

# Justice 101—No Credit—Take Home and Decide Yourself

When looking back at what has happened over the past week and a half, one can become very disillusioned and confused. In my mind, the strike by the Maintenance workers and the theoretical Students Union Strike have brought to the fore many interesting and alarming facts about what all this strike business means.

Before I go any further I would just like to point out that there will always be strikes primarily because the underlying goals of the system we choose to live under are profit, growth, and competition. When these aims formulate the backbone of this so called rational system it is inevitable that there will be exploitation, oppression, and social injustice. This is the inner rationale of our system!

## ADMINISTRATION

The end of the S.U. strike culminated with a walk to the Premier's Office where the students were told they came to the wrong place. The question arises: Where is the University going to get money to pay the workers if the Administration is at present operating under a deficit? There is a commission set up amongst the 3 Maritime provincial gov'ts to allocate monies to each university. Close to 85% of the money granted to U.P.E.I. is in the form of grants, loans, capital investment, salaries, etc. Fees cover the rest of the operating budget which, when added up is in the area of \$5,500,000. So if the administration is to find the \$35,000 needed to assist in

their plea for an equitable settlement, they must either look for the money in their budget or go to the provincial government which gives the money to the Commission. The administration contents that they are operating under a deficit so the next place to put pressure is the Provincial government. Why did the Premier and the President of the University say that the Student Union came to the wrong place? Why can't money that is donated for capital be transferred to where it is really needed - in operating? Mainly because you must profit from an investment. If the money is given to the maintenance workers the money invested is wasted.

Another reason that comes to mind when trying to find out why the administration won't comply with union demands is that if they give the union what it wants, they will have to give the clerical workers an equivalent increase or else they will go on strike too. And who knows, the faculty might even want a raise in the near future. Giving the maintenance workers what they want will initiate a snowball effect that would engulf the other sectors of the university. If the university complies with the maintenance demands then the division of labour which presently exists will get narrower. But wait a minute. Don't we have to have a fantastic division of labour? Isn't it acceptable that some people make \$20,00 - 35,000 while others make \$6,200? Isn't this justice? Why, if everyone got paid the same wage for utilizing his talents to the ut-

most there would be no profit, no competition, no exploitation, no injustice, and NO STRIKE.

## STUDENTS AND FACULTY

If the meeting that was held a week ago last Sunday night had had 1000 students and 100 faculty present, I am convinced that this strike would have been settled very quickly. However as we have seen there is a tremendous division among the faculty and students as to what course of action should be taken. It is fairly evident that 150 people cannot dictate what 1450 will do. So while this temporary boycott of classes was a great step forward in aid of a just cause it also proved how divided this 'university community' is. Together we stand, divided we fall. A divided effort on the part of students and faculty therefore had very little impact in alleviating this present situation. A friend of mine once told me never to let education interfere with learning. For example, you cannot teach justice, one has to discover what it is. One has to see, feel, and touch it. Are we really learning here in academia or are we just preoccupying ourselves with meaningless information that further perpetrates a system of injustice. It is vital we educate ourselves to the needs and demands of the day. How can this feat be accomplished, though when marks, salaries, and the quest for the "good life" are more important than justice? Let's face it, we are presently being prepared to go out into the world and make the Almighty Dollar, as well as compete, compare, consume, and satisfy our temporary lust for material whims and wishes. So, will today's student picketeers be tomorrow's administrators, subject to the same binds that the present administration is in vis a vis the maintenance workers demands? Will today's student or faculty picketeers consistently respond to the call for justice or will he or she follow the Pied Piper because it's the thing to do and just have another good time? i.e. march on the Premier's office.

## UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

The following is a paraphrase of Pedro Arrupe.

The man who lives only for his own interests not only provides nothing for others; he does worse. He accumulates in exclusive fashion more and more knowledge, more and more power, more and more wealth, thus denying, inevitably, to those weaker than himself the proper share of the God-given means for Human Development. What is it to humanize the

world but to put it at the service of mankind. But the egotist not only does not humanize the material creation, he dehumanizes men themselves. He changes men into things by dominating them, exploiting them, and taking unto himself the fruits of their labour. The tragedy of all this is that the egotist in the process dehumanizes himself as well. He surrenders himself to the possessions he covets; he becomes their slave - no longer a person self-possessed but a creature driven by his blind desire for these objects. But when we dehumanize and depersonalize ourselves in this way, something stirs within ourselves. We feel frustrated. In our hearts we know that what we have is nothing compared to what we are, what we can be, what we would like to be, what we should be. We would like to be ourselves. But we dare not break the vicious circle. We think that we can overcome our frustrations by striving to have ever more and more. We thus turn our lives in to a competitive rat race of ambition, competition, and self-destruction which twists and expands increasingly with the result that we are ever more chained to a progressive and progressively frustrating dehumanization. How do we escape from this vicious cycle? Clearly the whole process has its roots in egotism; in the denial of love. But to try and live in love in a world where the prevailing climate is egotism and injustice, where egotism and injustice are built into the very fabric of society - is this not a fruitless and possibly suicidal undertaking?

Do not allow yourself to be overcome by evil but rather overcome evil with good. Are we not living a contradiction if we choose to annihilate the aggressor with his own weapons. If you fight fire with fire, both sides get burned. Hence evil is only overcome by good, hate by love, egotism by generosity. It is in this manner that we may now sow justice in our world. To be just, it is not enough to refrain from injustice. One must go further and refuse to play the game, substituting love for self-interest as the driving force of society.

The question I now ask is this: Is the very survival of humanity still considered a Utopian hope? Or a possible reality? Hopefully, there is hope because what is considered Utopian can indeed be substituted for what we presently have. In essence, society will never change unless we as individuals do.

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