

Philippines not a dog diner

The December 2, 1981 issue of the Calgary Sun carried a two page article on the dog-eating complex in some parts of the Philippines. As a result some readers wrote irate letters expressing disgust over this trait, even going to the extent of exhorting economic sanctions against the country (The Edmonton Sun, January 4, 1982).

In Calgary, a number of Filipino-Canadians reported overt acts of antagonism towards them on account of the report.

A plea for perspective seems in order. Some qualifications have to be presented with what the Sun has reported as facts:

First, dog eating is not a universally sanctioned occurrence in the Philippines, as The Sun report implies. For that matter, dog meat is known to the general population as "hot meat", meaning to say it is against the law to sell it in public. But, as The Sun correctly points out, the law appears to be flouted in some Philippine cities. It does not mention, however, that even within these areas people who eat dog meat are to a large extent stigmatized.

To be called a dog-eater is no compliment. In other words, norms pertaining to kindness to these animals do exist among the majority, however insensitive they may be as compared to kinder groups. Perhaps, a better way to describe it is to look at it as an institutionalized deviation which provides a means of livelihood for those willing to take the risk of being stigmatized.

In a country where unemployment is more of a norm than an exception, quite a few will only be too willing to be involved in this otherwise illegal activity. And on the part of those who look at dog meat as a delicacy, it appears that just like most non-conformists in any system, the

forbidden to them is all the more enticing.

Second, some cultural assumptions and economic considerations surrounding the issue should be mentioned. For instance (at the risk of citing the obvious), the overall Philippine standards of kindness toward dogs is definitely not as high as most Westerners'. This cruelty or viciousness to dogs, as The Sun has successfully captured in pictures, must be seen in the light of the fact that generally Filipinos do not pet dogs as lovingly (as if they were human beings) as most Americans and some well-to-do Filipinos do.

Within this mental framework he finds it hard to understand how it is that in a society where leftovers from the table are invariably thrown away some dogs are allowed to roam the roads uncared for only to be impounded by some agency that would later on put them to sleep if unclaimed or not adopted.

With the same mental set, the same Filipino would be gripped with disgust when told that some Westerner could deal death blows to what to him are pitiful-looking, harmless seals who in no way compete with their captors for food. He is of course unaware that seal pelts yield economic profits in a society where consumerism prevails.

Third, the concept of cruelty, as it is in many cultures, is not monolithic. To a large majority of Philipinos, the illegal butchery of these hapless dogs is indeed cruel. However, because they know that there are no sophisticated facilities that make procedures less cruel (as chemicals and injections for this purpose are not available as they are in the more advanced countries), cruelty does

not shake them with the same degree of unforgiveness that their Western counterpart "suffers" from.

Finally, with all the above cultural complexity set forth, it is perhaps not inappropriate to note that while the mind is inclined to spot mismatches between systems more easily than it sees parallels, there is a need to respect the context from which they are gleaned.

In this respect, it may not be too much to ask that a newspaper, notwithstanding a tendency to sensationalize, should instruct its readers to accept relativities from other cultural systems. After all this is the underlying philosophy of the Canadian cultural mosaic.

Lillian Cui Garcia
Community Dev. Division
University of Alberta

Kid's art

Thursday's (Jan. 7th) *Gateway* contains a long, anonymous caption unfairly criticizing the latest issues of *Update*. Is J. A.'s lack of appreciation of art infecting your other writers or is he refusing to identify his own writing now? His (facetious?) comments regarding incompetents infiltrating public, volunteer organizations are embarrassingly ironic. Are you that hard up for writers that you must have J. A. writing in the Arts section?

In the Jan. 5th *Gateway* J. A. drew parallels between children's and abstract art. In the Jan. 7th issue he raved about the "magnificent" paintings of children in *Review*. Perhaps J. A. is trying to tell us he wants a children's section to edit in the *Gateway*.

No more "guess the art" contests, please!

Gerry Deacon
Law 1

A low IQ

J. A.'s comments and innuendos featured in the Jan. 5th *Gateway* concerning abstract art, make his appreciation of art appear to be below that of the three year old child.

Joe Kasoff
Engineering

America Bashing

Dear Editor,

The world has seen how the cold war has returned to Washington.

Everyone remembers that on August 6, the day when the Hiroshima victims were commemorated, US President Reagan made the decision to start unfolding the production of neutron weapons.

Everyone knows that Haig, in a speech to the press, said, "There are more important things than peace." Even though this is true, people still believe that Reagan is a peacemaker and that the USSR is the enemy of the world.

The implementation of fascism and the absence of human rights in Reagan's government is disastrous and is the most chauvinistic, imperialist and reactionary government. And let's not forget the "Neutron Bomb."

Dear Readers, let's not fool ourselves, thinking that USSR is to blame for all the above.

Solidarity in Poland has been in the news for a long time. It seems that we have forgotten about the 10,000 people slain in "El Salvador" - victims of a dictatorial regime imposed by the US government, aiding it with tons and tons of arms every month.

Bolivia's entire junta has been accused by the US Senate Subcommittee on Latin America of trafficking in narcotics.

Chile, where the CIA inspired a coup in 1973, brought in a regime which the progressive forces called one of the most repressive on earth.

They forget that Lech Walesa is an American spy and that in a speech with Mr. Cronkite on CBS Walesa said: "We want the US model in Poland; a statesman like this cannot fool anyone; the lack of modesty, the nonsense of responsibility, the disruption of internal order, breaking down social discipline and perpetuating misery is especially offensive."

Solidarity is not acting in the interest of Polish workers or Polish society, does not contribute to the arrest of the economic decline or the condemnation of the socialist system. The leaders of Solidarity positions are not for restoration of cooperation. It has raised to what had before, only been the demands of anti-socialist groups who had taken shelter in the leadership. This complete disruption of the economy and

society is the creation of a political party directed against workers' power.

So, dear readers, history shows that reactionary elements do not survive and soon they die a very natural death, because progressiveness and peace are in everyone's minds. The people of the world are becoming more aware than ever that people united will never be defeated and all honest people must raise their voices in defence of man's primary rights: the right to life, and the right to halt the barbarous plans of the US capitalist intervening in the countries' internal affairs, and to put a stop to US intervention in El Salvador.

Christina Fernandez
Agriculture

Gutterwaifs

There is a movement underway among a growing number of dissatisfied professors to institute extra-billing to students enrolled in their courses. A smaller group, quoting strongly established precedents of the 12th-14th century, are arguing for direct billing, with the students later to collect their expenditure from the university comptroller or the administrative assistant to the Minister of Advanced Education, whichever is closer.

The dissatisfaction of the professor arises from the failure of the Board of Governors to meet their wage demands. In light of the relative failure of academic salaries to keep up to the cost of living during the past few years, the professors are seeking an increase of 2% for the coming year. The Board of Governors has offered 0.05%.

Spokesmen for the Association of the Academic Staff: Wage Adjustment (AAS:WA) say that no one will be refused education where it is really necessary and that students with learning disabilities or on scholarships will not be billed extra.

The AAS:WA seems to have its strongest support among professors specializing in pre-medical courses, business administration and commerce and other programs designed primarily for economic gain. Apparently there is a deep division among the faculty in Arts, one faction arguing for freedom from extra-billing for Arts students on the grounds that they will always be among us and the other saying "Slap it to them - stamp out parasitism". Three or four sub-groups of each major position in Arts have also been heard from.

A committee of representatives from Friends of Education approached the Council of the Canadian Marketing Association to ask their support in opposing the extra and direct billing. The Council of the CMA, after a bit of spiritless discussion, took a vote, and in a majority decision, declined to support the Friends of Education, declaring in the words of one of its members, that "It is probably a good thing to have students pay directly for their education. It will remind users how costly educational services are."

It is understood that similar discussions about direct and extra-billing are underway among other enterprising groups. In response, the first steps towards forming a Friends of Fire Extinction have been taken, but without much hope.



WINDSOR PARK BARBER SHOP

Invites you to visit us for your tonsorial (hairdressing) needs

Diagonally across from Lister Hall
11706 - 87 Ave. — 433-1361

Closed Mondays.

10 Guitar Workshops

FOLK, COUNTRY, BLUES
with 'Ma' Fletcher (and instructors)
Writer of the weekly Edmonton Journal column
'The Guitar Man' and performer at the
Edmonton Folk Festival Ma Fletcher has
performed with Valdy, Stan Rogers

ENROL NOW!

Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced courses
Small classes 6-12 students
On Campus in SUB
Starts Jan. 23 (EVERY SATURDAY OR MONDAY)
\$65 for 10 week course

Advanced Course Includes:

- 1) 12 finger picking patterns
- 2) Blues guitar
- 3) Lead guitar
- 4) Theory & improvisation
- 5) Open tunings
- 6) Flat picking Styles
- 7) Learn to Jam



CALL 465 - 4017

Monday to Friday
5:30 - 9:30 p.m.

TEAR OUT THIS AD

in Dinwoodie

ONE HORSE BLUE

Friday, January 15
at
8:00 p.m.
CAB SU BOX OFFICE
Tickets:

Advance \$6

Door \$7