

At the Movies :

Peace And Human Nature

By WILL OFFLEY

"The sky grows darker yet, and the sea grows higher." With this quotation from G. K. Chesterton, Murray Thompson of the Friends Peace Committee opened the last Encounter meeting of this term; the topic was Vietnam, and the format of the program was standard.

The first item on the agenda was a film on the treatment of wounded civilians in South Vietnam. It is a relief to know that there are still people who can cry at the sight of a little boy with two artificial legs, or an old woman with the left side of her face shot away. There were two old nuns sitting near me who were weeping unashamedly for most of the film, and there was good enough cause. The film was an allegedly "non-political" documentation of the finding of three doctors during a several-week stay in the Republic of Vietnam. It was uninspired as a polemic, but the steady procession of amputees, of gangrenous limbs, of humans who look more like hamburger than people, made up for its lack of dynamic appeal to a family audience.

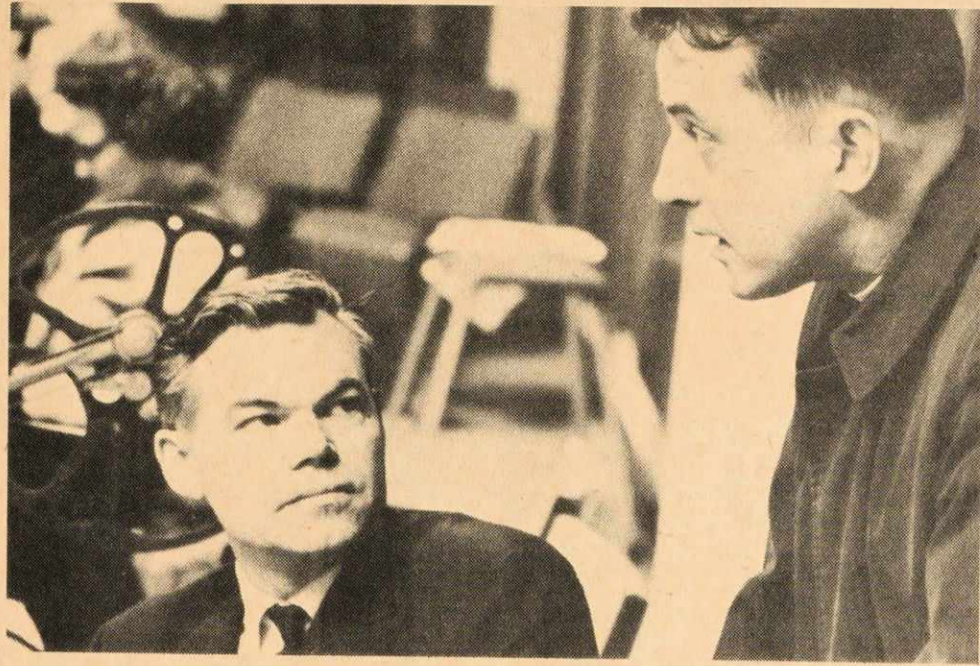
The film was the most interesting event in the whole program. It raised many questions, none of which were answered; maybe none of them can be answered. Peaceniks and do-gooders are not the only people who see films such as this. During the NLF's February offensive, most of us saw the South Vietnamese chief of police, General Loan, shoot an unarmed, bound captive through the head at a range of six inches. The picture of this execution was carried on a nation-wide T.V., and on the front pages of many newspapers. The response to it was significant; there was an unprecedented flood of letters to the editors, almost all of which condemned running the picture as a lapse of taste. We can call this the ostrich response to violence: ignore murder, protect our young people from seeing or hearing about it, and it will all go away.

The second response is to develop a sort of emotional scar tissue. One can take only so much horror before he either goes insane or withdraws from it. I have seen far worse atrocity films (remember "Good Times, Wonderful Times" with its bucket of human heads?); the film shown during this program was mild in comparison, judged on a sliding scale of works like this: a young, im-

pressionable mind sees an atrocity of "x" intensity (let us say, bombing civilians); the impact this has on him is considerable, evoking a visceral and instantaneous revulsion. But the next time he sees civilians being bombed, he will be less outraged. The sharp anguish he felt will only be experienced if he sees an even more brutal atrocity perpetrated (say, napalming civilians). The Sonderkommandos who cleaned out the gas chambers in Auschwitz and Buchenwald experienced the same process. They hardened to a point where cleaning out the excrement-covered contorted bodies and loading them on wheelbarrows had the same significance as cleaning out one's attic; hard work, a noisome task, but necessary and not at all repulsive.

The third response to violence is to revel in it; killing becomes enjoyable to many who are forced to live in an environment of brutality. Who of you have not felt a twinge of excitement in shooting a rifle, or watching someone die on Huntley--Brinkley? Death is the ultimate mystery--we cannot escape it ourselves, so the only way we have of regulating it at all is to inflict it on others; whether we do this vicariously, by rooting for the good guy when he shoots it out with the bad guy, or by actually killing, make little metaphysical difference, both phenomena are different manifestations of a universal human trait. The desire to deal out life and death, to become godlike. There is little bit of Eichmann in everyone. This weakness is innate in mankind; it is not controlled, it will prove to be his fatal weakness. Nuclear war only seems impossible; judging by man's past performance, it is more than likely.

After the film, a discussion of current and past events relating to the war/peace dilemma took place. The only significant idea to emerge was the powerlessness of the individual to do any more than his best -- a token amount in today's Realpolitik -- to agitate for peace. This is where the film was far more persuasive than the entire discussion. The film just said "thus", but with brutal honesty; the gathering spoke of the U.N., peacekeeping activities, and the whole sphere of peace activities and educational efforts, but pacifists cannot argue for peace half so effectively as can war. Death is the best argument for life.



Rev. Don Trivett puts a question to Murray Thompson of the Friends Peace Committee at the season's last ENCOUNTER meeting, March 21.

TYPING

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CUS Slams Frosh Rites

OTTAWA - (CUP) - Freshman initiations should be dropped in favor of more positive orientation to the university, according to the president of the Canadian Union of Students.

Hugh Armstrong said Friday, "Initiation procedures are degrading to human dignity for freshmen, and they have no place in the community of scholars."

He said initiations make freshmen second class citizens "in a time when student governments should be breaking down the pecking order."

He urged those who are organizing freshmen orientation programs now to drop initiations in favor of programs which give real introductions to the academic community, both as it exists now and as it should be.

He suggested freshman students be formed into small groups using a senior student as a resource person. The freshmen could then make their own individual decisions on how best they can learn about the academic community.

Ten or 15 students with a senior can hash out problems, Armstrong said, and decide what they want to do on the basis of their own particular interests.

If student governments are now dissatisfied with compulsory class attendance rules we shouldn't make attendance at initiation rites and orientation programs compulsory, he said.

SDU Strike Victorious

CHARLOTTETOWN - (CUP) - Students won a two-day strike for more freedoms at St. Dunstan's University here Thursday.

The academic senate late Thursday met most student demands including:

- * abolition of campus dress rules for women,
- * student committees to supervise residences,
- * A student seat on the 14-man senate,
- * elimination of compulsory class attendance rules, and
- * a mid-term break in the winter.

These concessions cover all but two major student demands; scrapping of the principle of in loco parentis, which is the right of the university to act in the place of parents in regulating students' academic and social behavior, and free choice of courses.

The students agreed to form a joint faculty-student committee to discuss these two demands and the

wide-ranging changes required to satisfy them.

Students council presented a brief of these grievances to the university a week ago, but when nothing came of it they boycotted classes Wednesday and Thursday. Two attempts to negotiate a settlement failed before the senate made its Thursday, March 14 proposals.

STUDENT DECOLONIZED

In Ottawa Friday, (Mar. 15) Canadian Union of Students president Hugh Armstrong said he was pleased the students had broken away from the attitudes of the colonized.

He described the principle of in loco parentis as a colonial concept. "It breeds the colonized and the colonizer attitudes," he said.

The chief lesson to be gained from this student victory, he said, is that when students act together change is possible.

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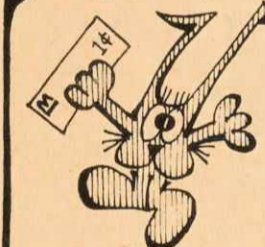
Picture yourself in this delightfully chunky "Fisherman Knit" pullover (or cardigan.) So casually smart, and warm as only a Kitten can be, this long sleeve, 100% pure Irish wool sweater is full-fashioned, and features a zippered mock turtle neckline, raglan shoulder, Continental band and cuffs. In a rich cream shade only to complement perfectly any of your Kitten slims or skirts. A MUST for every wardrobe. At all fine shops everywhere.

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LAPINETTE

A harey tail by don karr © 67



our lapinary compatriot reacts unpredictably to progress, we've found.

like, how she uses her new True Chequing Account.

she sends out cheques for one cent to her friends.

so, naturally, all her friends have to write her back to thank her for her unexpected generosity.

and then, of course, we send back all her cancelled cheques.

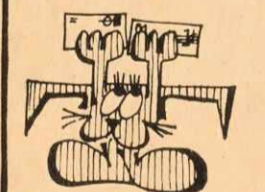
so - for every letter that lapinette sends out, she receives two back.

it seems to be a very down-key way to attract attention.

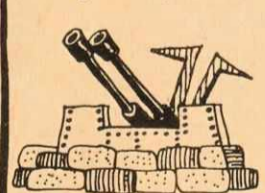
it is also a darned good way of keeping track of your disappearing dough.

so maybe you would appreciate getting your cheques back, too...

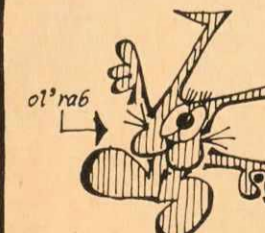
happiness is hopping post-haste to a post-box to mail money to a friend.



post-happiness is receiving two of something for one through the post.



there are alternative methods of keeping track of your money which it is only sporting to mention...



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