

The Dalhousie Gazette

CANADA'S OLDEST COLLEGE NEWSPAPER



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Editorial

More reruns this summer

It should have come as no surprise that the shock following the murder of Martin Luther King quickly fed the hatred of the black dispossessed in the northern cities, and was the signal for the first skirmishes of this summer's revolution. For the awful fact only now being realized is that the entire situation of the ghettos has seen no change since last summer.

Watts, the scene of the biggest uprising of the previous year, spent last year rebuilding. To the residents of that ghetto, no evidence of the lack of progress was stronger than the fact that it was mainly whites who were employed in the building programs.

Newark is still partially destroyed, and its mayor freely admits that contacts with the slum community are not succeeding; he blames the increased tension on the fact that neither the state nor the federal governments seem willing to offer significant financial aid to his city.

Detroit stands perhaps as the worst of all, however. Last July the city set up the New Detroit Committee to take action in the fields of communication, community services, law, youth affairs, economic development, employment, education, and housing.

The results have been bleak; the city could not be further from a New Detroit. The most important communications effort was not made until early in March. It consisted of a meeting of all Michigan city mayors in an attempt to calm these who head cities close to possible outbreaks. Community services has been put aside until a police commissioner can be found. It looked at welfare legislation for a while, but took no action. The law group has given legal advice to the other groups. Youth affairs suggested programs which will apparently fold due to lack of finances. Economic development has wasted its energies trying to get a slice of the Washington pie, since committed to Vietnam. Employment has found 56,000 new jobs for Detroit residents, of which 12,000 went to negroes. Detroit is 42% black. The education group wanted to set up community colleges, but received little financial support. Housing has made the acute need widely known and recognized, which is good, but only makes the situation more explosive because things will not change - banks and insurance companies do not consider the inner city a good risk, and will not give support.

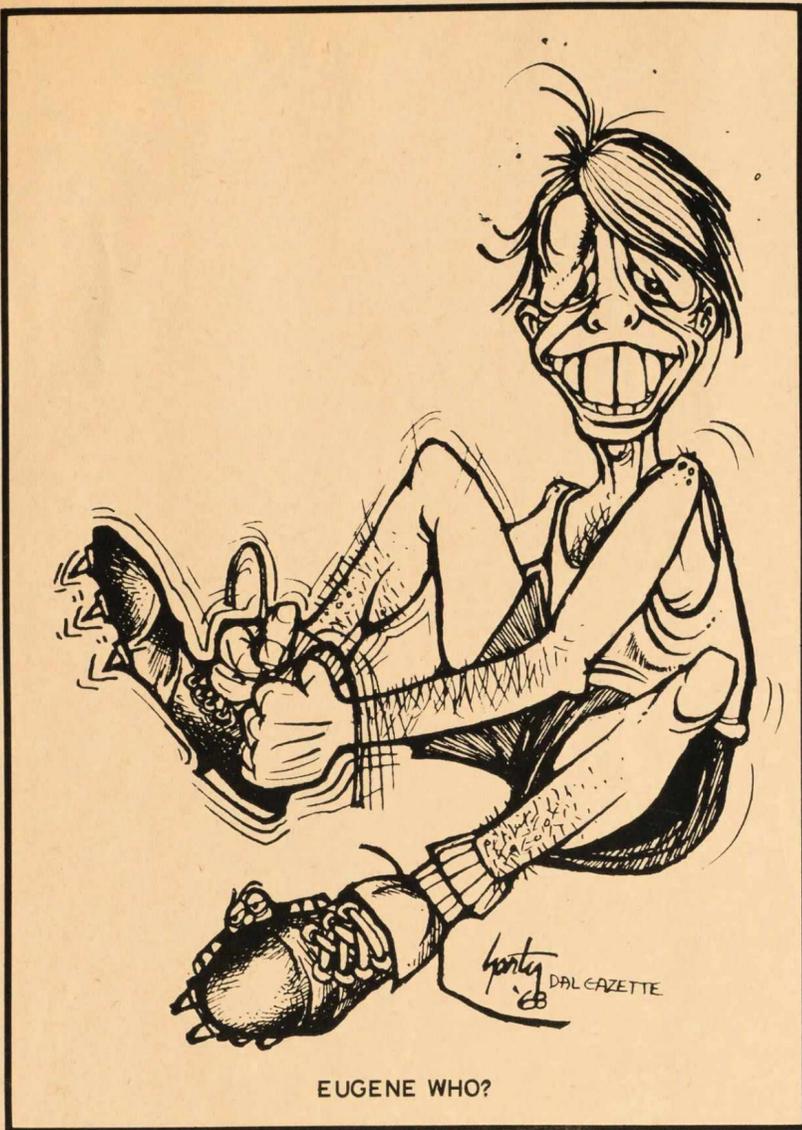
The most immediate analysis has been that the cities suffer from a paralysis of leadership and of financial support.

A more comprehensive examination, however, can only lead to the conclusion that those who wield the power and resources of the American system are unwilling to pass out even those small alms which could serve to keep the dispossessed vaguely content for the time being. In doing so, they have settled one thing only for certain - that the rebellion will surely come, and when it does, it will be of unparalleled destructiveness.

All of which has apparently given many Canadians some sort of perverted smug satisfaction - of course, it couldn't happen here, after all, these severe conditions do not now exist here. They are right. It would be safe to assume that the kind people of Halifax share in this feeling. They cannot afford to, for they are wrong.

Nova Scotia is the home of about half of the black population of Canada, Halifax, the home of one-third. The conditions of the Halifax ghetto are comparable to those in the major U.S. cities - certainly no less severe. Attempts to begin a meaningful community action program from within have been frustrated by the inevitable lack of outside support, the power structure has even acted as a resistant. This can certainly not be blamed on Mayor O'Brien. He is blessed with a city administration neither efficient nor in the least way progressive.

Many Halifax slum dwellers are already willing to take to the streets, it cannot be doubted that over this summer, starting last week, many more will join them. And with that incident, if it occurs, which will start Halifax burning, depending on what the incident is, a great many more will join those who are now committed to action. Perhaps sometime this summer, those kind citizens of Halifax will awake to realize that they, too, are part of the sick society which has unhappily left the dispossessed no alternative.



EUGENE WHO?

Letter to the Editor

"Where Is Your Reason?"

To the editor:

I have been able to tolerate your paper - the DALHOUSIE GAZETTE - for a year now but everything has an end. You have played so much on my patience for so long that I cannot but reply to this one of your many discriminatory, racial, and unprogressive reports which you have been publishing. I am referring to the extract supposedly taken from the TORONTO STAR entitled "Off Base", published in the DALHOUSIE GAZETTE (Vol. 100, No. 16) of February 22, 1968. I remember reading your edition that had the article on "STUDENTS being treated as a NIGGER" and although I took that in good faith you yourself will bear with me that it was a very serious and silly simile. Really, this extract OFF BASE is actually off target now?

I am wondering just why you allowed such a "coloured" report to be printed. To my mind, and I think to any reasonable human being, the OFF BASE, with its bald, bespectacled TEACHER is supposed to mean something. People are not so mad as to print extracts in their newspapers if it will not appeal to their fancy and to that of their readers. There is a purpose and I read that illustrated article with the view to learning something, if in fact there was anything to learn.

As a result I was expecting you, Mr. Editor, if you had any sense of objectivity at all, to add any editorial comments that you may have on the article which attracted and appealed to you so much as to deserve its publication in a University paper. In this, however, I was miserably disappointed, and the only explanation that I can think of is that the OFF BASE is to you self-explanatory and says just what you have been dying to say. It is self-explanatory enough and I hold you in great esteem, Mr. Racist Editor, for your great sense of humour and the dexterity that you possess to be able to cast insinuations even when you do not wish it. It is rather deplorable that with all these latent abilities your journal is devoid of objective reports when it comes to choosing between black and white, not forgetting the fact that your paper is also as despicable and as dry as the Sahara desert. The only difference is that even in the Sahara there are two or three oases to offer some relief -- even to us niggers?

That you have the right to express your opinion cannot be gainsaid and nobody is arguing with you about that. But that your opinion should smack of discrimination is what I cannot condone when I ponder that the same person may be sitting next to me in class!

I am sorry to realize (and to my great surprise and shock) that the "nigger" is frowned upon and despised in a University like Dalhousie. For a Canadian student even to think that those "outsiders who try to start 'em up over rights and such are just making trouble for everybody" is beyond me for since I have been here I have been made to think that Canadians are such broadminded people! There may be genuine friends amongst the students on this campus who are genuine sympathizers of the "nigger cause" and I do not deny that for a minute. But for a University paper to echo in blatant union with a misguided TORONTO STAR that "biologically they ('niggers') are just not EQUIPPED to handle FREEDOM and POWER" makes me think that in fact the black man is not safe, not even on this campus where many are wolves in sheep's clothing.

It does not take much juggling to surmise that our editor associates a black man only with a perpetual slave who must remain so to his so-called "TEACHER". A TEACHER indeed! I would not at all be surprised if next time our ignoramus of an editor writes to the South African Apartheid Government to continue with its filthy and unjust treatment of the "niggers" there -- the rightful owners of the land! Oh man, where is your reason? Men have lost their reasons indeed!

No doubt the editor may be one of those people around here who put on a hypocritical and phony grin when they meet a black student around. And you should know what enters our minds when we see through this phony and too-smooth facade! One would be unpardonably silly to think that a person of this caliber who would "not want a nigger to marry his daughter" (if he has any yet) "has niggers as some

of his best friends." Friends my foot! What flattery and mockery of friendship! It is, however, a soothing knowledge that the editor's "STUDENTS" are not all that crazy about his daughters! If it is only for fun!

It must be quite a joke for our dear editor to learn that "not many (niggers) are DOCTORS, LAWYERS, and BUSINESS LEADERS" but you must learn too, Mr. Conceited, that someone born a cripple does not start running in the twinkling of an eye. And please, Mr. Uppity and Ignorant Editor, if you ask me, I never even gave it a thought to "be like you", and definitely not a pompous TEACHER for sure!

ISHMAEL BRUCE,

...and yours?...

DEAR MR. BRUCE:

Although the DALHOUSIE GAZETTE has never printed "The Student As Nigger," and hence you could not have read it in this paper, we have printed several CUP releases which not only referred to that article, but explained it in such a way that you should by now have realized that you badly misunderstood it.

The article said that teacher and administration treat the student much the way the American bigot treats the "nigger": with a mixture of suspicion, fear, hatred, and as much oppression as he can get away with. The cartoon which we reprinted from the TORONTO STAR carried this theme a little further, showing the teachers (or bigots) are quite willing to admit that the student (or the "nigger") has many fine qualities, as long as this admission does not require him to give the student (or the "nigger") more power or to recognize more of his rights.

We agree with you that the simile is "serious and silly", though the fault is not in character but in degree. The student's plight is similar to that of

Johnson Dropout

Washing his hands of the responsibility

By WILL OFFLEY

Lyndon Johnson has managed to do it again. In the most crucial year in American history, with dissent within and impending humiliation of the US's military and diplomatic power without, he has once more chosen a face-saving operation at the expense of the American people and humanity. His withdrawal from this year's Presidential race is, if viewed cynically, one of the most brilliant coups he has pulled off in his political career. Despite his protestations of dedication and self-sacrifice in the name of a higher cause than mere petty politicking, he has in effect washed his hands of responsibility for the continuing slaughter in Vietnam.

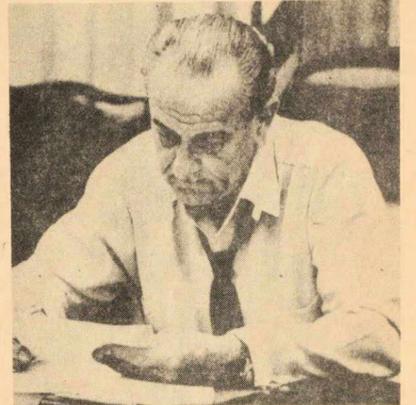
The speech in which Johnson announced that he would not seek, nor would he accept, nomination for the Presidency was first of all a declaration of a unilateral de-escalation of the conflict. By this Johnson meant sending 13,000 support troops to Vietnam, as well as 11,000 combat troops which he failed to mention in his speech. He will call up many of the better-trained National Guard contingents. Government spending on the war will increase \$5.1 billion in the next year and a half. The South Vietnamese draft is being extended to include 18-year-old boys.

Admittedly, the number of reinforcements that Generals Westmoreland and Abrams requested was on the level of 200,000 men -- Johnson's grant of 25,000 was a paltry sum. Johnson did call off most air strikes against North Vietnam (except for bombing infiltration routes north of the Demilitarized Zone), and naval bombardments as well. American operations have, allegedly, been cut drastically as part of the "peace offensive." And once more, Johnson called for North Vietnam to come to the Conference table.

The latest peace offensive is a gem of Welt-politik public relations. By the wording of his speech Johnson made no essentially new offer to the North Vietnamese government. Even Johnson himself acknowledged that the new formula for peace was a rehash of his San Antonio offer. What the wording also admitted was the possibility that if the North Vietnamese do not respond, an invasion of the North will commence. This is speculation at the present, but invasion has never been ruled out as an ultimate expression of the resolve to win.

As far as the war is concerned, Johnson has banked all his bets. If any meaningful reduction of the conflict results from the impending talks with the North Vietnamese, which appears possible, his past conduct will be forgiven by a great number of Americans who formerly opposed his policies. He will get a sort of retroactive "Ego te absolvo" from the American public. If the talks fail to materialize or are broken off by one of the parties, he will still have a free hand in controlling the war as he sees fit, though it is apparently unlikely that he will commit a large number of troops (100,000 or thereabouts) during the course of the year. Barring the possibility of another NLF offensive on the proportions of the Tet engagements, or a crisis situation around Khe Sanh, it is most probable that Johnson, freed from the responsibility and loss of time involved in campaigning this summer and fall, will attempt to soft-pedal Vietnam as much as it is within his power to do, and save his time for the long hot spring, summer, fall and early winter ahead. America is still in a crisis situation at home; it will be all that Johnson can do to keep urban violence from assuming the proportions of a civil war this summer.

Despite the much-touted blitzkrieg of negotiation, the Vietnam war will not end this year. Even if



AP Wirephoto (Reprinted From Christian Science Monitor)

Hanoi and Washington agree respectively to lower the infiltration level or halt the bombing of the North, the deaths will continue, for the war will continue. Johnson will leave office and be replaced by -- Whom? Bobby Kennedy? Richard Nixon? Hubert Humphrey? All honourable men. Whoever is President will be faced with the continuing war in Vietnam, the growing frustration of the American people, and the demand for a quick end to the conflict -- either withdrawing from the war or quickly annihilating North Vietnam. I personally believe that Kennedy will be elected, that he will be unable to deal with the situation, even more unable than Johnson has been, and that he will be forced to terminate his residence in the White House after four years. Depending upon all sorts of unpredictable variable, I believe that Johnson will be renominated and re-elected in 1972.

And with Johnson back in the saddle again, back with that fiend for our friend, the United States will continue its attempt to establish a Pax Americana, until the advent of the Apocalypse. Boom.

Reflections on American virtues and myths

By V. CLAMANTIS

The other day, when I opened my Newsweek, the first thing I saw was a full page advertisement by Warner and Swasey Precision Machinery, consisting of a series of Short American Thoughts. I imagine you know these things. They are expressions of American virtues and reflections on American myths which the reader can, with a little effort, appropriate to himself. They are rather like printed prayers: they allow one to grasp heights of self-deception ordinarily far beyond one. This example was a deprecatory litany for a father who doesn't want his son to be either a hippy or a leftist or a little bastard. Not being of the American faith, I could only use this document as an irritant to secrete my own thoughts around. You must judge whether the results are pearls.

I want my boy to have all the advantages I can give him. . . . Such as having to earn his own allowance by running errands, cutting lawns.

Yes, it is never too early for the boy to learn the middle-class knack of being industrious without being very useful, and getting paid far too much for it.

Such as getting good grades in school - getting them because he wants to, and because he knows what it would do to me if he didn't.

The patriachs called down wisdom on their sons, Montefeltre wanted his to be humanists and soldiers. Our American bourgeois wants his to have good grades. But the others knew that all their wishes were possible, while our contemporary is talking about Paradise. Knowledge has never been the fashion in Paradise. He is to study because he wants good grades, not because he sees the uses of knowledge and reason. He must remember that he is one of his father's favorite means of fooling himself.

Such as being proud to be neat and clean and decent.

To be clean and neat and predictable - always commendable qualities, no doubt but hardly the kind of accomplishments one can be proud of. But then, our Father is not concerned with what is possible, he is thinking how useful it would be if one could feel such pride. The boy gets on the bus in his spanking new Little-League uniform and sees a dirty workman who doesn't seem to care where he looks. How convenient then to have pride in being neat and clean and decent. For what is pride but an artificial solitude, a way of annihilating the humanity around one?

Such as standing up and standing proud when his country's flag goes by. Legs together, elbows at sides, eyes pushing everything into the background; the pose of prisoners and patriots. A useful accomplishment this, in an age when it is becoming increasingly evident that there are real people east of Eden, and in a year when so many of them have good cause to curse his country's flag.

The other clauses are all more or less commendable, except for the wish that he be "self-reliant" and "earn his own way." Per se, there is nothing wrong with these wishes, but in context they refer back to the maxim that "the world does not owe you a living." And for our real-estate salesman or junior executive that maxim conceals the declaration that he does not owe the world anything either.

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A Stupid, Contemptible War

From The Toronto Daily Star

Prime Minister Lester Pearson delivered a reproving lecture the other day to demonstrators who one-sidedly condemn the United States for the war in Viet Nam.

He condemned their tactics as futile, among other things, although exactly the same complaint can be made of his government's gestures toward ending, mediating or moderating the conflict.

But another remark by the Prime Minister suggests that he has not really grasped what the Americans are doing in Viet Nam. He described it as a "war of attrition not only against the Communist foe but also, tragically, against the peaceful population - a Paschendale of Southeast Asia . . ."

Paschendale, for all its butchery, was a model of discriminating, intelligent and efficient warfare compared to American offensive operations in South Viet Nam.

Where the Americans cannot come directly to grips with the elusive Viet Cong, they attack civilians on the off-chance that some VCs may be concealed among them.

In effect, if not in the intention of the Johnson administration, they are waging war against the people whom they are purportedly defending.

That conclusion is based on a detailed eyewitness description in the March 16 New Yorker magazine of Operation Benton, carried out in Quang

Tin province last year.

The reporter, Johnathan Schell, saw farming villages destroyed by American rockets, 20-mm aerial cannon, 750-pound bombs and napalm because a ground commander judged that a few rounds of sniper fire had come from them. The enemy marksmen were not seen and no attempt was made to locate them precisely. The villagers were not given advance warning to evacuate; Operation Benton was not supposed to "generate any new refugees."

On the strength of another vague judgment about the source of sniper fire, aerial destruction poured down on two churches, one of them flying a white flag, and on the surrounding houses.

The flight commander's bomb damage assessment report listed the results as "two permanent military structures destroyed, 10 military structures destroyed, and five damaged."

Later Schell saw some civilian survivors of Operation Benton in refugee compounds, without shelter or sufficient food. And hard-working American civil-affairs officials were wondering why they weren't more appreciative of what the United States was doing for them.

The American style of fighting in South Viet Nam is sparing of American lives, colossally wasteful of munitions, and wantonly destructive of Vietnamese homes, fields and people. As a way to fight for a country, it is both contemptible and self-defeating.