

No one will help

For a long time, students and student leaders have been trying to use some form of co-operation with university administrators in order that issues such as cutbacks and tuition increases might be fought with a unified force. The past week's developments at the Université de Moncton only further proves the point that such co-operation is non-existent and that students are going to have to stand up and fight together for themselves if they want anything done.

For much too long now university administrators have taken "a sit back and wait and see attitude" in too many important matters that affect all students. For all the moaning and complaining that the administrators do for that one week each Spring (isn't it strange how quiet they seem the rest of the year) one has yet to see a university administrator marching with the students to protest cutbacks. Long winded reasoning and pompous discertations do not help keep students in classes that have been cut because of lack of funds.

At our own university it is interesting to note how much politics can enter into the question. In the past, under the former provincial government, very little was said about the government's stand on such matters. Nowadays, with the change in governments, it is interesting to note how much larger the protests grew last fall. An administration that based its protest on past political ties cannot be counted on to do a hell of a lot for students at any time.

So it comes down to the students themselves. One wants to avoid the development of a "masada complex", a sort of "you and me against the world" type of thinking, but it is becoming increasingly clear that if students don't stand up and fight for themselves then nobody will.

the Dalhousie Gazette

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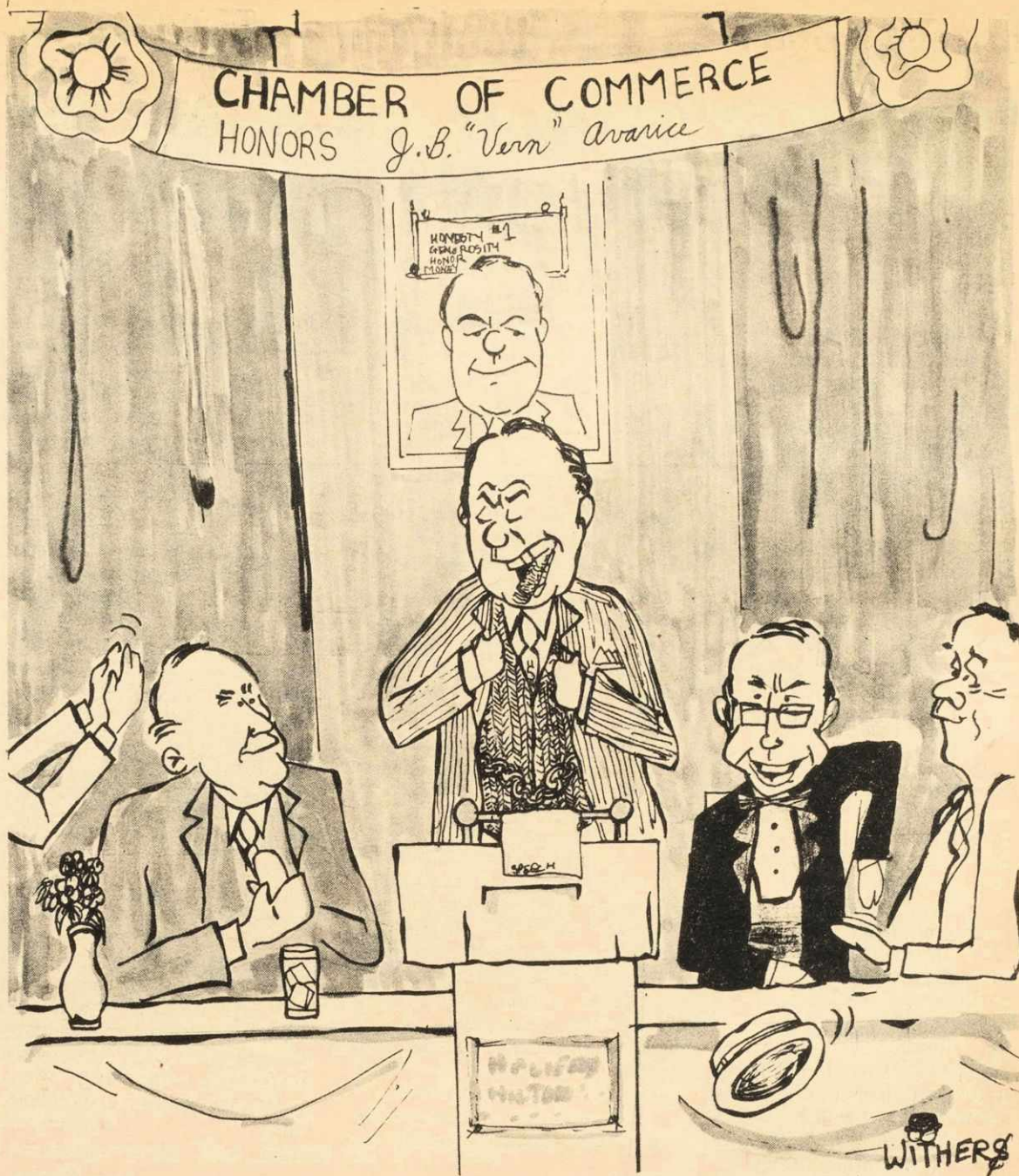


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"AND ABOVE ALL I VALUE HONESTY-OF COURSE, HEH HEH BUSINESS IS BUSINESS"

Letters

South Africa

To the Editor:

Recently I closed my bank accounts in the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce on the grounds that they finance South Africa. I did not want my money to be used as an instrument of oppression. The bank's Business Manager replied explaining their position, saying that the bank is active in more than 100 countries around the world and lending activity in any of those countries does not imply endorsement of any government or socio-political system. They do not condone apartheid. Their role is that of financial intermediary. They strictly adhere to the principle of banker/client confidentiality and an acknowledgement or denial of their transactions would be a breach of that code. Investments in any country are based on sound commercial and economic criteria and they do not knowingly operate in a manner that is immoral, contributes to immorality, is socially irresponsible, or is contrary to the national interest. They feel that the economic consequence of a boycott would not pressure the government of South Africa to reform its policies but would hurt the very people whom it is in-

tended to help.

When I first read this, all the arguments seemed valid. A little reflection however showed how shallow they are.

However broad based their banking may be, modern banking cannot be delinked from the humanist concept of the dignity of man and should not rely merely on the dignity of some men. Bankers should have learnt this lesson from the history of Fascist Germany. Hitler and banking prospered at the expense of the Jews; the world had to dance to the heavy beats of war and the Jews had to show their strength in a new Israel. Economic prosperity in such countries does no good to the oppressed. Victims of apartheid are being hurt, psychologically as well as physically. Their bank loans are not directed to uplift the living standards (which include psychological) of these victims though one may think so, nor are they directed to the strengthening of their hands so that they can rebel. On the other hand, they are helping the government gain strength against international sanctions and the financial backing to purchase instruments of oppression. This is what the very unwilling participants say and journalists like Donald Wood who have managed to escape from the country. As you probably know, South Africa imports most of its tear

gas and weapons from the developed countries of the West, getting their foreign exchange to buy them from trade, and such banks act as intermediaries.

As regards dealings with customers and banker/client confidentiality, I can understand the father confessor in a church not revealing the sins of the penitent. He at least suggests ways of repenting and exhorts the person to reform. But a bank supplying money to a Hitlerian government and not disclosing the nature of the transactions merely strengthens its hands of oppression. While a priest may not reveal what he has heard in the confessional, a man may not certainly hand over a weapon to another when he knows that it will be used to kill or oppress the very next moment and keep quiet about it. Their banking policy seems to do exactly that—and get away with it. The custom of confidentiality, founded in common law, is for the welfare of the clients, but why have such clients over whom the bank has no moral hold and whose policies every humanist abhors? A bank is no religious institution or is it that it is vying to be the first of the banking martyrs? The very fact that the manager has 'advertised' that his bank is active in more than '100 countries around the world' should caution him not to

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