

The Dow Protests: A Question Of Morality?

by D. John Lynn
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Hold a match under one of those foam take-out coffee cups. It bursts into flames. It's made of polystyrene. So is napalm.

Polystyrene is made in Canada. Some goes into the manufacture of take-out coffee cups, Christmas decorations and toys. Some is sent to the United States as an ingredient of napalm, which is being used by the U.S. in Vietnam.

The Canadian manufacturer of polystyrene is Dow Chemical Co. of Canada, a subsidiary of the parent Dow in the U.S.

Campuses across Canada have risen up in protest — in some cases violent protest — against Dow recruiters interviewing on campus.

The Canadian protests began on November 8th when a small group handed out literature at the door of the placement office at the University of Waterloo.

A week later UBC students followed suit, but this time they blocked the doorway. At Windsor last week campus Anglican Chaplain Bill Christensen led a similar group in protest, but there was no violence.

Then Monday and Tuesday, Toronto students kept a Dow recruiter and U of T vice-president Robin Ross captive until the Dow representative finally agreed not to continue his three-day recruiting program.

The Student Council at the University of Victoria shared these sentiments when they went on record opposing the use of napalm. Dow recruiters were expected a week after council took this action.

Why all these protests? Demonstrators see it as a moral issue.

Harold Kasinsky, a University of California biochemist, who has made a study of napalm, reports: —

"A napalm B fire reaches a temperature of almost 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit in a few seconds. The polystyrene component of Napalm B acts like a glue at high temperatures, holding the fire to a particular surface."

"The new Napalm B is so sticky and burns so intensely that it cannot be removed from human skin without causing whole chunks of

flesh to come off."

Protestors say such a weapon is immoral — much more immoral than Atomic bombs. The U.S. Dow company makes napalm bombs for use in Vietnam. The protestors claim this is contributing to an immoral act.

Part of Dow's supply of polystyrene, the active ingredient of napalm, is made in Canada. Therefore Canada is implicated in this immorality.

But Dow points out its napalm production accounts for less than one percent of its business. Opponents then say it would be a negligible loss to discontinue napalm production.

Pro-Dow forces on campus offer two arguments: The first skirts any moral issue and claims Dow Canada personnel work on a vast number of projects, so workers, those recruited annually from campuses, are not directly involved in producing napalm.

The second argument says it is the right of students to apply for a job of their choice, and the majority should not deny them this right.

"I want to be a rapist" screamed one U of T student. "Get me an interview!"

November, December and January are heavy recruitment months on campus — for summer and full-time employment. Dow, along with makers of arms and munitions which eventually find their way to Vietnam will continue to be harassed on campus.

The answer for many may be to follow the Central Intelligence Agency's lead in the States. They will continue their interviews off campus from now on, a policy decision which is a direct reflection of recent disruptions CIA recruiting had led to on many campuses.

It is starting even now.

At McGill University several companies have opted for off-campus interviewing. McGill Principal H. Rocke Robertson announced that three companies who have not yet had on-campus interviews, have consented to conduct interviews off campus in order to avoid "disturbances".

U of T Protests Dow Recruiting

TORONTO (CUP) — More than 80 students and faculty held a vice-president of the University of Toronto and an employment officer of the Dow Chemical Company of Canada virtually imprisoned in the U of T placement service building for three and a half hours Monday.

The demonstration organized by the U of T committee to end the war in Vietnam took the form of picketing in the morning and a sit-in in the afternoon to protest the largest producer of napalm in the U.S.

Organizers of the demonstration met at noon with U of T vice-president Robin Ross and the Dow recruiting interviewer to ask that on-campus employment recruiting for summer employment with Dow be stopped.

The demand was not met and at 2 p.m. protesting students and faculty linked arms, sat down, and blocked the entrance to the building where the interviews were being held.

A pamphlet prepared by the U of T Committee to end the War in Vietnam made two demands which organizers said must be met before the sit-in would end:

That the administration suspend Dow recruiting until the matter is brought under the control of the student council and

That all further on-campus recruiting be

under the direct supervision of the student council.

Towards the end of the sit-in the Dow representative promised that he would not continue interviews on campus Tuesday or Wednesday.

After considerable discussion, he was allowed to leave at 5 p.m. under a canopy of raised arms, flanked by plainclothes policemen. Vice-president Ross was detained for about half an hour until he promised to consult the members of the faculty about meeting the demands.

If these demands are not met by 8:30 p.m. Tuesday the CEWV will then stage a sit-in to block the university administration building. Throughout the sit-in and protest Toronto police were always nearby, but took no action. At one point they had to break up a fight between an engineering student and a member of the ultra-right wing Edmund Burke Society, who were heckling the demonstrators.

Both Toronto and U of T police looked on impassively as chemical engineering students fought and scrambled their way over the inert bodies toward the placement service and out again. There were no arrests.

JELLYBEANS

by Tom Murphy

FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT

One of the problems at university is that there are not enough arguments. At best, most "arguing" is a getting nowhere type of jibber-jabber. Perhaps the best way of making a few points about arguments is to actually observe in detail a so-called argument. It is an experience worth going through, and from which one can learn a lot. This essay is essentially a few observations I made about an argument I watched.

Jay was talking on two propositions: (1) that singers like Hank Snow communicate on a much lower intellectual plane than Bob Dylan or the Beatles, and (2) that not all people are equipped to grasp the same thoughts at the same intellectual level. Mike, however, spoke on two different propositions: (1) that some type of music appeals to some type of person on a "meaning of life" plane, whether this meaning is intuitive (Farmer Brown) or intellectual (T.S. Eliot) and (2) that music begins where words leave off.

PARALLEL BARKING

Any one of these four propositions would have been sufficient for a good argument. But to argue about all four simultaneously results in utter chaos. It is so easy to do — just juggle the same phrases and it will give the appearance of talking about the same thing. You have to be very careful when arguing that you are, in fact, talking on the same lines.

NO GIVE NO TAKE

Another seemingly universal idiosyncrasy of human beings is the notion that one must stand hard and fast on the original proposition. Where there is no give, there is no take. When a sportsman has a big salmon on the end of his line, he just doesn't hawl it in — he lets the line slack, pulls it in some — lets out a little less slackline, pulls it in some more — give a little line, take a bit more — give a little, take more. So it should be with arguing. If one uses the points he concedes to his advantage, it can be as simple as one step backwards yields two steps forward.

ABSTRACT TERMS

Avoid abstract terms if possible. Mike and Jay talked about the "meaning of life", without ever defining it for their purposes. Other concepts to avoid are freedom, democracy, love, happiness, etc. If it is necessary to draw such concepts into the argument, define the term as you intend to use. Don't argue over the definition — it doesn't have to be "correct" to be useful. For example, one may define democracy as a state where there is: "equality among men" or "freedom of choice" or the "right to conform" or any number of other definitions. Any one will do, if all parties use the term in the same sense.

COOL, MAN, COOL

One must attain and maintain a certain temperament while arguing. Mike and Jay were getting noticeably hot around the collar after a few minutes of debate. Their voices got very loud and "shouty". When people start losing their cool, they also start losing their rationality. When you find yourself getting emotional and loud, make a deliberate attempt to lower your voice. Others will soon follow suit. There is something terribly powerful about a low cool voice. For one thing, such voices win arguments.

"LISTEN HERE"

This leads to perhaps the greatest fault of which we are all guilty: we can't listen. While our opponent is talking, we are not listening, but formulating our own thoughts to counteract what we *think* he is saying. Listen closely to two people arguing sometime. How many interjections beginning with "but" have anything much to do with the actual sentence being interjected? There is no real cure for this — other than being consciously aware to consciously listen. One way, of course, would be to have silent pauses at the end of every point made. Silence scares people, however. I used to have a near paranoid fear that if someone in the "group" wasn't talking, the group would collapse. I have since learned that silence can bond such a group.

These few observations in no way represent the number of things one might learn by observing an argument. The best way of gaining an appreciation of the "art of arguing" is to analyse an argument two other people are having. Its kind of fun — and worth it too.

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Next week — A Christmas Special — an essay on the abolition of Christmas.