

What happened to discipline?

By Richard J. Needham

The waves are interesting, but what really counts is the tide; the trees are pretty, but what you're looking at is the forest. The Toronto transit strike fills the papers, but it can only be understood within the context of what's happening throughout the English-speaking world—the collapse of discipline in our public and private institutions, the dimming and disappearance of authority. Who's in charge around here? Nobody, so things are gradually falling apart.

We have so-called authorities, to be sure. But none of them has the power to get the TTC rolling for the benefit of the public which in theory owns it. This is not a new development, but has been building up slowly throughout my lifetime. Confronted with an individual situation—one man refusing to drive a bus—our rulers can and do act. Confronted with a mass situation—6,000 men refusing to drive all buses, all street cars, all subway trains—they're as helpless as kittens.

If people like Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey feel badly over this, they've lots of company. From London to Los Angeles, from Miami to Montreal, the men and women supposedly in charge of things are losing control—partly, I think, because of their own timidity and indecision; partly because the populace at large has been encouraged, even instructed, to think it has the right to do exactly as it pleases. The concept of men having duties, loyalties, responsibilities, went out the window long since—taking along with it stability, order, continuity.

In the New York Times this week, I read about the funeral of Arnold Roth, a saintly, much beloved Jewish cobbler on the

Lower East Side, fatally mugged as he sat in a chair outside the little store which supported him, his mother and his two sisters. Rabbi Elias Hefter said at the service, "New York has become a battleground. The only difference is that on a battlefield both sides are armed. Here, one side is armed and the other is completely defenceless. It is the duty of the city officials to call in the National Guard and have an armed soldier posted on every corner so as to prevent any more killings."

What makes the rabbi think armed soldiers can maintain order on the streets of New York? As I read the American papers and magazines, the armed forces of that country have trouble maintaining order within their own ranks. Muggings have become routine at the U.S. Marine base on Okinawa, with new arrivals warned to go about in pairs. Wherever the U.S. has soldiers and sailors, at home or abroad, there are serious problems with drugs, with desertion, with alcohol, with racial friction (the U.S. Army is now 25 per cent black) and particularly with discipline. General Patton, where are you?

At the close of the Vietnam war—or rather, of American participation therein—Col. Robert Heintz reported in the Armed Forces Journal, "By every conceivable indicator, our army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and non-commissioned officers, drug-ridden and dispirited where not near-mutinous."

More recently (July, 1974), Donald Smith reported in The Atlantic on the new all-volunteer

army which came into being after the draft was abolished in January of last year. It's a loosely run, soft-living medley of mercenaries, with high pay and enlistment bonuses, with low standards of entrance. Only half the recruits now entering got through high school, and 15 per cent have great difficulty reading and writing. Mr. Smith quotes a much-decorated Vietnam veteran as saying, "The army would fall apart if it had to go into combat now. We're a third-rate military power, and the officers are afraid to say anything because they're running scared."

That's just another part of the jigsaw puzzle. You could add many, many more parts—Rochdale, Kenora, James Bay, the calamitous Yonge Street Mall, Britain's long slide into bankruptcy, Detroit's 800 murders a year, Patti Hearst, the horrors of Watergate, galloping inflation, galloping interest rates, galloping crime and disorder. Put them all together, and you've got the general picture of what's happening in the English-speaking world. In the short span of 30 years we've gone from strength and discipline to weakness and irresponsibility.

Yes, indeed, the U.S. has a brand-new President; and Pierre Trudeau is back with a clear majority in Parliament; and Harold Wilson may get a clear majority on his next go-round. But it seems to me the matter goes an awful lot deeper than politics; it goes all the way down to morals, and doesn't that word terrify you? Politicians may be able to solve a political problem, they may (though I gravely doubt it) be able to solve an economic problem, but we can't expect them to solve a moral problem. They're a built-in part of it.

Brian Paulsen Exhibition

A one-man show of 26 acrylic paintings by American artist Brian Paulsen will be on display at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery during the entire month of November. This exhibition, organized by Confederation Centre Art Gallery and Museum of Charlottetown, is being circulated to members of the Atlantic Provinces Art Gallery Association.

Paulsen was born in Seattle, Washington in 1941. From 1971 to 1973, he taught at the University of Calgary. He is presently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Fine Arts at the University of North Dakota.

Brian Paulsen's paintings combine the technique of the comic strip artist with the imagery of a Surrealist such as Magritte or de Chirico. A reliance upon heavy outline and large areas of flat colour impart a deceptive simplicity of his work on initial viewing. Upon closer scrutiny, one discerns a huge, partially-con-

structed canoe emerging from the side of a half-completed house; a street with cars, houses and mountains made from flat wood blocks; the shadow of a man with a dagger poised; and elaborate wooden constructions reminiscent of medieval torture machines all containing elements of threatened violence. These images are clearly drawn from the realm of the nightmare. It is not so much the images themselves, but their incongruous juxtapositions which account for the hallucinatory quality of his work.

The Brian Paulsen Exhibition is one of three travelling exhibitions being show at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery during November. Colville-Pratt-Forrestall, a Beaverbrook Art Gallery Extension Exhibition, and The National Gallery of Canada Exhibition - Bronfman Gift of Drawings (November 15 - December 15) will also be on display.

'The Hole' by N. F. Simpson:

an absurdist comedy put on by UNB Drama Society tonight and tomorrow

The Hole, a one act absurdist comedy, has its setting as an excavation hole in the middle of a road. Throughout the play various people approach the hole and express their feelings as to what they see in the hole, e.g. tennis matches, golf and-or ritual murders. Before long it becomes clear despite much of the absurd

dialogue that the hole is in itself a symbol of truth. The play also deals primarily with the freedom of individuals to be different, as opposed to the norm.

The Hole will be presented Nov. 7, 8 and 9 at 8:00 p.m. at Memorial Hall. Students get in free and others pay \$1.00.

.....and to the alligators



John Neville to star on CBC show

Actor-director John Neville, well-known for his stylish interpretations of classical drama on the English stage, first won recognition here when he toured with the Old Vic company in the late '50s. He returned in 1972 to direct Sheridan's *The Rivals* at the National Arts Centre, and last season was appointed artistic director for Edmonton's Citadel Theatre where he recently had his contract renewed for another three years.

Earlier this year he starred in a double bill at the NAC, and is presently touring *The Rivals* around Alberta.

Somewhere in between his hectic schedule, Neville found time to star in a 90-minute CBC Radio version of *All Soul's Night* by Irish short story writer and playwright, Joseph Tomelty. That production, directed by Fred Diehl, will be aired on CBC Tuesday Night, Nov. 12 at 8:03 p.m. EST (Thurs. Nov. 14 at 6:03 p.m. on CBC-FM).

The play was originally put on by the Ulster Group Theatre (which

Tomelty helped found) in 1950, and later by Dublin's famous Abbey Theatre; it was also broadcast by the BBC.

The setting for the play is the home of a County Down fishing family, and shows a social system and a way of life that survive to this day. The eternal verities are illuminated in a conflict between a penny-pinching mother and a son who eventually sacrifices his life for a chance to buy a boat that would make life safer and easier.

Co-starring in this CBC Radio drama is May Diver, who had an active career as an actress in Ireland before moving to Edmonton to teach handicapped children a couple of years ago. She approached her friend Tomelty for permission to tape this play. Others in the cast are Patricia Byrne, David Dunbar, Philip Whyte, Jack Warburton, and Hugh Swandell.

Special incidental music for *All Soul's Night* was composed and conducted by Lucio Agostini.

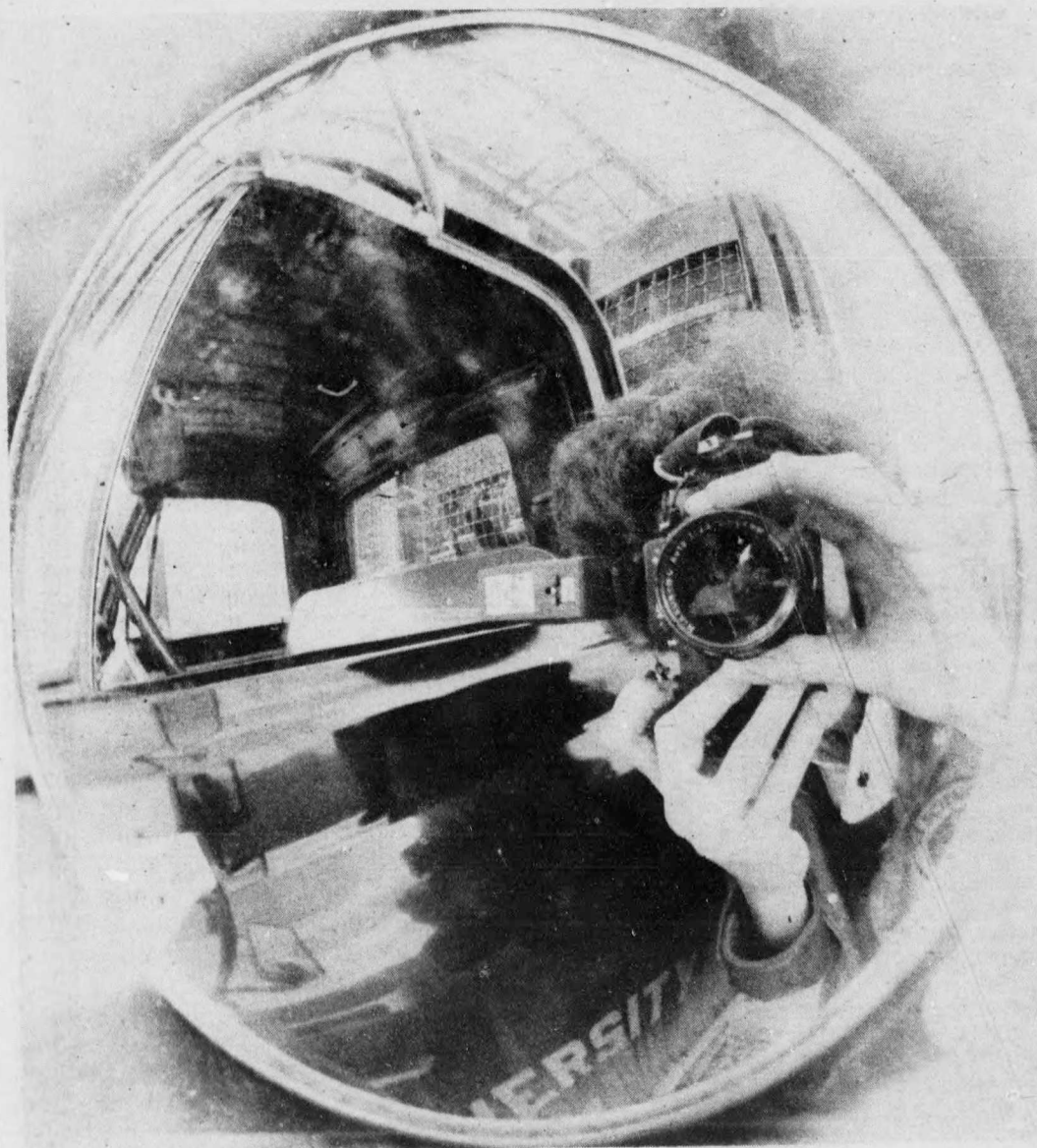


Photo by Steve Patrucco