

## Right to strike

After only four days of rotating strikes, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers announced Saturday the possibility of defying back-to-work legislation. Speaking at a rally in St. John N.B., Union president Jean-Claude Parrot told his members that they might have to resist government intervention in their dispute in order to achieve an amiable settlement. Parrot, of course, has been in this situation before, having gone to jail in 1978 for defying government attempts to force binding arbitration.

Back-to-work legislation in Canada has become an all too common approach for settling industrial disputes in recent years. The September 1986 grain handlers in Thunder Bay and the BC longshoremen dispute in November of the same year, are just two current examples of organized labor being forced back to work. The effect of such actions, create a negative impact on the collective bargaining process. Both sides form their position with arbitration in mind, reducing substantially the possibility of finding an equitable compromise.

Amidst the ensuing public moral indignation which predictably followed the onset of the postal strike, little reflection has been given to the fact that the workers are expressing the democratic right to withdraw their labor. This fact, it appears, is conveniently overlooked amidst the rhetoric of bystanders who attempt to determine the value of labor by making illogical comparisons throughout the workforce.

However, the right to strike cannot be etched in stone. Strikers and employers should never be in a position to claim the right to fight out their disputes without regard to the impact on the lives of other members of the community. The right to strike should not transcend boundaries that impede on the provision of essential services, which would create dire suffering to any member of the public. Parliament has yet to decree the Post Office as an essential service. Whether one advocates or disavows trade union activity, it is reprehensible to deny a worker in a democratic society his fundamental rights to associate freely with his colleagues in a strike situation.

As the postal dispute gathers momentum, the current impasse will have to be bridged. In July, the business lobby in Ottawa felt that the government was too conciliatory in settling the letter carriers dispute. Mulroney will not subject himself to the same criticism. Back-to-work legislation again appears on the horizon. Once it is implemented, organized labor can justify their claim that the right to strike in Canada only exists until used. Until then, the inconvenience to the public must be accepted as a small price for the right of others to express their democratic prerogatives.

Rod Campbell

## The Gateway



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Letters to the Editor are encouraged and always welcome.

If you have a comment which would be of interest to the students of the University, please do not hesitate to send it in. All we require is your name, address, and phone number, and student ID if you are a student. We will not print letters missing any of these.

Letters should be no longer than three hundred words.

Mail or deliver your letters to Room 282 SUB, or drop them at any SU information booth.

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## "Saved" from sex

Regarding Michael Cenknier's letter on Dragos Ruiu's "Commentary" of Bill C-54:

Poor Dragos never seems to get a supportive letter, so I thought I'd offer my comments. Mr. Cenknier argues that Bill C-54 isn't "sexually repressive", based on an idea that "sexual repression" occurs within the individual's mind. It can be argued that absolutely everything occurs within the individual's mind, but such a focus is practically blind to the power of cultural and social influences, the social context or environment, on the individual's thinking and behaviour. Minds don't operate in a vacuum. What Dragos wanted to communicate was that a bill that serves to outlaw films and other material on the basis of sexual explicitness is a "sexually repressive" bill. What the hell other term could better apply?

I do not understand Mr. Cenknier's use of ersatz psychology, where he discusses a Freudian-like idea that some "vital energy" is consumed by "the sexual act" (as if there was only one sexual act) and that if one holds in the vital energy by abstaining, this vital energy can be used in "creative manifestations". Is this the same "vital energy" that was supposedly amplified by the harmonic convergence? Excuse my sarcasm, but I can't believe that sex uses up any different kind of energy than jogging (take a biology course — please!). Also, I doubt that wearing a chastity belt for thirty years would let the wearer become a great creative painter. Mr. Cenknier also states that religions have regulated sex because of that effect of consuming "vital energy". Pardon me for laughing, but I thought religions regulated sex because they thought that it, or at least manifestations of it, was "dirty", or "didn't look arty enough".

Mr. Cenknier explains that art with the human body as a subject wouldn't be restricted, because of artistic or educational merit as determined by the market place's own barometer of good taste within limits set by societal consensus. I hope the barometer that gauges art isn't the same one that chooses some of the crap that becomes a box-office hit or top-40 radio gumbos. Such dedicated pandering to the tastes and d values of the majority would kill an kind of avant-garde. As for "societal consensus", I doubt that means we'll all get to vote whenever someone complains that a painting shows "just a little too much", or "doesn't look arty enough".

Mr. Cenknier says Bill C-54 would be a "good law" if it would "short-circuit" more "destructive material . . . than constructive material". Why should

ANY potentially constructive material, or neutral and innocuous material for that matter, be "short-circuited"? More to the point, who the hell should be allowed to define what "destructive material" is? Apparently the drafters of Bill C-54 see all explicit sex as "destructive" enough to outlaw, and see simplicity as questionable enough to give it a legal name, "erotic", rendering it vulnerable to the generalizing class of any future legislation.

While Rambo blows heads off the communists, and while Jason hacks up group after group of camp counselors (we're talking violent death here), our government sees fit to "save" us from explicit sex. Gee, thanks guys.

Ron Lalonde

## Pleased

I was extremely pleased to read your article in the *Times*, Oct. 1/87 issue entitled "Education in Japan: Does It Meet Western hype?" by Michelle Lalonde. It was extremely informative and thought-provoking. I am glad it was published in the *University paper* so that all of us could read it and really feel happy and proud that we are not a part of that system. It just makes us count our blessings once again.

This article moved me so much because the educational situation (or CRISIS as I would like to call it in Japan) is so very, very similar to the one that exists in my home country — India. In fact, if I were to write a brief on the "Current Educational System in India, all I would have to do is (with Michelle Lalonde's permission of course) take the above mentioned article and replace the word Japan and all the other Japanese words and Universities with India and Indian words and Universities respectively.

I would like to relate a very personal experience which is very much connected with the above mentioned issue. In India students matriculate at Grade 10 and then do 2 years of college before proceeding on to University. The two years of college are very crucial in terms of getting into University, especially for the extremely competitive fields like Engineering and Medicine. (India has the 3rd largest percentage of graduating Engineers and Doctors in the world after the United States and the Soviet Union).

Obviously many students join coaching classes which are the equivalent of the Japanese Jukus. Some students, myself included, join these classes not out of choice but out of sheer necessity.

Everyone else around has joined these classes and so obviously they are going to have an edge over you if you don't join them. And of course there is competition to join the Best Coaching Classes. The Coaching Class is judged

by the number of students it sends to the prestigious Universities, for eg. IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) is considered to be the best school of Engineering.

When I visited one of these classes and began reading the application forms I was shocked and literally scared out of my life. At the bottom of the form it stated "Please do not apply if your average mark for Physics, Chemistry and Math is below 89%". I was shocked not because I didn't have the marks, because I did, but by the sheer elitist policy of this organization. I thought the person who really does indeed need coaching classes and every help he can get is the guy whose average is say 40%, or 50% or even 60%. He is the person who truly deserves to get in. A person with a 90% plus average does not, by any stretch of the imagination, need "extra help!!!!" So the very purpose of a Coaching Class is utterly defeated!

The end result of all this is that the extremely small minority who are intelligent and well-to-do are going to be even better off and have obviously a much, much better chance of climbing the social order. The average guy is left out in the cold. This ultimately results in the disastrous eventuality of the ever increasing gap between the rich and the poor and this is precisely one of the saddest and most critical questions that needs to be answered in India.

What is the use of sending all sorts of satellites into space and graduating one of the best Computer Engineers (according to a *Time* magazine report) when the real people of India, the millions who cannot even afford one square meal a day, lie in utter misery and poverty? With no hopes and a very bleak future what do they really have to look forward to? Another satellite in the sky or an Indian mad space shuttle?

Sometimes I indeed wonder!!  
 Dilip J. Prabhu

