

Order on the campus—Harry Crowe's analysis

By HARRY CROWE

The only people who have cause for complaint against the Committee of Presidents of the Universities of Ontario for circulating a working paper on Order on the Campus are those people who are planning disorder on the campus.

Students can plot conspiracies, shout foul-mouthed obscenities, run campus newspapers which exclude every viewpoint except that of their far-out fringe, disrupt convocations as at Glendon College and orientations sessions at Toronto and York and it is all very legitimate apparently.

But if the people whose job it is to preside over the universities come up with a working paper to be used as a basis for discussion of problems common to most campuses, and even give it to the press so there can be public examination and debate, it is all wicked and sinister and outrageous.

And along with the vocal "radicals" one can always rely upon a number of faculty, part-intimidated, part-stupid, to join in the chorus. And then a president's address is postponed — apparently for good reason as Toronto, like York, is in transition between old and new judicial procedures.

But what a spectacle the university presents today.

Professors and administrators should be required to sit down and listen to the views of steelworkers, housewives, businessmen — you name them — the citizens who are paying the shot and who have just about had it. And along with the ever-ready opinions,

there is always the earnest question: What do students want?

Yesterday, (Sept. 23) The Telegram carried a letter from Geoffrey Nathan, a student at the University of Toronto. What Mr. Nathan wants is freedom from compulsory student fees which finance, on almost all campuses, the extremists who gain control of organizations and newspapers by perseverance and harassment and through the inertia of the mass of students.

This may come as a surprise, but in any listing of the complaints of students at most universities the main one is the compulsory fee which becomes a subsidy for the extremist group. The only other beef which comes close to it is the lack of sufficient parking space.

The university presidents set out a list of what they suggest should be considered for the category of "illegitimate and unacceptable activities." They did so in a context of elaborate and, one might have thought, unnecessary references to what is legitimate and acceptable.

Violence is unacceptable. Disruptions of a class and interference with the freedom of speakers properly invited by any section of the university community are unacceptable. Forcible interference with the freedom of movement of any member or guest of the university is unacceptable. Obstruction of the normal processes and activities essential to the functions of the university community is unacceptable.

But how thoughtless of the presidents to put this out to their respective universities,



"One never hears about the ninety percent of youth who are law-abiding, clean, and studious, and don't concern themselves with war, bigotry, and human rights."

to be debated by faculty and students and university administrators. They should have realized that study papers and research and rational debate and structured decision-making are all out of date, all superseded by the glorious Revolution of the Goons.

Slogans have taken the place of study papers. Obscenity has supplanted research, and confrontation displaced debate. And decisions are arrived at in fear and in surrender.

The presidents' working paper spelled out suggested actions which might be taken in certain eventualities. In this it came to the neglected mechanisms of the rule of law which must be agreed upon and instituted, and should have been long ago.

Then there appears the only line in the whole document to which citizens might take offence. The document says: "It (that is, the university implementing it) fervently hopes that it will not find it necessary to invoke these sanctions."

Campus-watchers we are familiar with feel it should have read: "The university will seek out opportunities to apply these sanctions and will do so with relish." There can be no mistaking the public attitude, masked though it has been by indulgent and patient newspapers. Radio programs are a much better barometer here.

If the universities do not stop the goon-squad activity which in one year in Canada caused over one hundred disruptions, stopped two convocations, occupied three presidents' offices, smashed a computer, broke up senate meetings and faculty meetings, then the job will be done despite the university.

The working paper says that expulsion is the only appropriate penalty for those who would challenge the university's right to carry on its affairs through orderly and peaceful discussion and its right and responsibility to be the house of intellect.

Could anything be more self-evident? Reprinted from the Douglas Fisher-Harry Crowe column in The Telegram, Sept 24.

The social absurdity of avoiding real issues

By MELDON LEVINE

"The streets of our country are in turmoil. The universities are filled with students rebelling and rioting. Communists are seeking to destroy our country. Russia is threatening us with her might. And the republic is in danger. Yes, danger from within and without. We need law and order . . . without law and order our nation cannot survive."

These words were spoken in 1932 by Adolf Hitler.

We have heard almost every one of those assertions used this year in this country as justifications for repressing student protests. Instead of adjudicating the legitimate causes of the dissatisfaction, our political and social leaders have searched for explanations which deny either the validity or the pervasiveness of the dissent.

What is this protest all about?

You have told us repeatedly that trust and courage were standards to emulate. You have convinced us that equality and justice were inviolable concepts. You have taught us that authority should be guided by reason and tempered by fairness. And we have taken you seriously.

We have accepted your principles — and have tried to implement them. But we have found this task to be less than easy. Almost every one of us has faced the inflexibility and the insensitivity of our system.

To those who would argue that the system has been responsive, there is a one-word answer: Vietnam. It is not a weakness but a strength of American education that enables us to understand the absurdity of the premises which control our policy in Vietnam and which threaten to embroil us elsewhere.

We have tried every possible peaceful means to change our disastrous course. We have signed petitions. We have written to our congressmen. We have had teach-ins. We have marched. We have reasoned with anyone who would listen. And, in 1968, after years of peaceful protest and after the U.S. people had spoken in primary after primary in favor of a change, we were not even given a choice in Vietnam.

We have grown weary of being promised a dialogue. What we urgently need is a meaningful response.

Our experience with Vietnam reflects the type of frustration we face every time we press for change. We are told to follow "the system." But when I look at that "system," I see rules — but not understanding. I see standards — but not compassion.

And although our complaints are more with society than with the university, the university itself is not an illogical target. Some students believe it contributes to oppressive social policies and most of us feel that it has become, in an unresponsive system, the only means whereby we can focus attention on the most serious injustices which continue to infect our nation.

And the university, too, has tenaciously resisted change. Six years ago, I was elected president of the student body at Berkeley. I ran on a moderate platform — one calling for educational reform, increased university involvement in the community and student participation in academic decision-making.

Since that time, I have received degrees at Berkeley, at Princeton and at Harvard. And I have heard my fellow students raise the same issues — time and again. And time and again, I have witnessed the university's response: a



LNS photo

" . . . as the repression continues, as the pressure continues, as the stakes become higher and the risks greater, we can do nothing but resist more strongly and refuse more adamantly."

committee will be formed, and the issues will be discussed.

Year after year, the result is the same. And eventually the tactic of setting up committees is discredited. They come to be seen as a device to buy time rather than to make changes; an opportunity to stall until another class of undergraduates leaves the school, removing that particular thorn from the university's side as they go.

Thus, the university and the society respond the same way to our appeals for change: a direct confrontation of ideas is refused and the issues raised are avoided. But explaining the issues away won't make them go away. And the frustration which comes both from the issues themselves and from the continual denial of their existence touches all segments of the campus.

If anyone still doubts the depth of the conviction, I ask

him to witness the intensity with which it is felt. I ask him to review the efforts of my classmates. These efforts were pursued not as a sacrifice, though sacrifices were made; not as a risk, though risks were involved; not to gain praise, though praise they deserve, but because this was necessary to achieve the ideals which you have held forth for us.

They chose to work with poor people in Appalachia and with black people in Mississippi and in urban ghettos. They persevered in calling attention to the injustices in Vietnam, despite accusations of disloyalty to their country. And when the price was raised to include physical danger, they exhibited courage and did not waver — in Chicago, in Berkeley, and in Cambridge.

Now, for attempting to achieve the values which you have taught us to cherish, your response has been astounding. It has escalated from the presence of police on the campuses to their use of clubs and of gas. At Berkeley in May, the state ordered a helicopter to gas the campus from the sky and ordered the police to shoot protesters from the street. Whether the victims had themselves engaged in violence seems to have made little difference.

When this type of violent repression replaces the search for reasonable alternatives, Americans are allowing their most fundamental ideals to be compromised.

What do you think that response does to students? It drives the wedge even deeper. It creates solidarity among a previously divided group, committing the uncommitted and radicalizing the moderates.

I have asked many of my classmates what they wanted me to say in this address. "Talk with them about hypocrisy," most of them said. "Tell them they have broken the best heads in the country, embittered the most creative minds and turned off their most talented scholars. Tell them they have destroyed our confidence and lost our respect. Tell them that, as they use the phrase, 'law and order' is merely a substitute for reason and an alternative to justice."

Continuing to explain the conflict away will only serve to heighten the frustration. It can no longer be denied. Once you recognize that it pervades the campuses — that it affects more than a discontended few — how will you respond?

So far, we have been unable to understand your response. You have given us our visions and then asked us to curb them. You have offered us dreams and then urged us to abandon them. You have made us idealists and then told us to go slowly.

We have been asking for no more than what you have taught us is right. We can't understand why you have been so offended. But as the repression continues, as the pressure increases, as the stakes become higher and the risks greater, we can do nothing but resist more strongly and refuse more adamantly. For it would be unthinkable to abandon principle because we were threatened or to compromise ideals because we were repressed.

We are asking that you allow us to realize the very values which you have held forth. And we think you should be with us in our quest.

Meldon Levine graduated with honors last June from Harvard Law School. This is the critical commencement address he delivered at that time. Reprinted from The Chevron.