

DALHOUSIE Gazette

AMERICA'S OLDEST COLLEGE NEWSPAPER

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Your Freedom . . . Your Voice—

From THE VARSITY

When planning this issue on civil liberties it seemed to us at first that the subject held little of importance to us as Canadians. In the United States it is certainly becoming an urgent and pressing issue, for the judgment of what constitutes "Un-American activity" grows so fine that it threatens, both directly and indirectly, the basic freedoms of criticism and expression.

In Canada, however, we have the good fortune to live in a land where most individuals enjoy the full range of civil liberty, although without a Bill of Rights these freedoms exist only through a process of legal implication or inference.

Without a Bill of Rights and, what is more important, without our being individually aware of our freedom, ready not only to possess it ourselves, but to protect it for ourselves and for others, we run the risk of losing the liberty we now take for granted.

This issue of *The Varsity* attempts to bring together the many instances where civil liberties are being denied. As separate instances they amount to little, but taken as a whole they add up to what has been called aptly the creeping sickness of our time. In its lighter form it is the insidious attempt to limit the freedom of the individual for what is misguidedly considered to be the good of the many.

In such a guise we have the danger of censorship, not only on the Federal but also on the Provincial level, where a Board of Censors has the right to ban literature and movies entering Canada without any right of appeal being allowed.

On the national level our treatment of the Eskimo and Indian leaves much to be desired, while Canadian immigration laws frankly discriminate according to colour. According to an Order in Council passed in 1950, admission of British subjects into Canada depends upon the colour of their skin, for though the British West Indian has the full rights of a British subject, his entrance into Canada is now restricted by law.

On the provincial level, the province of Quebec is notorious in its arbitrary fashion of passing laws suppressing freedom of religious worship and freedom of expression, to say nothing of its laws governing the distribution of printed matter. Only recently Premier Duplessis has announced his intention of censoring all TV shows in his province, and the chief censor of Quebec, Alexis Gagnon has said: "We are a Catholic province, and well will not permit anything to be shown which does not conform to the Catholic idea."

But lest we consider that discrimination is unique to Quebec and to the United States, we would do well to remember the incident in Dresden in 1949 when it was brought to light in the press, particularly in MacLean's Magazine, that some stores were refusing to serve Negro customers, while others served them only in a back room.

Only in last November a Malayan Trades Union representative was refused a shave by a Toronto barber, and a similar incident occurred in Hamilton in 1951 when a barber refused to cut the hair of the pianist, Oscar Peterson. For each of these instances which come to light there are many which remain unknown, in spite of the fact that nearly every city has passed by-laws which grants licenses to businesses only with the provision that those businesses do not discriminate against customers according to race, creed, or colour.

That the rights of the Canadian citizen should be protected by law was the recommendation made by the Association for Civil Liberties in a brief presented last year to the Senate of Canada. It was felt that Canada should include a Bill of Rights in the Constitution which would apply as the fundamental law of the land, as a protection for the individual against infringement of his civil liberties by the state, or by any groups within it.

That we should have a law guaranteeing our liberty and our freedom is a step in the right direction. It is, however, not an end in itself, for whether or not we have a law stating our individual rights, those rights will remain ours only so long as we use them.

We shall remain free to speak only so long as we demand freedom of speech. We shall remain free to worship only so long as we stand vigilant over that freedom, not for ourselves only but for all those like us. The danger to our liberty lies in our silence.

Letters To The Editor

January 21/53, Halifax.

Editor,
Dalhousie Gazette,
Halifax, N. S.

Dear Sir,

I am a Roman Catholic. During my later high school and early university years I made a diligent and sincere personal examinations of this Church, its laws, teachings and beliefs. Call the quality, nature or extent of these examinations whatever you wish but, sir, it made me an even firmer believer of Catholicism.

I am also a member of this university. But Mr. Editor does not this statement seem incongruous when you recall my opening declaration and re-read the "Sunova Beach" composition by the evasive "S.O.S.", and a letter to you by a cautious "O.U.P.". According to these two authors I am a religious fool and "... have not attained maturity of mind." This, they apply to all Roman Catholics. But I'll ask you Mr. Editor, who is the bigger fool and more immature—one who enjoys a peace of mind because he knows what his religious beliefs are or one who is a derelict with regards to his beliefs? I would indeed shudder to see a problem of moral issue, of consequence to a community, rest in the hands of either one of these two who obviously are confused as to what they believe and surely devoid of character and principles as is evident from their two submitted articles.

John Mason Brown delivered an address to the graduating class of Montana State University in the dark war days of 1942. I happened to read this address a few years ago and can recall, in essence, a few of his concluding remarks. He pointed out to them that we on this continent are the arsenals of democracy and that we are also the arsenals for the values of democracy; paramount among these values is the right of free men to express themselves freely and that we should earnestly strive to secure that right. Today it seems almost paradoxical to me that "O.U.P." and "S.O.S." should use that right to attack, ridicule and deride a religion that has helped greatly to maintain that arsenal of democracy, instead of using it to attack a vicious, godless peril to that arsenal in the form of Communism. I ask you again, Mr. Editor, who is the bigger fool—one who protects his free rights by attacking a threat to them or one who jeopardizes his free rights by attacking one of the guardians of them?

The action of these two "students" is difficult to be condoned by all students on this campus for it reflects not too kindly on this

university and on us as members of it. But nevertheless sir, you printed them, despite the honorable and righteous assertions of some of your editorials. This thought leaves me with one last question, Mr. Editor, who is the bigger fool and more immature—"S.O.S." or "O.U.P." for submitting their articles or you, for publishing them?

DAVID J. JANIGAN,
Med '57.

Sunday, Jan. 18, '52

Re: Miracle of Sunova Beach
Dear Editor:

S.O.S. is used, as any housewife can tell you, for cleaning pots and pans. It is my humble opinion that your staff writer S.O.S. would be much better employed in that capacity than in offending the beliefs of a large number of students on the campus with his pen.

Sincerely,
JOYCE CARNEY,
2nd year Law.

Halifax, N. S.,
Jan. 18, 1953.

The Editor,
Dalhousie Gazette.
Dear Sir:

In reference to your article of January thirteenth, "The Miracle of Sunova Beach"; may I say that it is one thing to disagree with a person's beliefs and still another thing to publicly attack these beliefs in such a defamatory manner.

I notice that on the page preceding this article that you list the duties of a university newspaper. In what category of duty does this satirical masterpiece fall? What duty does it nobly perform but to create religious dissension in a non-denominational university?

Obviously views such as the ones expressed in this article exist but what are the Gazette's purposes in printing them? I believe an explanation is in order.

Sincerely,
DAVID PIGOT

Enjoy a pipe with
Sir Walter Raleigh
MILD BURLEY TOBACCO
at its best...

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"DANCING SATURDAY NIGHT"
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