

# About engineers and reactionaries

The Editor:

While at an election rally recently, I watched as a virtuous young man from the floor stood up to speak. The first thing he did was to announce he was an engineer. Immediately a loud hiss went up from the audience. The reaction seemed typical of the attitude of many students towards engineers. It is, I think, an attitude that is largely justified.

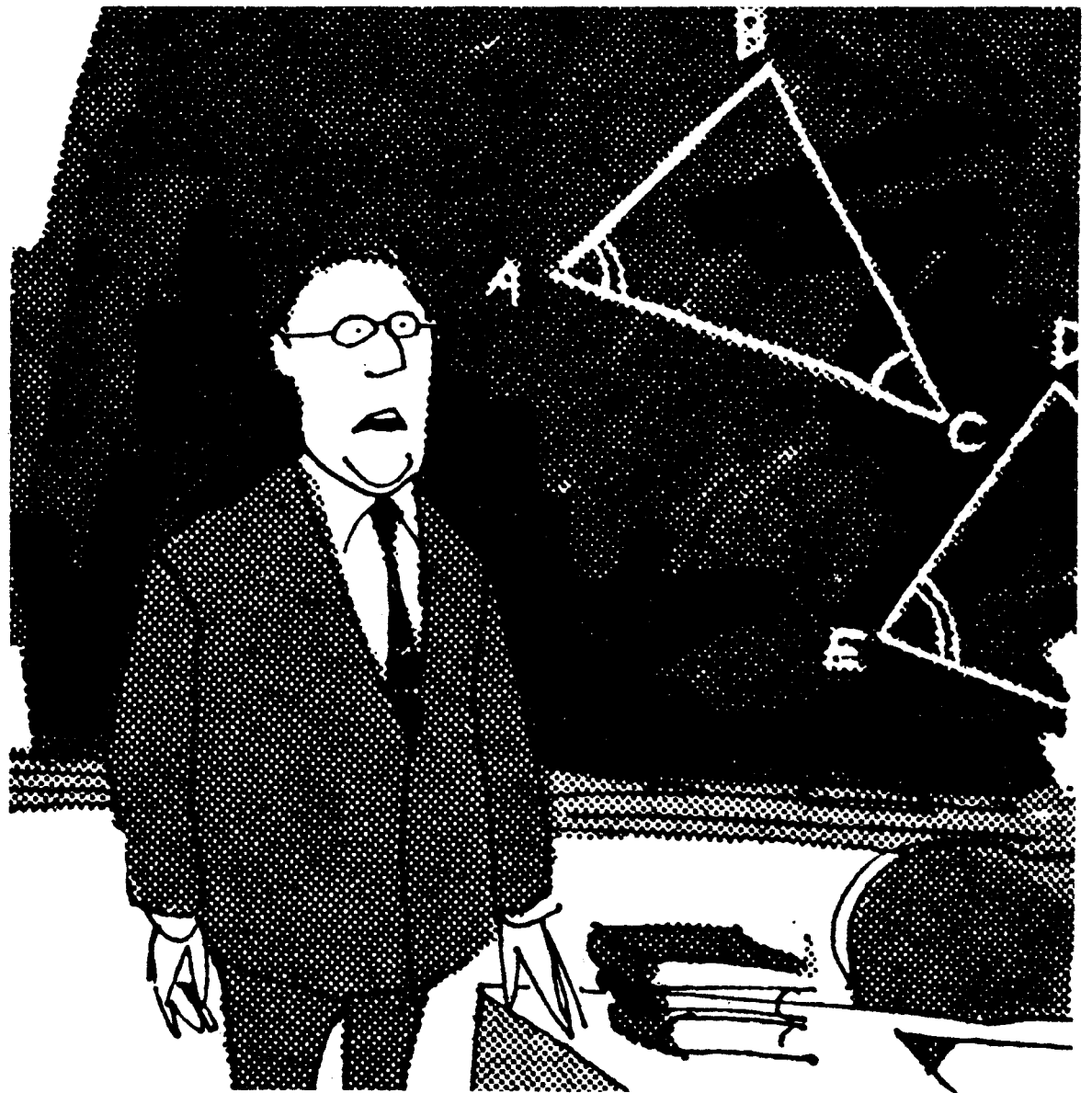
The contempt has usually been for the engineering student mentality—the "let's go have a beer and lay a broad" mentality. But there is another point. One can find among engineers and other such people a new type of student—the student reactionary. He seems to be caught up in something which could almost be viewed as the growth of The New Right. Consider a few symptoms. Consider Mr. Jack Bennett, engineering rep and arch-conservative on students' council.

Consider the results from the Canadian Union of Students referendum. While the campus average was 3-1 against CUS, figures from The Gateway show a margin of more than 7-1 in the two engineering buildings.

There is a thorough contempt for any form of student activism. Our virile, clean cut, sensible, self-satisfied engineering youth have set out to guard society from the evils of these anarchist radicals. And if you can't reason with them, bully them. The idea is to catch a few hippies and paint blue stripes down their backs or better still, tar and feather them. Maybe the situation hasn't gone quite this far, but the arrogant, self righteous attitude is definitely there. It is the kind of attitude that led an engineer to remark "if we ever had a student occupation at the U of A, send in a few science and engineering students before you call the cops. We'll clean out those radicals faster than any cop can." It is also the kind of attitude that makes a vigilante.

Well, by now the reader probably thinks I'm a babbling artsman. Not quite. I'm a first year engineer. Having overcome the fear of being lynched by my colleagues for writing thus, I sign my name.

Chris Koilpillai  
eng 1



"Some of you students have urged me to teach that bourgeois society is corrupt, so here goes. Bourgeois society is corrupt. Returning to the question of congruent triangles . . ."

## President Johns answers charges of repression etc

Dear Concerned Students:

I should like to acknowledge a document headed "Political Repression", handed to me by Mr. Jonathan Bordo at a meeting in the Board Room, University Hall, on Monday morning, February 24th, 1969, on behalf of a group calling itself the "Student Defence Committee".

My comments will be brief.

First of all, I will say that I agree with free thought in all matters at the university or anywhere else, including the Department of Sociology. I am also in favour of free speech, providing it respects the rights of others.

As to your demands with respect to what you erroneously refer to as the dismissal of Don Whiteside, and with respect to the refusal of tenure at this time to Seth Fisher, you know by now that every possible care is being taken to ensure that these cases are fairly dealt with, including

provision for appeal. On the matter of what you call "50-50 student parity" on all committees, I can only say that I am prepared to continue conversations with the duly elected representatives of the student body, including the Graduate Students' Association, and with the Association of Academic Staff of The University of Alberta.

As to the matter of the availability of files, and their openness to the inspection of persons involved, I shall be pleased to take this to the Dean's Council for consideration.

In conclusion I may say that I reject completely your charges of political repression and authoritarianism at this university, as applied to either faculty or students, as they have been made against myself and senior administrative officers on this campus.

Yours sincerely,  
Walter H. Johns,  
President.

## Our film reviewer does not use objective criteria

The Editor:

Although by nature a lethargic person, I am sometimes moved to express an opinion. In this case the topic is the film-criticism of John Thompson which I find increasingly irritating. Do not misunderstand the intention of my letter—he is quite entitled to express his own views of films—for I am not particularly concerned with his conclusions but rather with the manner in which he attains them. You see he is far too arrogant for a critic. Having read all the class books and retaining his subscription to

"Cahiers du Cinéma" perhaps having even seen his due share of classics, he no doubt imagines he has a pretty shrewd idea as to what makes a good film. What a pity his reviews do not reflect this.

His sin lies in his refusal to allow any sort of objective criteria to enter his criticism and to try and sell an image of John Thompson. cinema-gura and spotter of "good-films - which - you - poor-morons-only-can-see-as-mediocre-rubbish-but-really-I'm-right.

J. van Gelder  
grad studies

## There is great affluence

# But we ignore the needs of others

The Editor:

At this university, there are those who feel that this internal strife and never-ending student-prof, student-administration, student-student disagreement is going to evolve a much higher order of human integration and democratic understanding. There are those of us, and if not us, than myself who feel that the apathy on the part of many students is not caused by sheer disinterest in the situations the various factions present us with. We are living in a society "blessed" with great affluence and yet some are wrapped up in destroying what we possess for some "correct ideology".

Cannot those students who riot (or attempt to) find more constructive purposes to turn their attention to? We have moved from the backwoods into having developed Canada into a well respected member of the world community, looked to as a mediator by various groups.

In my opinion, the affluence of our society has not produced the disinterested commoner (we were always here) of a student campus, it has produced the rebel and the ideological debater with a warped sense of values. The faction groups call us apathetic and

"filthy rich" for we will not join forces with them.

The world today is plagued by much more serious matters than the opinions of a few students in the universities of the well-fed, degree-seeking, protesters. These groups have shown the universities that they do have some intelligence—whatever direction it's off in—and they would take up the cause of "less well" endowed with "mechanized thinking" and lead them into international matters of importance.

Formost in my mind now is to bring pressure on the Liberal government and millionaire, girl-kissing, best-dressed Trudeau to initiate anything in the name of humanitarianism to prevent mass starvation and most foreboding racial genocide in a country (or countries) which is asking for Canadian assistance by both parties. But then, any type of assistance can be interpreted as political, therefore starving Biafrans can "go it alone".

I am not saying Nigeria is right or Biafra is right but I am saying that Canada is saying, by not doing anything, that starvation is sanctioned and political aspects of overpowered humanitarian ideals. I am also saying that the universities are the guardians as

well as makers of Canadian public opinion, and that the factions on campus have the power to change the opinion of our "just society" government by gathering the support of the apathetic (for you and I know—as a rule—most are followers) and showing governments the opinion of the people.

We have all forgottted Sunday night's W/5 in favor of Monday night's "Laugh-In". I don't think any further comment is necessary.

Jerome S. Lewiski  
Commerce 3

## Dinwoodie Lounge for study purpose?

The Editor:

Because the University Library facilities are frequently crowded, primarily with students working on assignments which do not involve the use of the books in the library; and because there is a vast waste of space in Dinwoodie Lounge area remains unused; I suggest the practical solution to the problem above it to open Dinwoodie Lounge as a study area during weeknights.

Peter Keven  
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