

with radical thinking

The arts student is essential in the mass. If he accepts this, he can be made to think society meanly uses him after having rejected him as useless, which appears to be adding insult to injury.

Surely the student must now feel nicely hostile. If one hates the establishment enough, one can feel warm all over having indulged in such intellectual thuggery.

"The second class student absorbs culture so he may embody it." Important here are the words "so he may". These are responsible for the implication that there is an ulterior motive to absorbing culture. We get a clearer notion further on: "He is the guarantor of the status quo."

Exposure to anti-establishment

Now we know—the student is fed this culture so he will preserve the Establishment. We might argue from this the removal of all arts faculties would be a telling blow to the radical cause. However, no one can seriously doubt this is just about opposite to the truth. In the arts faculties students are increasingly exposed to anti-establishment doctrine; here is the refuge for the corporation hater, the iconoclast, the misanthrope and the establishment baiter. The status quo would be better served by the abolition of the Faculty of Arts. That it is a mechanism for the protection of the establishment is therefore a lie, consistent with the fixation that administrations are by nature unalterably and oppressively opposed to change.

"Everyone is somehow aware, without being told, it is unthinkable to shout at a teacher or fart in church." These are examples of deep rules, according to Matt Cohen, because people do not really know in avoiding such conduct they are obeying rules at all. Therefore they are more difficult to break than say "rules, such as those against liquor and drugs."

A matter of farting in church

What a wealth of social ignorance and superficiality is exposed here? The reason for it, in part at least, must be the desire to see the individual completely free from restraint and the refusal to see any form of authority (except perhaps the gods of the radical establishment from Marx to Marcuse) as anything but arbitrary and oppressive.

This is, of course, nonsense.

Therefore, the reason why drug and liquor laws are broken with relative ease of conscience is they concern an aspect of our liberty which may or may not jeopardize in the long run the benefit (however that is interpreted) of the greatest possible number. For the same reason the law in this area is very complicated and difficult to apply.

The matter of shouting at teachers or farting in church belongs to an entirely different area. For Matt Cohen the drug laws, the teacher and the church are all representative of oppressive authority and the only distinction he brings to our attention is based on the depth of ingraining in the minds of individuals. He invites us to flout these aspects of authority by showing disrespect. I do not find anywhere a reason for this disrespect other than the fixed desire to be rid of all authority, to be completely free, and this I have rejected as an impossible extreme, a radical pipe-dream. The showing of disrespect comes close to expression of opinion, and in a democratic society we must be very reluctant indeed to impinge on this freedom. Therefore there are now laws against shouting at teachers or farting in church.

If, having done these things, you find yourself excluded, it is not because you ex-

pressed an opinion, but because you, against the will of the majority, prevented the teacher from exercising his profession and prevented the rest of the class from attending, and because with insufficient cause you restricted the liberty of others. And if the teacher feels personally slighted, which would be perfectly natural, it is up to you to apologize to him as one human being to another, for he too, yes even a teacher, is entitled to human dignity.

Teachers should be supported

Any form of society will require individuals or groups of individuals to make decisions affecting greater numbers, perhaps all of society. The teacher is burdened with such responsibility (which is concomitant with authority). Assuming he is good-willed we should support him, for his decisions will be made with general benefit in mind. Matt Cohen, however, encourages students to adopt ill-will as a basis of action. Why? So when they have to make decisions for others—and this will come upon them—they will do so for personal gain or specifically for the disadvantage of the greatest possible number?

Popularity of Marquis de Sade

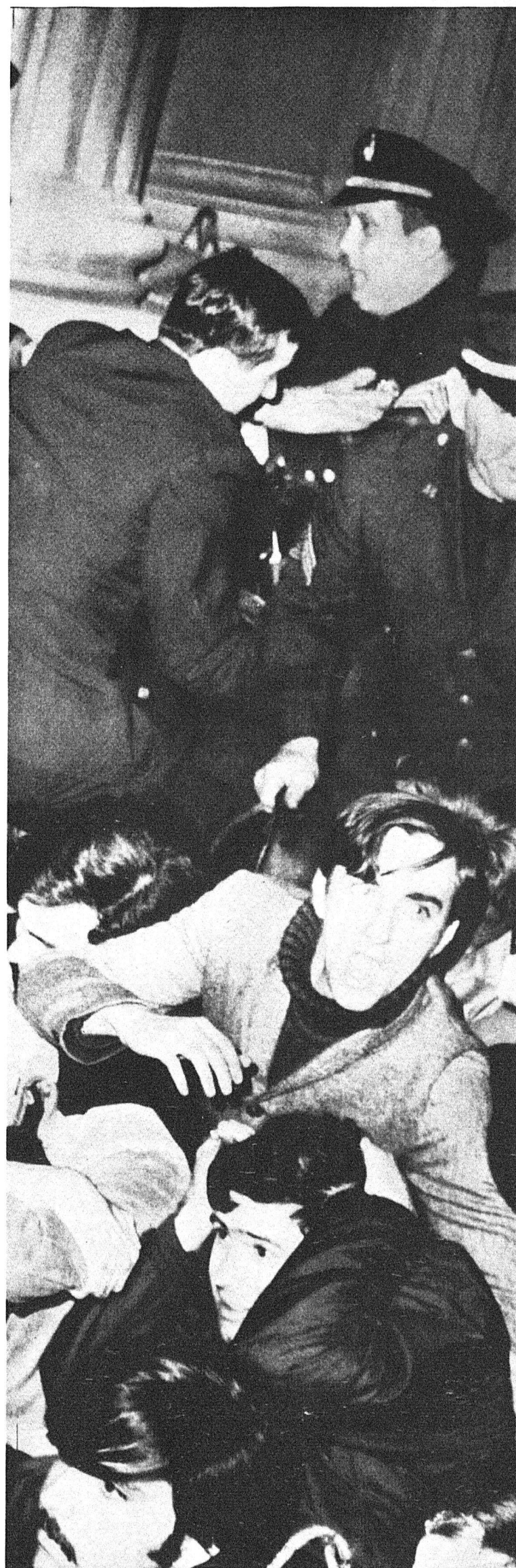
Dissent has become a way of life, the medium (of expression of discontent) has become the message, destruction of the West has become an end in itself for the genuine radical. Arguments based on moral grounds may be used to attack only the Establishment, thus Viet Cong truce-breaking and mass murder of civilians in Hué become irrelevant or virtuous. Established standards are stood on their heads; hatred is good—it gives you a feeling of security; violence is good—it gives you a feeling of power and self-respect—unless it happens to you; murder is good—as shown by the popularity of the Marquis de Sade.

This is the radical ethos. It goes back to the false notion that our ideas of what is morally good or bad are arbitrarily imposed by society. Born of resentment, bitterness and grudge, it is anti-good and anti-humanistic.

Let us restore the balance

If the arts student wishes to play a first-class role, let him operate on the spirit of the times to produce a balanced understanding, not hate-hysteria, let him bring meaning back to all forms of art to give the ordinary citizen aesthetic experience instead of sensual titillation or cultural shock. For this he must develop a set of comprehensible artistic forms or styles, so expressions are communicable. This in turn will help eliminate alienation, which has been produced by the over-emphasis on the individuality of our personalities, needs, likes, fears and modes of expression. We must restore the balance and find what we have in common, develop a common cultural idiom. The effects of such a change would be an improvement in areas where students and others see room for improvement: alienation; inter-personal relationships, including student-staff; relevance of course materials; race-relations, since culture is not racially oriented; self-interest; the predatory and exploitive side of industry and so on. All these have been exacerbated by the negativism of modern cultural trends. Far from playing a second class role, the arts student could—indeed must—realize his is the highest calling of all: to bring to the people a feeling of human brotherhood. This can be done only through a unified cultural idiom embodying accepted cultural values.

Yesterday was high time to begin.



RADICAL STUDENTS—Life magazine caught them in action at Columbia University. The radical agitates and the cops come and scenes such as above created headlines all over the world. One reason for this, our author says, is that there is something radically wrong with radical thinking and that the radicals have taught themselves to stop thinking.