

We are colonials

Robin Mathews explains Americanization

The following are excerpts taken from a paper to be delivered to the Canadian Student Liberal Conference at Carleton University in February. Robin Mathews, co-author of *The Struggle for Canadian Universities*, will speak at York in the McLaughlin junior common room tomorrow at noon on the Americanization of the university and other matters.

By ROBIN MATHEWS

Canadians are not masters in their own house, not even in the modified measure presently described by the phrase, modern international inter-dependence. The prime minister has said we have an area of 15 per cent sovereignty where we may "play government," as school children under the tutoring eye of indulgent parents "play house."

The recent federal-provincial conference was such an empty, infantile game. The only question worth talking about — the survival of Canada — was not on the agenda.

The talk was about "spending money." But the purse was in other hands. The symbol of the crown was present. But the crown was on another head, for the man who holds the purse-strings wears the crown, and no one in the old Union Station had a purse — the most powerful could only talk about their "allowance" as if it had meaning in terms of sovereign power.

Canadians are not masters in their own house. They are colonials. Many have colonial minds in a country that is a mercantile possession exploited by non-Canadians to conform with the desires and policies of a foreign nation ...

It is because of that simple fact that the universities, too, are being increasingly removed from Canadian hands. The shock of that revelation has struck the Canadian people a forceful blow. For 25 years they have been told by politicians, editorialists, economists and social scientists that the economy doesn't matter as long as the culture remains Canadian.

That was a lie, a deliberately perpetrated falsehood. But many Canadians believed the "experts." Recently, they have been shown how, beyond the shadow of a doubt, they are losing the symbolic centre of the culture: the Canadian university.

As the truth of the fact is borne down upon them, as the implications become

known, Canadians face the terror they can no longer avoid. Unless a distinct policy of repatriation begins, now, the culture will go as the economy has and Canada will be finished. Canada will suffer de facto integration with the United States. The branch-plant manager will be succeeded by the U.S. bulldozer and the small arms salesman. Violence will become as

Canadian as the maple leaf. U.S. chauvinism, militarism, racism, cultural aggressiveness, political simple-mindedness, materialism, and violent imperialism will take up residence in Canada ...

The betrayal of Canada and Canadians in the universities is massive, pervasive, and indefensible. The facts are simple

indisputable. Primarily, they can be summed up in six general statements.

1) In 1962 about 75 per cent of faculty members, were Canadian citizens. By 1968 about 49 per cent. Canadians have been a diminishing proportion on Canadian university faculties, decreasing with increasing speed each year.

2) Canadian material available in Canadian universities is in an impoverished state. In the most sensitive areas of study, intimately related to the survival of the community, nothing is being done to ameliorate the situation and the destructive status quo is vigorously defended by university administrators.

3) Canadian citizens are discriminated against in competition for positions as faculty members and for places in Canadian graduate schools.

4) The vast majority of universities and departments in Canada refuse to advertise in Canada, though many advertise in Great Britain and the United States. "Grapevine hiring" by non-Canadians in Canada to non-Canadians in and outside of Canada is the rule rather than the exception.

5) Legislators and university administrators at all levels have refused the Canadian community its self-respect. They have refused legislation that would provide full, just and imaginative opportunities for Canadians in the universities of the country.

6) Non-Canadians, particularly citizens of the United States have, in very large measure, contempt for Canada and for its reasonable aspirations. They believe they have an unquestioned right to disregard Canada, to disregard Canadian customs and knowledge ... They act as imperialists in the conventional definition of the word. They believe they bring a better culture.

They, therefore, believe excellent qualification is possessed by the non-Canadian. They believe that if Canadians are placed in charge of administration of the universities, the universities will become mediocre. They believe Canadian material is parochial and Canadians concerned with it "chauvinistic" and "narrow." Canadians (students and others) who are concerned with U.S. issues are, they believe, mature and relevant.

Most of them believe Canada an inferior place, and Canadians an inferior people.



Excalibur -- Jack Meoff

The U.S. flag is just a symbol of U.S. scholarship at York.

U.S. profs ignore Canadian issues

Why the quota system is a primary demand

By GAIL DEXTER

Once we've discovered that the increasingly low proportion of Canadians on staff in our universities and the increasingly high proportions of Americans is no accident ... that our cultural institutions in general and our universities in particular are fast becoming colonial appendages of the American system ... that, in fact, the "Americanization problem" is U.S. imperialism ... What do we do? ...

What we do depends on how serious we consider the problem. And the problem is seen in all its seriousness when we understand the extent to which the "Americanized" university oppresses the masses of Canadian people.

Universities train people who will hold positions of authority in the community: the teachers, writers, broadcasters, lawyers — in short: the Canadian intelligentsia. These people leave our universities knowing more about "caste and class in a southern town" than about the plight of our native peoples, more about "alienated American youth" than about the Canadian working class.

As more and more American professors join "sensitive" departments such as political science, humanities or sociology, there is an ever greater tendency to ignore Canadian issues simply because these teachers know little or nothing about Canada. They complain that there's a lack of material. But they rarely take the initiative of creating class projects that would add to our knowledge of the country: Canada doesn't seem important to them.

As for the propagation of American orthodoxy, American professors are certainly aided and abetted by Canadians who partake of a colonial mentality. But there can be no question but that the propagation of these ideas is facilitated by the importation of hundreds of U.S.

academics who are exposed to no other modes of thought in the great imperial centres of learning.

For example: students are commonly taught that the multi-national corporation (an academic euphemism for U.S. monopolies) have benefited Canada. In fact the Canadian people have paid dearly for the presence of branch plants which send their profits south of the border. Students learn almost nothing about the trade union movement. But if perchance a few are exposed to labor history, they are not taught how the big U.S. "international" unions are a primary force for suppressing the class consciousness and political development of the Canadian working class. They are not taught how these undemocratic unions steal millions of dollars annually from Canadian workers.

The list is a long one. Students must, of course, demand new courses that deal with problems relevant to Canada. But we must ask ourselves whether Americans are qualified to teach such courses.

When a quota system is mentioned people tend to associate it with a witch-hunt. This is most peculiar considering that all European countries have quota systems to control the number of foreign professors in their universities. The U.S., through its hiring practices and immigration laws, has an effective quota of less than two per cent on permanent foreign staff. It is only Canada which insists on having "free trade" in the academic market place. And the result is that our universities are dominated by citizens of the world's greatest imperialist power.

A quota system would insure a truly international university; i.e. a university dominated by Canadians with plenty of places for foreign academics representative of many countries in the world.

The implementation of a quota system that would permit 85 per cent of our teaching staffs to be Canadian

and insure that the remaining 15 per cent of foreign professors be dominated by no one country would be a major step in the reform of our universities. It would insure at least that Canadian issues be considered, that Canadian students have jobs in the universities paid for by the Canadian people, that our universities become bulwarks against imperialism instead of viaducts for imperialist ideology.

The quota system does not solve all the problems of the university. It does not solve the problem of working class accessibility to higher education. It does not automatically democratize the university. It is a transitional demand.

But, because of the ingrained colonial mentality of Canadian university administrators; and because of the toughness of U.S. imperialism, it is a transitional demand we will have to fight hard to win.

A word about U.S. professors: Not every U.S. professor is an agent of U.S. imperialism. In this sense, there are many Canadians who are agents of imperialism. Under a quota system Americans who wish to stay and teach in Canada could do so if they showed their commitment to Canada by applying for citizenship. However, surveys show that less than 10 per cent of the U.S. professors in our midst intend to do so.

If we as students are serious about fighting U.S. imperialism, the quota system is a major demand on the campus. But just as the university spreads its influence far beyond the confines of the campus into the fabric of the Canadian community; so the demand for a quota system (a demand that directly confronts U.S. imperialism) will strike a responsive chord in the community. We will see workers united with students in this crucial struggle.

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