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Trouble is, replacing these mouldering piles with tower blocks is neither aesthetically pleasing nor economically viable, for those of us on low incomes. While building the tower blocks may not be quite the social crime the graffitists of Garneau would have us believe, they don't solve the students' problem. More acceptable would be the purchase and renovation of the older buildings by the University, but costs would be astronomical on the required scale. (Some, of course, have been acquired by the University, but owing to a slight difference of opinion over a bill, I haven't felt like contacting Food and Housing Services).

So, there isn't an answer. Those of you still looking, good luck. Higher education may be your right, but it's a right you still have to buy.

Richard Miller  
Grad Studies

## Disposable university

I resent the University Bookstore's policy of giving away disposable shavers to customers.

I stood in line for half an hour, bought two pens, (why, I don't know), and got totally free of charge a box containing 3 disposable razors.

Not only are these a waste of university money (maybe that explains why textbook prices are so high) but they also waste valuable non-renewable resources.

Students should not be encouraged to use disposable plastic products — they are non-biodegradable and will be littering our world for centuries. (While I'm on the subject nor should university cafeterias use plastic utensils).

The university should exhibit an environmental conscience.

Craig Laurence  
Arts 4

## Second Wind

An occasional column of opinion by Gateway staffers.

We have all read in the newspapers about the troubles and violence of the Iranian revolution. Yet have any of us stopped to think of the importance of this event? I would propose that the Iranian revolution is the most important revolution since the Russian revolution. Like that event, the Iranian revolution will serve as a model for movements and rebellions throughout the world.

The immense importance of the revolution in immediate terms is obvious. Iran is one of the largest oil producers in the world, and an important supplier to the West (including Israel). Since the revolution, oil production has been erratic, and rarely above one-quarter of the pre-revolution levels. This shortfall in Western supplies, and the fact that OPEC nations took advantage of the situation to drastically raise prices, is to a very large degree responsible for the recession just beginning to start in the West.

The second immediate effect of the revolution is in the strategic area. Not only because of its own petroleum resources, but because of its geographic location, Iran is of immense strategic importance. In earlier years the Soviet Union and Britain squabbled over it, and in later years there was heavy U.S. interference in its internal affairs, culminating in such events as the CIA-backed coup overthrowing a democratically elected, nationalistic government in favor of the Shah's father in the 1950s. And finally,



SCURATO/LNS

by Harvey King

and perhaps most importantly, the Shah of Iran squandered most of the income generated by oil production on arms. This leaves the fourth most powerful army in the world sitting in the midst of a tense and divided country, in an already tense and strategic area.

However, the most important effects of the Iranian revolution are the potential long-term effects. Iran contains conditions prevalent throughout the Third World in varying degrees of intensity, and recently has been doing an accelerated version of what the rest of the poorer nations of the world must go through. Besides the incredible repression under the Shah, a larger factor in his downfall was his total bungling of the development of Iran's economy, and his gross mishandling of the oil revenue (most of it went into his own pocket or for the army's latest gadgets).

Iran had certain conditions prevalent throughout the Third World. Most of the population was (and still is) illiterate, rural, starving and conservative Muslim. The rest of the population is isolated from this sector in an urban elite that was middle-class and largely Western in outlook. The notable exception is the militant student segment, which was usually Muslim or Marxist or both. This dichotomy is prevalent throughout the Third World, and since their goals are often divergent, conflict is inevitable. In Iran these elements united to overthrow the Shah, but are now on the verge of civil war. Iran, like many other nations, has militant ethnic groups seeking greater degrees of autonomy. Their violent guerilla warfare is likely to add fuel to the potential civil war.

Iran attempted to go through a modernization process that took the West hundreds of years (with a great deal of pain), in a few decades. This process, combined with corruption and untold wealth, plus a conservative, militantly religious population led to an inevitable conflict. Most of the world is yet to go through this process, and therefore Iran is important as a warning. Perhaps the most important aspect present here is the growing strength of Islam, which is growing throughout the Middle East and the Third World as it is in Iran.

The Iranian Revolution is much too complex to be labelled "good" or "bad", yet it is overwhelmingly important. We're watching our century's French Revolution, and it is far from over - the French Revolution took 25 years and the conquering of most of Europe before it ended.

Many countries in the Third World are on the verge of Iran-like situations. Muslim-left conflicts in Afghanistan and Pakistan are growing. And perhaps most importantly, large resource-rich nations like Nigeria and Brazil are about to explode into being as powerful nations. Will they too be torn apart like Iran?

## Reader comment

by David R. Marples

The recent assassination of Lord Mountbatten by the I.R.A. has been widely condemned as an outrage in the media of the western world. Indeed the London *Daily Express* of the following morning even carried the headline "These Murdering Bastards" in reference to the assassins. Few newspapers however have delved into the question in any depth. Why was such a murder perpetrated? Why have the problems in Northern Ireland reached such an acute impasse? Little will be found from examining the life of Mountbatten who merely used Ireland as a convenient holiday resort.

To understand the current situation one has to go back ten years. Oddly enough, few newspapers reported the fact that Mountbatten's death coincided almost exactly with the tenth anniversary of the Downing Street Declaration which brought the British Army into Ulster.

A decade ago, the Ulster premier, Major Chichester Clark, asked the Labour Government to send over the British Army after serious rioting by the Protestant population. An Orange march in heavily Catholic Londonderry had ended in a clash with police. In Belfast on August 14 and 15, 1969, 270 Catholic homes were burned down by Protestant gangs. Clark needed the British Army to provide some protection for the Catholic population, at this time a defenceless minority in Belfast.

Initially the Army was welcomed by the Catholics. The Protestants, who dominated the Stormont government of

Ulster were disgusted at such "pandering to the Fenians". The Catholic-British alliance however could not last. In 1970, a Conservative government was elected into power at Westminster under Edward Heath. Heath responded to suspicions that the Catholics of Belfast were gathering guns by ordering a house-to-house search in the Falls area. The Catholics resisted the intrusion and as a result, the Army carried out the search with the use of C.S. gas and after shooting down ten civilians.

By March 30, 1972, the Heath government had decided to take the security of Northern Ireland into its own hands and the Stormont Parliament was prorogued. By this time, the alienation of the Catholic population had been completed. This was achieved by two events which have been amongst the most portentous in Ireland's sad history.

On August 9, 1971, Westminster imposed the policy of internment in Ulster. At once prominent I.R.A. members and influential figures within the Catholic community were dragged from their homes and subjected to the most brutal interrogations and torture. Internment was in camps hardly distinguishable from Dachau or Belsen. It would be difficult to overestimate the folly of this policy which overnight transformed the Army into a hated occupation force and the I.R.A. into national heroes and martyrs.

However a second event had more immediate emotional impact. On January 30, 1972, a British paramilitary

unit shot dead thirteen civilians on a Londonderry street. All were Catholics and none was armed. Now the wheel had turned full circle. The Army, called in to quell Protestant attacks, had also turned on the Catholic minority. It had become evident that only the I.R.A. could offer some protection from the combined assaults of the British Army and Protestant armed units.

The I.R.A. has gained something of a mystique through press and television reports. Films portray "secret" meetings of BBC staff with I.R.A. personnel in places unbeknown to the British Army. Yet the I.R.A. has been a mouthpiece of the Catholic population for the past fifty years. Nurtured on segregated schooling which renders every Catholic a potential "republican", it has always been dedicated to reuniting Ireland and ending economic dependence and connections with the British mainland.

In 1969 however, a fundamental split occurred in the republican movement between those who desired some form of compromise with the British government and wished to form a "National Liberation Front" and those who refused to accept British rule on any terms. The latter group became known as the "Provisional I.R.A." or "Provos" and they have been rather misleadingly referred to as the "rightist" faction as opposed to the marxist-oriented Official I.R.A.

In fact, recent events have shown that it is the Provos who have developed the real basis within the urban Catholic communities. Members are often

amongst the poorest social strata of Ulster and this is in a province which is economically controlled by the Protestants. Many Catholics condemn the terrorism of the Provisional I.R.A. which has led to a prolonged bombing campaign in English cities and to the deaths of Mountbatten and Tory Shadow Cabinet Minister Airey Neave. They are however in direct agreement with the long-term goal: the removal of the British Army and the artificial border which divides Ireland.

It is unfortunate that the I.R.A. should resort to tactics which deny it a voice on the world stage. Its policies carry the only solution to Ulster's predicament. By removing the Army and reuniting Ireland, Britain could at one stroke give this troubled country a chance to develop. In turn, the subservience of the Dublin government to Westminster through economic connections would have to be ended. The solution demands an enlightened government in London.

However, Ulster's short-term future appears very bleak. Once again, the Catholics are faced with the government which introduced internment, this time under a prime-minister who could at best be described as "hostile". The Army is being reinforced and the Ulster Unionists dominate the Irish "lobby" in the House of Commons. One cannot condone Irish terrorism, but one can at least understand why it is taking place. It is the outlet when all doors have been closed, when discussion has become pointless. Such is the case with the Catholics of Ulster.