

A REVIEW

ON THE UNIVERSITY RIGHT

by Joseph M.J. Sanlei

It is coincidental that as the first semester draws to a close, so too do we as a people bid farewell to the 1970's. The generation of which I am a member has grown up during this decade of paradox and contradiction. These last ten years have done much, as every decade tends to do, to change our perceptions of ourselves and our environment. Many of us unfortunately will ignore the real events of the 1970's, turning our attention instead to the insignificant and superfluous. Others will have become nihilistic and shall drown in the sea of their own selfish tears. Still others will have become narcissistic and probably contract the venereal disease of their own hedonism (remember V.D. causes blindness). Yet, a few of us will continue to fight to spread the good news that humanity is

endowed with Reason - and Reason demands Liberty - and Liberty demands perseverance.

In the seventies, we have seen the masses of humanity still suffering under the heavy mantles of one or another oppression. We have witnessed the agony of the boat people, until the media decided they were no longer "significant"; the genocide of Cambodia, until we became weary of hearing of it; the continuing exploitation of women, because we do not consider the Feminist cause "important" enough to ignite our righteous anger. We have tolerated (and even accepted) the continuation of a "racist" bigotry which rots our system and makes a mockery of our North

American Free Society. We have turned our eyes from the obvious wrongdoings of our supposedly "public" officials and yet we continue to make barroom complaints about the burden of corrupt government. We have confused shoddy pretensions usually under

the sanctification "avant garde", for art. We have been all too willing to prostitute ourselves, forsaking things such as "honest labor", "honor", "truth" and "compassion" and instead we sit with blank faces and minds and stare at the tube that has become the centre of our lives, or we get drunk and believe ourselves excused from civility itself and scream like the mindless animals we have degraded ourselves into being, in the sacristy of the bottle. And when we are confronted with all these things, we look for pat answers and snappy simplicities to explain away all of our woes.

So much of the 1970's was grand, so much was worthy of our highest praise; on a personal level, there are the memories of a multitude of days from this last decade that I shall take to my grave with fondness; but it is not the purpose of this column to be a happy facade over the reality of the world. I have dealt with many issues during the course of the last three months; I will deal with more next term, many of them indeed unpleasant, but if the weak-kneed cannot face reality, that is not my concern. I am concerned with those who are suffering, who because of our inaction, still suffer; the oppressed who, because of our apathy still face oppression; the hungry, who because of our callousness remain still to be exploited - these will not simply go away by pretending they do not exist, and until the eradication of these ills occurs, this column will serve to keep them in mind, in its own meager way, every week.

Only by hard work and selfless sacrifice on the part of us all will these blights upon the human soul be destroyed. Every man must become a Feminist and every woman must accept nothing less than her equality. Every person

must strike out with all the anger that is within the human nature to convey at all perversions of our sacred Liberty.

There must no longer be a place for any monarchy of crowned imposters. They have become anachronistic - humanity alone deserves a crown. Our labor must be immediately employed to bring all this about. In the words written from the cell in which he died, the martyred Dietrich Bonhoffer

(who was murdered by the Nazis as one of their final sins against a humanity that had failed to act soon enough to stop their demonic empire from ever being born and thereby acquiesced to the butchery which later ensued): "We have been silent witnesses of evil deeds; we have been drenched by many storms; we have learnt the arts of equivocation and pretence; experience has made us suspicious of others and kept us from being truthful and open; intolerable conflicts have worn us down and made us cynical. Are we still of any use? What we need are not geniuses, or cynics, or misanthrops, or clever tacticians, but plain, honest straightforward men and women. Will our inner power of resistance be strong enough, and our honesty with ourselves remorseless enough for us to find our way back to simplicity and straightforwardness?"

I do not yet know how to answer Dr. Bonhoffer's questions, but I know this - if we do not act soon, and act with all the power our souls can employ, we will revert not to the simplicity of the honest person, but to the cave from which our ancestors crawled. We will be left staring at our humanity, as a sailor stares at the mast in the night following the apparition known as St. Elmo's Fire, which when it is gone, leaves one wondering if it was ever really there at all.

Protestant Chaplaincy

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Proceeds will go to the Biology Club Scholarship Fund. The cost is 25 cents, but larger contributions would be gratefully received. We hope you'll make use of this service.