

Canadian radicals present clear, rational ideas

STUDENT PROTEST by Gerald F. McGuigan (Toronto: Methren, 1968) ppiv, 285

A new book entitled *Student protest* (which may be of interest to students of this campus) has recently been published. It is by Gerald F. McGuigan, an associate professor of economics at UBC.

The book is different from others of its sort in that it is not the effort or opinion of any one group or individual. Instead, it consists of articles by thinking students, teachers and organization leaders from across Canada. It must be faulted for failing to present the other side of the issue of student vs. establishment, but the

authors themselves are as objective as could be expected when speaking of things that are dear to their cause.

In reading the book I was impressed by the rational attitude of those who contributed to it. It is not the effort of a handful of crazed radicals to sway opinion their way; it is a reasonable look at the student movement as it exists in Canada. The only thing that is put across is that these people want you to understand them and their ideas so that you may decide for yourself.

McGuigan himself writes the first article and in it succeeds in presenting the issues, with all their complexities, in an orderly

fashion, but avoids scientific dryness. First he outlines a few misunderstandings that exist between the students and the establishment. Following this he attempts to analyse radical thought on certain issues, centering on lack of communication, which is one of the main reasons for the generation gap. In the third and last section of his article he explores the radical question: "Does he (the student) have the right to seek a form of education which by definition requires moral action as part of the way of attaining the truth?"

In all of this McGuigan is speaking from a unique standpoint: that of a member of the establishment who sympathizes with the students who find it inadequate and anachronistic.

The main purpose of the book is the education of the masses toward what is going on around them. To understand the movement it is necessary

to know something of the people who have created it. Seymour L. Halleck aids understanding in his article on why students are protesting, from a psychiatrist's point of view. He states that the movement is made up of three types of individuals: those responding to realistic and direct oppression, those responding to realistic but indirect oppression and others who react to misperceived oppression.

This selection further deals with the stresses that lead to protest and, indicates what educators can do to avoid these confrontations.

Daniel La Touche speaks for the student movement in Quebec, enabling us to see why they are protesting and how they are doing it. According to him the French students are fighting for something different than the English students. He feels that "Student radicalism in Canada tends to become an

alienating refuge . . . while in Quebec it is an instrument for the integration of the students into the surrounding society." La Touche also states that the student community is generally radical and that in Quebec the radicals are in power.

James Harding supplements La Touche's work with an article on radicalism in English Canada. This deals mainly with the development of the movement and a few personal issues that have confronted him. His ideas seem to be summed up in the phrase "Minority actions based on praxis-able to shift from liberation to confrontation — to build support not only for the theory of student power but also commitment that is existential and conscious, will become more and more necessary."

What are the students protesting against? David Zirnelt and Neil Kelly elaborate on this in their chapters on the actions at UBC and an analysis of the establishment, respectively. The student council at UBC, for once representing a large number of students, laid out its demands strongly and threatened to back them up with strong action. The important thing here is that these people are definite in their desires and the means that must be used to achieve these. Kelly examines all aspects of the establishment as well as the students opposing it. It is obvious that society's institutions need to be re-evaluated and he feels that the movement has forced people with closed eyes to begin wondering and asking questions.

The content and position of this article (which is the last in the book) make it a fitting ending and summary for all that has gone before which is roughly "Look around you, find out what they are saying, discover why they say it, and get off your ass and DO something!"

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