

800 jam McInnis room

Vanier on violence and non-violence

On Monday, February 5, approximately 800 students and members of the Halifax community turned out to hear Jean Vanier speak in the McInnes Room. The speech was part of a day and a half activity in the Halifax area by Dr. Vanier. The trip was sponsored by the Archdiocese of Halifax.

The subject Monday night was reflections on violence and non-violence. Specific violent individuals and groups were described. These examples had one factor in common — rejection and unloving treatment at the hands of others, often their family. On a small or a large scale closed minds and cold treatment cause anguish for their victims. The reaction to this anguish may be severe withdrawal or self-hate which turns into violence. This

reaction is a request to be treated with an open, loving attitude. It may accompany a sudden change in a person's everyday life.

Rejection is a form of violence, just as hate is. Its tragic results, especially the reactions to it, are everywhere. One example given was the plight of Afro-Americans. This is the enormous result of centuries of irrational discrimination on the basis of skin colouring. Children who respond to a loveless home by refusing to react in any way to the world around them are further evidence.

These victims are called wounded people by Vanier. He seems to feel that their numbers are increasing in the large American cities. However, there is also a growing world-

wide movement of people who are willing to treat others in an open, loving manner. They realize that a person must be allowed to live according to the music — the spirit — of his being. People are hurt when they are forced into structures and life-styles that were not meant for them. What they need is people who can love them for what they are, who treat them as unique individuals. This is an alternative to focusing upon their differences, and rejecting them because they are different.

Vanier does not say that we can all start treating those around us like this tomorrow. Only those who are at peace with themselves are able to work successfully with wounded people. Such persons must have the courage to go into the large

cities, the country and other places where there are many wounded people. By treating their neighbours with love and openness they will be able to bring more peace into the world, and lessen the violence around us. To do this a person must be strong in his gentleness and tender in his force.

The unexpected standing-room crowd that came to hear Dr. Vanier was taken by the organizers as a sign of how much his message is needed here. No doubt the above description of that message does it little justice.

Dr. Jean Vanier is a son of the late Governor-General George

Vanier. He was born on September 10, 1928, in Geneva when his father was a Canadian delegate to the League of Nations. He joined the Royal Navy and attended the Royal Naval College during World War II. In July, 1949, he transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy. A year later he unexpectedly resigned his commission and went to live with a religious community in France. Since then he has studied theology and worked both with and for wounded people. His major work has been with retarded adults, and this has led to the establishment of 30 homes for them, throughout the world.

Monday's "Mass Democracy" day

Some of you may be wondering why there is a Student Union meeting this Monday. Then again, some of you may not have even heard that there is a Union meeting. If not, it is Monday, February 19, at 12:30

p.m. in the McInnes Room, SUB.

The meeting has been called to deal with two amendments to the Union By-laws. The amendments were passed by the necessary two-thirds vote at the January 28 Council meeting. However, all By-law amendments must be passed at a Union meeting to be valid.

The main amendment will create the Judicial Board of the Student Union. This is a major innovation. It was the only substantive proposal of the Alternate Student Government Committee to be accepted by Council. The Board will have responsibility for all questions about the interpretation and application of the Student Union constitution. Its decisions will be final. No one will be able to overrule or appeal the decisions.

The Judicial Board will receive questions for its consideration from the Council or any group or individual in the Union. There are detailed provisions for the procedures that the Board will follow from the time it gets a referral until it makes a decision.

There will be a Chairman and two members. Two of the three must be students, and all must have a minimum of legal training. They will be appointed

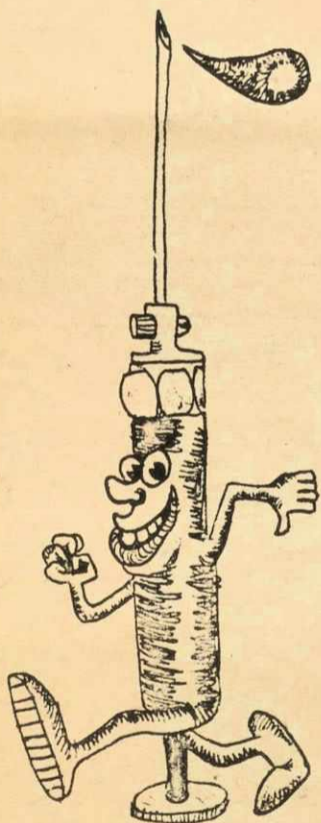
by the Council every January.

It is hoped that the creation of the Judicial Board will improve greatly the enforcement of the Union constitution. Several Council members expressed the view that the constitution is largely ignored or avoided at the present time.

The other amendment will eliminate the Treasury Board. This consists of the Treasurer and two Deputy-Treasurers. The main purpose was to help with the bookkeeping and general financial management of the Union. It was also supposed to give future Treasurers practical training. However, the training provision never worked very well and the Board was inactive in 1971-72.

There is a full-time Union bookkeeper now, so the Board became redundant. The present executive decided not to ask Council to appoint Deputy-Treasurers for 1972-73. Council then decided that the By-law creating the Treasury Board might as well be deleted.

So, those are the reasons for having this Monday's Union meeting. The quorum is 100 members. A Union meeting may also pass any other motions. These motions must be considered by the Council, and it may put them into effect if it wants to.



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