

The Gateway

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Mr. Hinman's Comments

Recently Mr. E. W. Hinman, the provincial treasurer, stated in an interview that "there must be the greatest freedom of thought and expression at the university."

"But," he added, "it must be that which the culture and concepts of the age can accept. Universities which rely on tax contributions for the major part of their income must expect to accommodate intellectual freedom with the purposes the taxpayer expects it [sic] to serve."

It is not the contradiction in Mr. Hinman's statement which interests us, but the notion that curtailment of thought can be rationalized.

There are two myths involved in this latest example of argument against the concept of a free university—free in all aspects.

The first myth is that the university owes the public community an explanation for all of its professors' thoughts, without regard for the idea that professors have private lives which they cannot entirely divorce from their academic lives. As members of the larger community they have as much right to be critical of the system as the members at large. What criticism they direct in their public roles should be of no concern to the employer. Nor should the employer be held responsible for employees' indiscretions.

The second myth is that the university provides an environment where freedom of thought is the highest concern. Perhaps in some Platonic Utopia it could exist, but in our world of actuality there are

considerations which must be given to consequences of thoughts which necessarily limit the latitude of any thought.

If we return to Mr. Hinman's statement, with these reflections in mind, we can approach his notion that freedom of thought must be that which the culture and concepts of the age can accept.

This is simply the most outrageous argument against the liberal concept of the university which could be conceived. Mr. Hinman is saying, in effect, that nothing should ever be thought of for the first time, or if it has to be, then it should not be thought of in the university.

The university as we know it is a conservative institution. But it has also been, from its inception in the Middle Ages, the embodiment of the vanguard of thought in society.

If the concept of thought as it is seen in the university is destroyed we also see the atrofication of society, preliminary to totalitarianism, or as Erich Fromm puts it in **The Fear of Freedom**: a system that, regardless under which name, makes the individual subordinate to extraneous purposes and weakens the development of genuine individuality.

No man, no society, has the right to mould another individual to his way of thought. This does not mean that there is not room for intellectual persuasion. We ask Mr. Hinman to keep this in mind when he refers to the purposes which he says the taxpayer expects the university to serve.

Do We Want A Chapel?

The Gateway is in favour of the principle of SUB expansion, but a number of disturbing developments force us to question the application of that principle on this campus. Not the least of these is the issue of a chapel to be included in the Students' Union Building.

In the first place, is it necessary? Many churches are easily accessible to the university. A Roman Catholic Chapel already exists on campus. St. Stephen's College is available to United Church Students. An Anglican Church is one and a half blocks off Campus, and further afield a more varied group of religions are all represented in the university vicinity.

Secondly, in view of the limited need for such an institution, can it be afforded in view of the money available?

It seems pretty reasonable to suggest that no matter how much money can be obtained from other sources, the student body will be called on to pay a fair amount, probably through increased fees. Students are far from affluent on this campus.

There are much more important and worthwhile ways in which students' money could be spent than on the addition to the campus of a piece of real estate which would at best

be used by a very small proportion of the students.

These considerations are important, but they are not all-inclusive in their scope. There is here an issue of principle as well. In the Canadian system it is well established that church and state should be clearly separated. This is so in order to ensure that no religious group or groups would have an advantage over others, and so that no one would have to help support an institution he disagreed with.

Yet if we have a chapel in SUB we will in effect be forcing everyone to support a certain group of organized religions. It is highly unlikely that all the Christian sects will be represented in the administering of the chapel, let alone non-Christian religions.

If we are to be consistent and practical in this issue we must appraise the whole of the SUB expansion project most carefully. It is a big investment, and has the potential to be most beneficial to the student body. But the features it incorporates should be reasonable and useful. They should also keep in mind the rights and financial ability of all the students.

In the case of the proposed chapel they have not.



"ACCORDING TO THIS TECHNIQUE, VICTORY IS ASSURED."

Spectrum

The Armistice Day service in Con Hall on Monday was a fine tribute to those who gave their lives for their country. But was it fitting?

In the first place there are many students of this university who are not Christians. If they attend the service in remembrance of the dead they are required to listen to a Christian service which does not mean much to them. They are required to sing Christian hymns or to not participate in the ceremony.

Indeed, in the Armed forces, the members are obliged to attend the Christian service, whether they are Christian or not.

Yet why should this be?

Surely not all the people killed in the two world wars were Christians? Surely not all those who lost loved ones in the two world wars were Christians? And surely this uni-

versity is not so bent on sponsoring only the Christian point of view as to refuse other beliefs the right of expression in honor of the dead.

What of the principles those who died are supposed to have been fighting for? What of freedom of religious expression? What a farce if the very liberties the dead fought to preserve are denied in the remembrance of the dead themselves!

But we hope that the university is guilty of only oversight, not bigotry. If this is the case, it will not be difficult to substitute for the present one-religion service a multi-religion service.

Next Remembrance Day we hope to see not only Christians taking part in the service, but also Jewish students, Humanists, Agnostics, Buddhists, and Muslims who at present do not feel they can attend a purely Christian service.

Fabius

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