

DEMOCRATIC SCIENCE

ON THE UNIVERSITY RIGHT

DEMOCRATIC SCIENCE (Part one)
by Joseph M.J. Sanlei

"Science", however little be it understood, must be taken down from the shelf of the ivory tower upon which it has rested since that day in 1945 when, over the skies of Japan, it was lowered from its pedestal. Science and scientists (and science students) must be brought into the greater human context and, becoming forever encompassed by it, must serve its needs selflessly, with regard only for the highest good in human terms and devoid of the present parochial concerns which, in the developed nations at least, have produced undesirable results that have slowed social and political progress and put in jeopardy the very survival of humankind. Social-Scientists (political scientists primarily among those) and historians must concentrate their own efforts as well in a united effort with the sciences in order to eradicate the present global political tensions and unjust socio-economic disparities of peoples which impede the technological progress of

the human race. Only with such a united effort, based upon mutual respect and a common primary concern in humanity, will the future of this planet hold promise.

As Joao F. daCosta, Secretary-General of the United Nations Comm. on Scientific and Technological Development (UNCSTD) has himself said:

"It would be entirely unrealistic to try to harness science and technology to confront global issues while ignoring the poverty and underdevelopment existing in the world...it is quite clear that global problems demand better political and economic relations in the world and broader scientific, technical and other forms of cooperation among all countries" It is of the highest order of ignorance for a person to either concern him or herself with an exclusive pursuit of knowledge within one academic discipline or another while ignoring either the scientific or broader political environment around us. Stratification, beginning in many universities (UPEI included), of students into tightly knit groups based upon scientific,

social-scientific, theological or business-world etc. interests to the exclusion of all others produces individuals with narrow perspectives who fall far short of the requirements of the ever more complex society of which they are a part. Developmental stagnation is an implicit component of such stratification; stagnation in both the development of the individual student of life and of the general progress of the human race, which could be much better served by more aware individuals. A more holistic approach to the socio-political, economic, psychological, spiritual and technological needs of humankind must replace the worn-out single-minded approaches to the immense problems confronting our planet and our race.

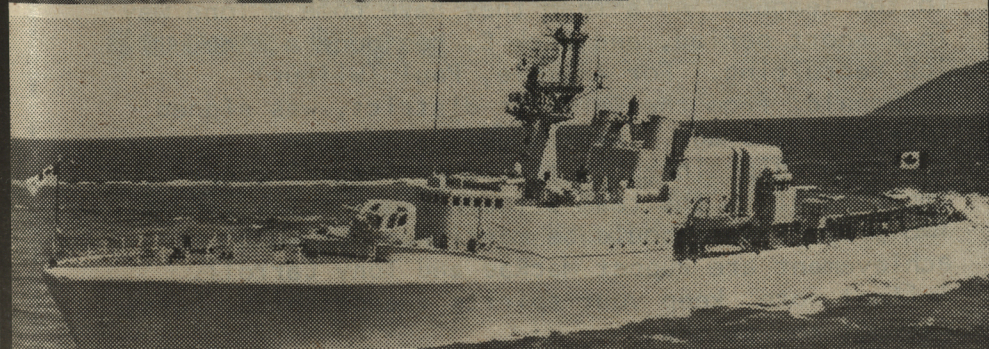
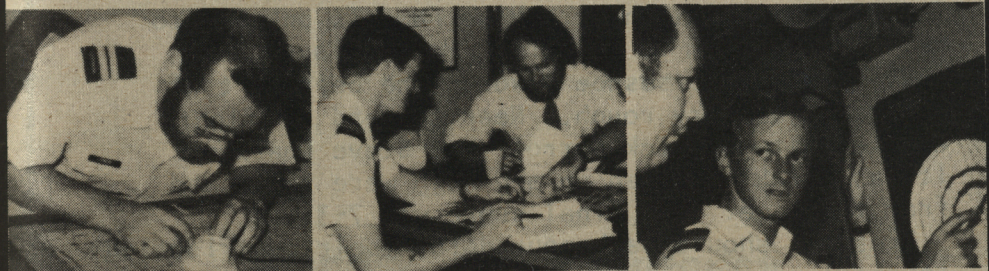
It is unfortunate that for the vast majority of us who are willing to expend our labor in academic pursuits, the complex nature of our world permits only the gaining of expertise in but one, or a few related areas of study. And it is nothing short of criminal that we seldom have interest outside the realm of our scholastic training; with stupid put-downs and abhorant self-glorification we all too often attempt to belittle areas of study alien to our own. Of the science student who does not have the time to "bother" him or herself with the "artsie" concerns of politics, economics etc; as well as the non-science student who exerts little effort in maintaining

awareness of the progression of the scientific world little good can be said and only pity extended.

Three-fourths of our world will go to sleep tonight still hungry from the morning and many will not live to see another day; poverty and economic disparity on an ever-widening level along with a growing worldwide militarism daily increase the danger to our collective survival. Leftist and rightist extremist threats to Liberal Democratic Freedoms as well as the growth of "Big Brother" governments and entirely self-interested multi-national corporations (although not all government business interests fit this description) endanger us all. No ivory tower can provide us with sanctuary.

Therefore, I am here proposing, as a partial solution to the growing threat to our collective self, a new approach to both the scientific and social-scientific environments in which we live. Science must (despite any and all protest of those who would foolishly consider themselves a "scientific aristocracy", shrouded in the "mystery" of it all) become democratic: id est, a tool of the earth's people seeking socio-economic development. Next week I hope to examine further the need for this democratic science and its implications for our future.

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THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES

UPEI STUDENT STRIKES SILVER



Walter Wilkins (Education) has won the silver medal in epee at the 6th Annual Lieutenant Governor's Challenge. The competition, a highlight of the fencing calendar, was held in Dartmouth, N.S., over the weekend. By placing in the top four, Wilkins qualified for the gala finals carried out in the presence of provincial and municipal dignitaries. This part of the tournament was recorded by local cable TV.

In the gala finals, Wilkins was able to retain his second place finish, but lost again to gold medalist Mick Dawson of Newfoundland. Wilkins competed also in

foil and placed seventh. This particular event was dominated by Quebec A class fencers who held on to the first three positions.

Wilkins has now captured two important epee awards this season. Previously, he placed first in the Nova Scotia Open. His impending success in the Newfoundland Open was cut short recently by an injury which prevented him from continuing the finals.

The Atlantic Club Team Tournament set for March 15 and 16 at UPEI and the PEI Fencing Championships are next. And then perhaps the Nationals in May.