

## THE ALARM CLOCK

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by the Editorial Board.

Editor-in-Chief ..... Lloyd G. Reynolds  
Associate Editors ..... Albert Marcus  
Ragnhild Tait  
Carl Gustafson  
Business Manager ..... R. G. Sampson

".....Just around the  
corner..... what?"

JANUARY, 1933.

### IN PRAISE of PROPAGANDA

There are good and bad spirits in the academic demonology and the student is continually reminded by his professors of their existence. Blackest sheep of the literary flock, evillest of malicious spirits, is the arch-demon *propaganda*. His diet consists of nine parts of hearsay to one part of fact; his only purpose is to delude a trustful people and to lure them into treacherous pitfalls. He is the especial ally of all radicals, socialists and revolutionaries and any of their statements must therefore be disregarded. Fairest of all bright spirits, whitest of innocent lambs, is the arch-angel *truth*. Those things which you read in books, newspapers and magazines, those things which you are told by your professor, your minister, the Prime Minister and the President of the Bank of Montreal are *truth* and must be followed at all costs.

In order to qualify as a devout worshipper of truth, you must never express an opinion on a subject unless you have arrived at complete intellectual certainty concerning it. If the man on the street questions you on a point of economics, you must reserve judgment; or if you are so indiscreet as to open your mouth, you must enclose your statement in such a hedge of "buts" and "ifs" that no one can justly accuse you of having committed yourself on the matter. If you are not extremely judicious on this point you may make statements which are not perfectly correct—and that makes you a propagandist. The logical corollary of this doctrine would be that you must never in your life make a positive statement about anything; for nothing is intellectually certain, save death.

We have as high a regard as any student for the pursuit of truth; we object to it, however, in the extreme form noted above. And there are certain facts which we would like all those who desire to entirely wash their hands of propaganda to remember. Remember that whenever you read a newspaper or a magazine you are partaking of pure

or diluted propaganda. Remember that many books are entirely propaganda, others partially so and that even textbooks are not immune from the virus. Remember that whenever you hear a sermon you are listening to propaganda—the propagation of the faith, egad! Politics, bargain sales, charity drives—propaganda is the life-blood in their veins. If you would completely shun propaganda, we can suggest only a hermit's cell, a hair shirt and contemplation.

And what of the man on the street and his questions? After you have discovered your precious truths how do you intend to "put them across" to him? If you descend upon him with volumes of facts and piles of diagrams, he will not understand you—he will not even listen to you. In order to make the slightest impression upon the common man you must simplify your facts—simplify them so greatly that they cease to be strictly accurate; in other words, you must become a propagandist.

But perhaps you do not intend to "put over" your facts at all; in academic seclusion you will ponder the perfection of truth and leave the common man to his fate. In this case, remember that it is the common man and his prejudices, not you and your intellect, who decides the fate of the world—*your* fate as well as his own. If you do not so guide him that he may act wisely, he will act foolishly and you and he alike will suffer the consequences.

We have so many facts already, you see; they lie piled up in great heaps in our graduate schools and research departments—we are smothered in facts. We have *facts* enough to abolish war, eliminate unemployment and poverty, introduce economic planning and social control of economic life. The tragedy of the situation is that, while these facts exist, nothing is being done about them; they have not been set before the public in such a clear and easily understandable form as to induce action. The need of the moment, as Sir Norman Angell so well said, is for a great army of "explainers"; surely students are more

### CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editors will welcome contributions of poetry, stories or articles, the latter to be preferably not more than 1200 words in length; material of sufficient merit will be published as space permits. Contributions should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief at 772 Sherbrooke West or handed to any member of the Editorial Board.

completely fitted to undertake this vital function than any other social group. The alternative is clear; we may, if we so desire, remain in some research corner of the academic edifice and continue to play the great fact-finding game; if we do, it is highly probable that the common man will shortly rush us into another war, in which we and our fact-finding brains will probably be blown into blessed oblivion.

## SAGE SAYINGS

By Gibbard

### Property Properly Acquired

**Mr. R. B. Bennett:** "The acquisition of property is what comes to a man of ability in this world if he has done his duty properly. And it lies between him and his God what he does with it".

—Toronto Mail and Empire, Nov. 20 1932.

### All That Glitters Is Not Gold!

**Sir John Aird,** President of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, "We bankers are all hopeful of a silver lining..."

—Montreal Star, Dec. 29, 1932.

### Such Statements Should Be Guarded.

Regarding **Premier Taschereau:** "Premier Taschereau flatly refused an investigation into the administration of the jails of the Province to a delegation which came to intercede for a number of members of the Canadian Defence League now serving a sentence in Montreal and Quebec Jails . . ."

"Premier Taschereau refused the demands for an investigation, stating that he knew that the prisons were administered properly, and what happens inside the walls did not concern the general public."

—Montreal Star, Nov. 29, 1932.

### Bigger and Better Depressions

**Henry Ford,** (when better depression are made Mr. Ford will make them) "If this period of convalescence through which we have been passing must be spoken of as a period of depression, it is far and away the finest depression we have ever had".

—quoted "the Unemployed", No. 5,

New York.

### Sanity Defined at Last!

**Editor, Montreal Gazette,** (Speaking of the New Five Year Plan): "If the Soviet authorities in their new programme of procedure have been impelled to revise and adjust their policies more in accord with those safe and sane economic laws that have stood the test of experience and provide a workable scheme for the better welfare of all sections of the community at large, such reforming ordinance is a step in the right direction".

—Montreal Gazette, Dec. 29, 1932.