of what the final recommendations of the association to the government's commission on the non-medical use of drugs will be, then the association can only be labelled as irresponsible.

The paper itself comes dangerously close to using scare tactics about that evil weed, marijuana, and its "immature," "primitive" users. It is not, as Dr. Yonge would have us believe, the "excessive permissiveness of 20th century society" which has encouraged groups to opt out, but rather their increased realization of the very oppressive, false nature of that society.

Avoiding the basic societal issues by slapping a label reminiscent of "dirty hippies" on drug users is a very easy way out.

And altering the concept of penitentiaries to work colonies as

rehabilitation and "remotivation" centres is simply toying at the outside, in effect, begging the real question.

It is time we realized it is the society which is deviant, not the opters-out; that it is the society which needs "remotivation."

Hence, it is most upsetting to see a report from one of Canada's leading psychiatrists which not only wants the status quo maintained on the prohibition of psychotropic drugs but wants the law "extended" to net users and probably any other non-conformist bystanders. It is a bass-ackwards solution.

True, Dr. Yonge does not say drugs cause "a generally idle and parasitic attitude to society" but he does say drugs tend to be associated with a "reversion to the crude or primitive in speech, in sexual expression and in taste for music forms (however much these may be rationalized as emancipation from socio-cultural oppression)."

I expect a few of Dr. Yonge's smoking associates in any of the professions might have something to say about that.

Al Scarth

The reform of imperialism . . . a pious wish

STUDENTS FOR A DEMOCRATIC UNIVERSITY

Once again on the campus this week we are getting an illustration of how far removed from reality is the world of the "intellectuals." We are being treated to a teach-in on something called "The American Domination of Canada." We are hearing various proposals for the reform of this "Domination." But the exercise, for two fundamental reasons, is largely fatuous.

The first reason is that the problem is not the American Domination of Canada, but the underlying processes which give rise to that domination. These underlying processes are those of capitalism in its contemporary stage, the stage of imperialism, and the reform of imperialism is a pious wish for its destructive effects can only be ended by revolutionary changes in the economic, political and social order.

Teach-in is just an empty exercise

The second reason why the teach-in is an empty exercise is that it takes no note of the fact that struggle against capitalism in its imperialist stage is already underway daily in our society. The very people engaged in this on-going struggle, the working people, are the exact ones who were not invited to the teach-in and who, indeed, are rarely invited to participate in anything on this

campus which their labor has created and paid for.

The teach-in, then, first mystifies the issues by talking about American Domination when it should be talking about imperialism, and second ensures it will not come to grips with even the mystified issues by excluding the very people who confront these issues concretely in their daily lives.

How should we understand imperialism as the contemporary "stage" of capitalism? Capitalism is the system of producing goods through the application of men's "free" labor-power in ways determined by the minority of people who own the elements of the productive process.

It develops to the imperialist stage as a result of its own internal necessities, as a system in motion. If capitalism were purely competitive, the rate of profit of capitalist enterprises would tend (and has tended, in certain historical situations) to decline as a result of processes including competition in productivity and mechanization and the struggle of workers for a better standard of living.

To maintain high profit rates in face of these problems, capitalist enterprise tends toward concentration of ownership—monopolies which can hold profits up through market control—and tends also to invest abroad in countries where conditions are such that resources and people can be exploited cheaply. Financial institutions like banks and insurance companies play a growing role in the direction of these monopolies because

the monopolies need to finance their growth and concentration using the resources of these institutions.

Alberta makes a good imperialist investment

One of the parts of the world where the great imperialist power, the United States, has found profitable investment for its monopolies is Alberta. As a satellite area of American imperialism, Alberta suffers a number of problems of a fundamental character, the least of which is the number of American professors at its universities. Alberta suffers, for one thing, "uneven development." That is, the Albertan economy is directed in accordance with the needs of imperialist companies, and if these companies require that one area of the economy such as oil production be developed while other areas of the economy such as manufacturing be ignored, development will proceed on this basis regardless of the needs of Albertans.

The economy thus is vulnerable to any decision of the imperialist companies to invest elsewhere, and this is only one result of uneven development.

The imperialist companies rob Alberta of much of its wealth by taking huge chunks of profit home to the United States. If Albertans controlled the oil industries, they would reinvest the profits here at home, and the premier would not

have to make public statements admitting that more than 60 per cent of Albertans don't have a decent income.

It is ironic that Premier Strom should make such statements, since he is the leader of a government which has worked diligently for years to see that the imperialist companies will have the easiest ride possible on the backs of Albertans. Now Premier Strom is going to Alaska to advise that state's government how to give the oil companies an easy ride there, too.

Imperialism is struggled against most directly by the people of Alberta in the work-places of the province. The working people are fighting as best they can to maintain a decent living against the imperialists—some of whom are not American but huge Canadian companies which engage in "internal imperialism" in various areas of the country like Alberta. The struggles of the working people are what we call class struggle—workers against capitalists.

Students and intellectuals in general will not be able to fight against imperialism by calling it American Domination and repeating pious words about it before large audiences in the academic hothouse.

Students and intellectuals will only be able to fight against imperialism by joining in and helping the struggle which is already on-going—the class struggle of the working people against their oppressors the capitalists. Some aspects of this alliance of students and workers will be manifested on the campus—in struggles against

the anti-people research that goes on in the social sciences, physical sciences and other areas; in struggle against the fraud of companies giving money to the university in campaigns like the 3AU campaign without a single reference to the people who made these gifts possible, namely the working people who produce the wealth in our society; even in struggles against the authoritarian structures of the university which imperialism needs to maintain the university as its tool.

Join the picket lines of the workers

But we need always to remember the fundamental importance of the class struggle, and we can help the working people directly in this struggle—joining their picket lines as some of us have done at the MacMillan Bloedel plant where workers were locked out in denial of their just wage demands, and so on.

And we need always to be working to forge instruments of effective struggle against the concentrated power of imperialism—instruments that will organize the people together in equally powerful unities like worker-student defense groups and the like. The struggle is only beginning, and it can be raised to higher and higher levels only by concrete actions—not by pious words like those heard at this week's teach-in.