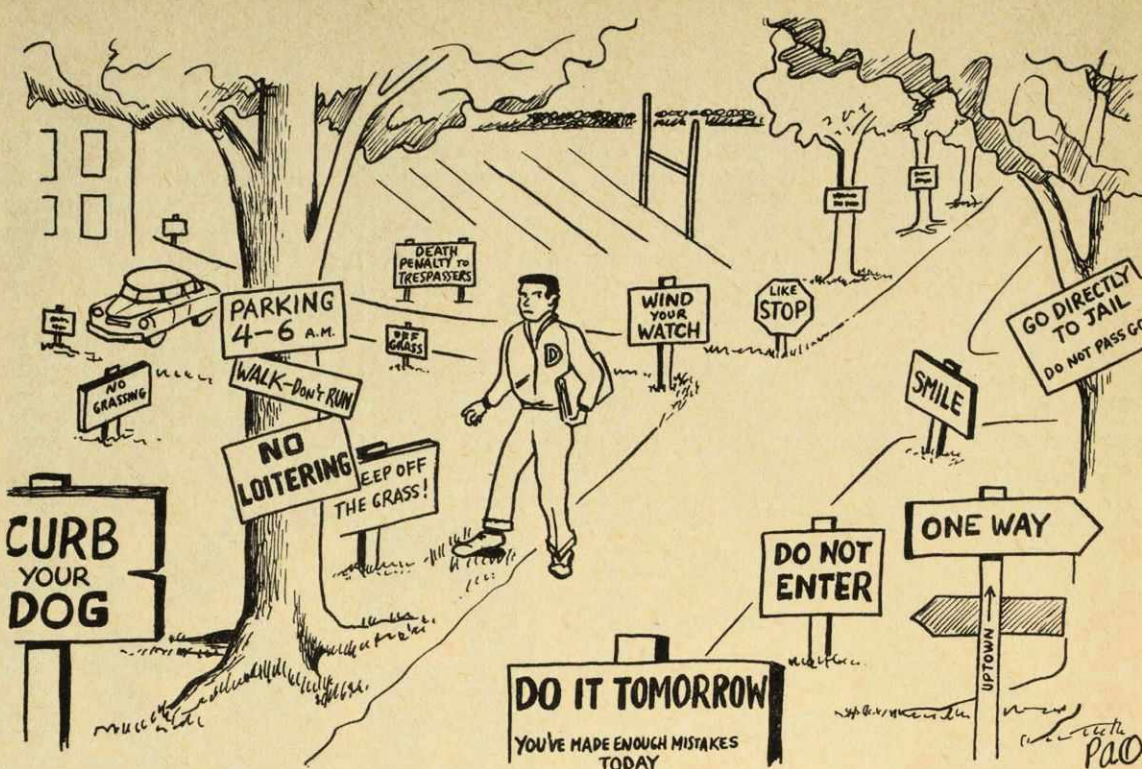


The Dalhousie GAZETTE

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THE OUTLAW



The Aftermath

Now that the Soviet students have left Dalhousie, there seems to be little doubt that their visit did more to destroy whatever tolerance our student body had for the Russian state than Krushchev could do in a month of waving shoes in the United Nations General Assembly.

What disturbed us initially was the fact that the visitors were not students in the ordinary sense, but much older "professionals" of a type almost never found in North American universities. Alexi Golubev, 35, who was the leader of the group and Vice-Secretary of the Youth Organization Committee, and the interpreter, Emmanouil Equizaror, also a member of the Youth Committee, could hardly be full-time students of Siberian tribal history and foreign languages, as they respectively claimed.

The net result of this wide gulf in age and interests between the visitors and Dalhousians was simply that the relaxed spontaneity so necessary for the success of exchanges of this kind was entirely lacking.

Yet it is doubtful whether discussions would have been any more profitable even had this gulf not existed, for the Soviets were so completely wound up in the party line, slogans, intensity, and jargon that talking to them was like addressing a phonograph record; and it was the same record that has been on the Communist hit parade at all levels from Premier Krushchev down for the past several years.

There were the same evasive replies to questions of a controversial nature involving individual liberties, ideologies, etc., the same hollow-sounding declarations for peace, friendship, and world student brotherhood, and the same distribution of Sputnik propaganda that we have all heard over and over again from Russian officialdom.

But assuming that the party line was to be expected, what really impressed, or depressed, this editor most was what the Party had apparently done, not to change their beliefs, but to destroy their personalities. Excepting perhaps the girl, who was pleasingly talkative until subdued by the approach of the delegation's leader, they were all completely disciplined, intense, serious, and, above all, practical. There was no cheerful gaiety, no relaxed good humor, no casual conversation; their every thought and action had to have a premeditated and constructive end, to the complete exclusion of the small pleasantries that make life enjoyable.

Moreover the members of the delegation seemed to be plagued by a fear that affected their every move. Almost all remarks and questions, for example, voiced even casually at dinner, had to be translated to the leader, Mr. Golubev, who then gave a reply. The other delegates appeared unwilling to volun-

teer an answer on their own unless he was not present, and that happened but rarely. On the occasion of the panel discussion in Room 21, they insisted that CHNS microphones be removed.

In brief, the Soviets brought with them an atmosphere of totalitarian party control, and it was this sinister quality that brought home to us the reality of the threat facing our ill-defined but nonetheless vital liberties.

The Soviet visit has made strikingly clear the difficulties western statesmen face in their negotiations and dealings with the Soviet government.

It is We Who are Dead

Tomorrow the campus will be quiet. The laughter, the shouting and all the sounds of students at work and play will be stilled. For one day we will be given a break from classes to attend more important functions. Some of us will march in parades, others will attend church services, but a majority of us will continue to go our own way, mostly indifferent and perhaps a bit cynical of what we are commemorating.

We, the youth of today, care little for the great sacrifices made in the past. We point to history books and read phrases like "a war to end wars" and the dates say 1914-18. A few years later we hear the Prime Minister of Britain saying, "There will be peace in our time." Within weeks of uttering that statement, the world was again plunged into a bitter conflict.

We have seen the great hopes of preceding generations vanish with a puff of gunsmoke. We have studied the conflicts that arose between nations and realize that they might happen again. We have read of the bitter struggles of the past and fear lest they be repeated. For these reasons we are more concerned with our own welfare than with what happened to those who went before us. We are completely occupied with saving our own lives and are not interested in being thankful for the sacrifices of the past.

But it is time that we paused and thought about the sacrifices of our predecessors. Those men who died were men like ourselves. Young, able-bodied men, caught up in a web of circumstance, thrust into battle, and they died fighting for what they believed to be right.

Perhaps here, more than anything else is the reason we should remember them. They at least had a cause, something worth fighting for, something worth dying for. We are so preoccupied with our cars, our television, our football games, and all our daily luxuries that we have lost sight of any worthwhile ideal. We have given up all our principles for the benefits of a materialistic world.

It is we who are dead, not they.

Random Thoughts on Freedom:

Responsibility and Grass

by ARTHUR MURPHY

Mr. Murphy has returned to Dalhousie this year to complete his master's thesis in French literature. He has spent the last year in France studying and teaching English in the public schools. He is particularly concerned with the lack of cohesion in Western thought and its confusion in meeting Communist ideology. This article makes the point that it is impossible to attain any cohesive position without first reaffirming our conception of freedom.

The other day, a bank clerk by the name of Milktoast murdered his mother with a poker. His motive, you'll agree, was highly implausible—he simply lost his temper. The press and public accorded the case the attention it deserved. Milktoast was described as schizophrenic by some, as paranoid by others, and as quite normal by a few. His crime was referred to as unnatural, inhuman, barbaric, sadistic, and as understandable by a few.

In fact, everything pertaining to Milktoast and his crime was aid, but the one thing that really mattered—that it is wrong to kill one's mother, just as it is wrong to kill anyone. But then, wrong is a nasty word today. Milktoast wasn't wrong—not morally wrong. He was simply misunderstood or unloved or a product of his environment.

LETTERS

...no reply...

Sir:

We, as a group of Dalhousie students, Sir, sincerely regret that you have received no reply to your recently posed query: "Why Did the Professors Go?"

How do other student organizations feel about the lack of response to this important question?

The Dalhousie Medical Students' Society.

...responsibilities...

Sir:

Recognizing its responsibility to the students of this University the Macdonald Memorial Library would like to experiment with limited additions to its regular hours. The notice which appears in today's newspaper stating that the Library will stay open this year on Remembrance Day is an example of this recognition of responsibility. We would also like to make more space available for study purposes.

However, the limited numbers of staff available to the Library means that any extension of our service will have to be by skelton staff, and we will have to rely heavily on the sense of responsibility of Dalhousie students and on their ability to help us maintain unsupervised discipline.

In this connection I have been very interested to watch the results of our current attempt to limit smoking in the Library to the front vestibule. We have provided ash trays, posted no smoking signs, and put up notices giving the reason for our request. So far student co-operation with us has been less than wholehearted.

Perhaps it is difficult to change habits overnight; but if even a few students cannot accept responsibility for taking care of their Library without supervision, it will make it very difficult for us to ex-

The twelfth century would have understood Milktoast. They knew that a man was free to sin—and to acknowledge his guilt. They punished him for his crime, but when he repented and was shriven, they went with him—not over him, as our sob-sisters do. Ah yes, you say, but twelfth century was an age of Faith; we live in an age of Freedom.

How ironic! an age of Freedom which denies freedom of the will; by relieving man of responsibility for his actions. An age which asserts the dignity of the individual by robbing him of that which gives him dignity—freedom to choose, freedom to acknowledge guilt, freedom—dare I say it—to fly in the face of God!

Poor Milktoast! He believes that he has transgressed the natural law. How will we explain to him that such ideas are outmoded? What can this age say to a man who believes that he is morally responsible for what he does? How are we to answer the man who says, "What I do, I do freely; to be influenced is not to be forced?"

One answer to this problem may be stated in a paradox. Unless we see man in the context of natural law, we will not grasp the full significance of individual freedom. The man who does not believe in something greater than self will be a slave to every passing whim.

Now, what has all this to do with grass? A painter, for valid artistic reasons, may depict grass as gray. But if the viewer cannot distinguish between a subjective impression and objective reality, he will most likely come to believe that real grass is gray. The man who allows mood to triumph over mind will not understand that freedom and moral responsibility are inseparable, and may come to believe that real grass is red, or at least pink.

tend to the student body as a whole the privileges and responsibilities which we would like them to assume.

J. P. Wilkinson,
Chief Librarian,
Dalhousie University.