

# THE RIGHT

\*By W. F. P. Ringle

The rightwing is by definition paranoid. Unable to understand human beings, and how oppressive structures affect people, they must invent conspiracy theories.

But what of radicals? Is there necessarily to be a paranoia for the malso, especially at a time when repression appears to be on the increase? It is possible to rationalize leftist paranoia in "Reaction(ary) theory". Some leftists can argue, articulately, that their political oppression legitimizes a defensive paranoia.

The Right is paranoid. I suspect that many radicals misunderstand paranoia. Paranoia is the turning inward, the escalation, and the projection of fear. The reason for fear, in itself, may be quite valid. We have stayed alive as a species greatly because we have known when we are endangered. But fear turned into protection never aided anyone to survive. Let us therefore get our feet on the ground and understand the fears about the authoritarian and oppressive system in which we live.

First, why are some radicals so fearful that their real, and sometimes, unreal fears are turned into projections? For one thing the new radicals and reformers of North America have only lately been introduced to the police. The lower classes, including minorities, have from birth learned to survive, though not too successfully, from the police because they have had to. The middle classes (I am thinking of the student "turn ons" and student reformers) have only lately been "introduced" to the police and have thus imagined this to be a new thing.

Don't misunderstand me. Student reformers do need a strategy for dealing with the latent police state in this country. But that strategy won't develop from paranoia.

Second, what can be done to enable people to treat the fear for what it is? How are student and other reformers to deal with their real fear in a way that aids them to organize for an "open society"?

One thing is to understand the liberal legal rights on which they can depend, at least for now. Conversely they need to understand the power of the State, including potential political uses of the laws. They also need to understand the police ideology which operates in this society.

Another thing is to develop a more reliable method of communicating within the student reform movement. In the past, myth, rumour and romanticism has made it difficult to know what is really happening. Though state capitalism needs mythology to function, human beings desperately need to know what is happening to them. Part of the quest for self determination is to understand, well, what things actually or potentially affect us, and how.

Lastly the student movement needs explicit tactics for dealing with informers and plants. And a good strategy is worth a thousand defensive actions.

Now let me get on with an analysis of some of the reasons for fear becoming paranoia. Self-criticism and self-knowledge is on the side of the reformers. Satori is something those who man the state, and their agents, will never have.

Canadian students who are working for educational and social reforms are increasingly coming into contact with the police. Once people become conscious of how the structure and function of an institution (the "multiversity" in this case) relates to society at large (monopoly capitalism) their reforms begin to take on a radical character. This is now happening in Canada, hence the State is becoming directly concerned with the student movement. Consciousness among the people simply subverts the power of elites.

Increasing RCMP busts of students and youth are one indication of a growing reaction of the State to the reform movement. The RCMP has clearly been preparing, and equipping (e.g. Mace) through the continental market place, for this for the past while.

The reaction of students to the use of police in university matters, and their breaking up youth subcultures, has been somewhat naive. It has lacked an historic understanding of the political role of the police. This knowledge cannot be expected from "institutions of higher learning", which teach rhetoric and ignorance. Believing in liberal rhetoric ("peace officers") only to find it unbelievable, and having no knowledge of past political struggles and the use of police in them, makes for a paranoid reaction rather than a strategic response.

It would take a very large book to document the political role of police in our history. When one analyzes one social system, in comparison to another, all police action takes on a political role in that it serves to preserve certain social and economic relationships. In our case the police are used to maintain the system of control and authority of state capitalism, and the "rights" that have evolved as this system grew out of the feudal ages. Only now, with educational institutions becoming central the monopoly capital, are police required to put down students. Until now they have mainly been used to oppress organized labour, and the minority groups that have resisted capitalist industrialization. Looking at this past oppression can give us perspective on the growing oppression of student reformers in this country.

(\* This is a pen name for the author, who is a university teacher in Saskatchewan, Canada.)

## Sir George damage not in proper perspective

By John Kastner

from the Toronto Telegram

An open letter to the good, upright citizens who are blowing their tops over the computer-wrecking students at Sir George Williams University:

Dear Moms and Dads: A while back I wrote an account of how the Florida adults were out to get their young people — as demonstrated by a series of hostile acts culminating in a proposed state law to have every teenager fingerprinted.

Now, judging from similarly-growing adult hostility here, culminating in the howl of outrage over the Sir George Williams incident, it seems clear that Canadians, too, are out to get their young.

Good citizens, for you to lecture us about lawlessness is the most unbelievable sort of hypocrisy. It has often been suggested there is one law for the rich and another for the poor; there is obviously one for the old and another for the young as well.

Every day the hoary fathers of big business, government and the legal establishment itself, commit or permit the most flagrant possible abuses of the law, without ever raising the puritanical fury you've unleashed at the students.

Take those recent revelations of price-fixing by American drug companies. Two weeks ago, five U.S. firms offered to make a settlement in a price-fixing case that has been dragging on for 11 years now.

The drug was produced for 1.6 cents per capsule and sold for 51 cents; finally after all those years of ring-around-the-rosy in the courts, the firms have offered to pay \$120,000,000 in some 100 civil suits.

At that, it's only a fraction of the profits they have made from the overpriced drugs. But in this case and countless others like it, we have heard no yowls of indignation from you, oh dear, upright elders. The viciousness of making money from illness, at the expense of countless sick persons, many of whom may have gone without the drug because they couldn't afford it or else suffered heavy financial loss in paying for it — the ethics here, and the toll in human suffering, don't seem to have disturbed your sanctimonious lethargy one whit.

We noticed no loud demands for the arrest of the erring drug company executives. Not that the really big spoilers always escape the heavy hand of the law, mind you. In another staggering profiteering scandal a few years ago, involving \$350,000,000 in civil suit, seven electrical company executives did spend all of 30 days in jail — about what a student demonstrator would get for obstructing a policeman. Now, there's blind justice for you.

But for the 93 computer-smashing students, you cry, 14 years in jail — the maximum — is none too good. After all, they attacked that holiest of holies — property; i.e., the computer. When the industrialists indulge in price-fixing, the only ones hurt are people.

What example have you set for the students at Sir George Williams to teach them the law is not to be bent whenever they choose? What makes a supposedly exemplary bunch of young people "go wrong?" Outside agitators, you thunder, I suggest they didn't need to look outside, not with the example of the seven jailed electrical company executives — all of them described by character witnesses as "exemplary citizens," noted for their charity work.

How do you choose your great moral issues, my revered elders? Do you ignore them if they involve your contemporaries? Is it a question of being too overawed to yell when a huge corporation is involved?

Or is it just that it's so

much easier to get all indignant and upright over that old, favorite scapegoat — the reckless, ruthless young?

Some of you are fond of softening the anti-youth criticism by pointing out that "bad egg" student leaders are an unrepresentative minority of youth. Unfortunately, the same doesn't seem to be true for your bad eggs. They're fairly evenly distributed in all the most important levels of your society — and you, by turning a blind eye to them, become accessories to their lawlessness.

And now, at the trial of the Sir George Williams students, young Canada will sample your justice. We have a pretty good idea what to expect. Recently, the young editor of a hippie newspaper in Vancouver was punished by the law for describing a magistrate as "Pontius Pilate."

Last Friday this newspaper ran a column about the Sir George students, with the headline, Our Hitler Youth. Went to take bets the courts won't punish anybody for that tasteless — and possibly slanderous — piece of description?

## 19 Students Contest Alberta Student President Election

EDMONTON (CUP) — Student council elections have always been complicated — they usually hinge on campaign promises for larger dances and more carnivals.

But, at the University of Alberta, the alphabet becomes all important.

That is rapidly shaping up as the only way to differentiate candidates for student present here — all 19 of them.

Last year, Marilyn Pilkington won by acclamation. This year, 19 people want to replace her.

One candidate is running on a "faith, hope and charity" campaign, while another wants better quality ping pong balls in the games room.

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