

# CON

by Ambrose Fierce

Next week I enter University Hospital to have my eustachian tubes tied off, because I have recently been taking it in the ear with increasing frequency and violence from too many of my acquaintances.

I am, these people point out, extremely callous; not so, I reply, I am merely gifted with great fortitude to bear the misfortunes of others. I am opinionated, then; as to that, I have no opinion one way or the other. I am, some of these people have the hardihood to content, terribly bigoted; it is incredible, say I, that they could mistake bigotry for frankness, openness, and honesty. But I must, they say, pressing hard, admit that I am not a good team player, not a fan of such books as *I'm OK, You're OK* and *How to Be Your Own Best Friend*, and not totally converted to Transcendental Meditation, despite that excellent group's convincing welter of scientific charts and graphs; and that I am a believer in almost nothing, a sneering searcher for ulterior motives, a pessimist, a lukewarm patriot, a bad loser and, generally, a person sometimes boorish, often rude, and almost never genteel. These charges I do readily admit, and in doing so I thank my God.

I am now and increasingly the target of other accusations, more specific than those just noted. For example, because I own a few trifling securities, control one little company and was until recently director for another, hold a little bit of property, have tenants and occasional employees (all this through agents because of my extreme youth), and because I never apologize for any of these things, I am, *therefore*, a heinous hyena mad dog bloated bourgeois ravaging slavedriving bloodsucking capitalist.

This is tedious enough, but there is much, much worse. On social evenings (when I am not, that is, devouring widows and orphans raw) invariably arises the topic of women's liberation, and the men present are then obliged by present-day convention to say, "tsk, tsk," and wear looks of guilty penitence, and gaze mournfully into their drinks. They may speak if spoken to. Granted, this is lots of fun, but after the first two or three hundred such festivals their charm diminishes. Recently, at one such jamboree, I ventured to observe, softly to the cubes in my watery drink, that men sometimes have troubles too, not the least of which being our current obligation to sit silently at least one evening in seven, and to hear yet again what massive bastards we were and are. This remark established me then and for all times as a sexist. As a sort of bonus, because of this crime's gravity and because of my partiality for scotch on the rocks, I was also, on the spot, branded a cubist.

And so forth. Because I have once or twice mildly given it as my opinion, that the provincial government at times seems to be its own and only reason for

existence, I became straightway an anarchist; and that labour might try — if only for the sheer novelty of such a move — occasionally living up to a contract, I became immediately an enemy of the people, an anti-populist; and that I didn't pretend to give a God damn about Zimbabwe or whatever it is (working up such ultra-long range sympathy is like trying to feel guilty about Original Sin), I became a double-dyed, treble-damned racist.

Similarly, there is my belief, strengthened over the years, that many major problems are insoluble (corruption in office, the decline of the West, Talcott Parsons' prose style, the inevitability of war and of eventual thermonuclear annihilation, child beating, vanishing literacy, the Life Force comic book store and the pinball arcade in HUB Mall, over-population, disease, famine, imbecility, our dying oceans, CHED, our sick planet, our universe which is seemingly programmed for murder, entropy). This realistic belief has drawn down on me heavy fire ("The man tears down, but he doesn't build up! His criticism isn't *constructive!* So coo and snivel the sweet ones, so wags the national tongue." — Mencken), and this belief has resulted in my being irrevocably pigeonholed, "defeatist."

The list is endless. Because I enjoy nice things and good food and drink, I am a rank hedonist and materialist. If I should marry two women — or even one large one — I would be a bigamist, but should I remain single I would then be an anti-feminist. Ridiculing the *Daily Worker's* illiteracy makes me a fascist. Once, having gently counselled someone against keeping a too-open mind (your brains fall out), I discovered that on this earth there are few worse things to be than a — and I of course was one — "rationalist."

Somebody once called me an "Ageist."

-Ist, -ist, -ist! The affix is like "hissst!" — a recrimination to oneself and a warning to the orthodox: "Watch out! Here's *somebody different* — interloper, traitor, foe, alien, alienist."

But if you avoid all the pitfalls, and choose your friends regardless of race, creed, color, sex, age, class, influence, and all the rest of it — the way I choose my friends — then you are still in deep trouble with all campus right-think vigilantes, and are certain to get "-ist!" hissed at you anyway. Why? Because you choose people as friends (as opposed to allies) because you *like* them, and you like them because they like you, but also because they are smart or funny or both. And that — may God have mercy on your soul — makes you that worst of all "-ists," an *elitist*.

You can, however, placate those who turn purple and scream this word at you, as did Sir Max Beerbohm, to this effect: the dullard's envy of brilliant men and women is always tempered by the suspicion that they will come to a bad end.



A blind skier racing at Sunshine Village.

Last year's International Disabled Ski Meet included Japan, Norway, U.S. and Canada.

## Disabled skiing

by Richard Desjardins

After two years of amputee ski club inactivity, Edmonton will become the last major city in Canada to have such an organization with the formation of the "Alberta Amputee Ski Association."

Peter Dunster, co-ordinator of the association, headquartered at Lake Eden Resort, is seeking volunteers to help teach amputees to ski. U of A students registered in Physical Education, Rehabilitation, Physio-Therapy, Sports Psychologists, etc. are welcome.

As well as amputees, the program is aimed at other handicapped children and adults such as the mentally and emotionally handicapped, blind,

deaf and polio-stricken individuals.

Susan Clist, a former member of the National Ski Team and presently Chief Instructor for the program across the country, will be on hand at "Sport Chek," 125 A Ave. and 82 St. on Nov. 3 at 7:30 p.m. A demonstration of amputee and blind skiing on an indoor ski ramp will be followed by a movie.

The program is to start the first weekend in January, but volunteers are required for an orientation on Nov. 14. The projected schedule calls for instruction on Fri., Sat., and Sun. Some volunteers will also be required to ride on the buses with the participants out to Lake Eden.

Interested individuals should contact Peter Dunster as soon as possible at the Lake Eden Resort, 963-3411 or 963-3262.

## National Student Day

The Students' Union is sponsoring:

...Student Aid-Employment; 10:30-12:00

...Cutbacks-Tuition; 10:30-12:00

...Question Period-Dr. Bert Hohol; 12:00-1:30

...Student Council Forum and Question Period; 1:30-2:30

...Film, *Getting Straight*; 3:00 and 7:00 (Free)

BE THERE

SUB THEATRE

Tuesday November 9



**ratt\***

food service

8:30 AM till 11 PM

"refreshments"

3 PM till 11 PM

\*7th floor SUB There's Room At The Top

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40 Bonnie Doon Shopping Centre

## Sugarless submarines

BANGOR (ENS-CUP) - The dent submarines, the most generous nuclear warships ever built by the Pantagon, have developed cracks in more than 100 critical places.

According to columnist Jack London, the cracks have been detected by navy inspectors in the three Tridents currently under construction in Bangor, Washington.

## Skiing for the Disabled?

Find out how you can help rehabilitate disabled people through skiing. (Disabled includes the physically, mentally or emotionally handicapped.)

The Alberta Amputee Ski Association  
will hold a

General Meeting

Handicapped Skiing

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 3 7:30 PM  
at SPORTCHEK, 125A Ave and 82 St.

If you are interested your help is needed. Students involved in related fields of Phys. Ed., Special Ed., Physiotherapy, Medicine or Occupational Therapy are especially welcome.

For further information call Peter Dunster, Coordinator, Lake Eden Resort, # 963-3262 or 963-3411.