

IN DEFENSE OF CONFORMITY

By DOUGLAS E. McLEOD

There seems to be so much talk today about conformity that I thought I might as well get in on the act. The books written on conformity are usually by the "probers of society" who are characterized by a persuading dismay at the trends which are becoming evident in our culture. These scriptors talk about the sheep, the mass man, the organization man, the status seeker, the "unproductive element" in society, the crowd, the unfeeling mob, the victims of mass media, the unthinking, other directed mass.

This is really nothing new; Observers of society from the Greeks to our present day have been concerned with the mores of society, and their expression in art, music, literature, religion, government and education.

There were satirists in Greek literature, Roman, Renaissance, Post Renaissance, Victorian, and they are still around in our Modern Times to act as a "thorn in the side." These are people who refuse to let us be satisfied with our society; by their exaggerated emphasis on the weaker side of human nature, they ignore or brush-off as inconsequential the fruits of human endeavour which are wholesome and worthy of praise.

It began in our modern times with Kierkegaard who saw men giving up their individuality and freedom to forget themselves in conformity, the crowd, material wealth, pleasure.

Nietzsche, called the prophet of the twentieth century, envisioned a time when man would become so forgetful of his "true nature" that he would no longer be able to dispise even himself. When that time comes, says Nietzsche, the man who feels he is different from others "will voluntarily take himself to the madhouse." Now surely this is an exaggerated point of view.

The modern disectors of North American society such as Riesman, Sorokin, Linder, Gordon, Packard, and so on, simply give sociological weight to the conclusions of the philosophers.

We must, however, accept their conclusions with a grain of salt. It sometimes happens that in their investigations into society, they have already started with certain conclusions; their soundings are simply used to back up peculiar and one-sided views on society and culture.

We, however, being more enlightened, are aware of the tremendous values to be found in conformity. Man is a social animal and anything which contributes to "togetherness and "sociability" are certainly desirable.

Take for instance in the field of education. It is certainly more beneficial to have students follow and adopt the same ideas and attitudes—it makes for intellectual clarity and universality. Communication on the intellectual level is a great deal easier if we use the same vocabulary and express the same ideas and opinions; there is no need to make learning unnecessarily complicated.

Turning to entertainment, we can see again the advantages of conformity. It is not easier to judge art in this field if we have

all been conditioned in the same way? The artist then knows what the individuals of society accept as artistic and acts accordingly. We have only to turn to television, radio, the stage, films to see the advantages which conformity contributes. Would it not be frustrating to watch a film, or a play which we could not understand or judge? Such frustration is completely uncalled for; there should be no innovations which tax our individual testhetic tastes. That is why the innovators, for example, the promoters of the avant-grade in the theatre are having such a difficult time. It is only right that we should pooh-pooh their "creative efforts."

The levelling of the members of our society to the point where all think and do the same things is psychologically healthy. What a state of affairs it would be if we were being constantly subjected to new ideas, or interpretations. This could cause intellectual frustration in the attempt to arrive at a synthesis, which as we know is hardly necessary and quite unprofitable. Such a sythesis would contribute little to our social life, to our image in society, to our acquisition of near and dear friends.

There is a trend, however, creeping insidiously into our culture; it is manifested by the desire to take a second (and serious) look at the intellectual, the eccentric, the innovator. After reasonable consideration we conclude that such men are odd, misled, and selfish followers of their own ideas.

Living in a democracy we have fortunately learned to tolerate his works and his ideas. It seems there must always be those who "just have to be different"—it is probably some sort of neurotic drive.

This emphasis on profound intellectual knowledge to the extent that social life is, perhaps, hindered is not to be tolerated. We are, after all, social beings. The school which has the peculiar idea that it is simply meant to teach academic subjects while leaving the social development to the individual (the home, for example) is decidedly unenlightened. It is easy to see why we have such few schools of this nature—their raison d'être is, without a doubt built on shaky premises.

The probers of society, the pests who destroy our self-satisfaction and constantly criticize our morals, our so-called shabby ethics, our supposed obsession with sex, fail to realize that it is a stage of development, a stage we must go through to enrich our society—these are birth-pangs necessary to develop a sane, enlightened culture.

The works of these satirists must be looked upon simply as curiosities, the works of minds concerned with the supposed dilemma of modern society, the crisis which exists only in their imagination; besides, such works are profitable to the authors (helped considerably by the curious drive in man which makes him question). We should not discourage their efforts—we do need a certain amount of amusement and distraction—and their works serve a noble purpose in that they tickle our intellect and are really quite harmless in themselves.

The Apartheid

WHAT IS IT?

BY

KAREN KAUANA

In South Africa today there exists a ruthless policy of government, namely Apartheid. By this policy the government may completely dominate the Negro. It places him in a certain section of the government, he may lose his job and endanger himself or his family .The Government has also seen to it that the Negro has not become well educated. Most Negroes never complete grammar school and most schools are under state control.

In, 1959, two universities which had been previously open to all were put under state control by an act of Parliament. In 1960 about 200 Africans were refused admittance to these schools and six staff members were dismissed from one of them for destroying the Apartheid policy.

But in 1959, also, there was formed a South African Committee for Higher Education (SACHED) under the direction of Bishop Reeves. This committee finally formed a system of providing education for the Negroes. The students were tutored at one of the private universities and had a personal tutor in their weakest subjects. Only a two-week vacation was allowed yearly. The students, at the end of five or six years, received the Degree of the University of London. The courses cost each student approximately £100 yearly. Part-time jobs were also found for the student who could not afford to study on a full-time basis. These jobs gave the students experience in such fields and provided social contact for them, which they severely lacked.

There are other international organizations which have been attempting to help the Negro in his struggle for education and freedom. These are: The Coordinating Secretariat of the National Union of Students (COSEC), an administrative and technical agency of the International Students' Conference (ISC), which offers scholarships and trust funds to South African students; and the World University Service (WUS), an international student and university organization, which provides many opportunities, for the non-white students in South Africa to gain a university education.

These South African people should be allowed the same rights and privileges as the whites. If you were to let one of the natives see a modern American home, he would be bewildered; these people live in the past. The present can be made open to them by means of an education. Some of our greatest minds may be contained in this mass of people. What can be accomplished by letting them be dormant?

A C R O S S THE CANADIAN C A M P U S

Memorial University:

A house committee has been formed on Campus to curb the unnecessary littering of the student facilities. Dr. W. F. Summers, chairman of the Committee, attributes this untidiness to the carelessness and thoughtlessness of a few particular students and he hopes that this committee will not have to resort to disciplinary action.

University of Alberta:

Graduate students working towards their masters' degrees are required to pay a \$14 Students' Union fee, Mr. George Baird, speaking on behalf of the Graduates Students' Association, argued that they should not have to pay the fee because they do not wish to take part in Students' Union Activities, stating that they would withdraw their support if such a motion was passed.

Mount Allison University:

Stuart Goodings, national president of NFCUS was officially welcomed at Mount A, at a special meeting of the S.R.C. He explained that the main aims of NFCUS were education and communication and these are achieved only if a student feels both a responsibility to himself and society to be well-informed about what's going on in the other universities and that it is up to each student to take part in NFCUS.

Assumption University:

There has been a breakdown in the Communications between the clubs on campus and the students. This was the main problem faced by most of the clubs on campus after an unsuccessful "Club Week," in which only four of the clubs took an active part. There seems to be a need for a closer cooperation between these clubs and S.A.C. and if this can be done then the students can be properly informed of the activities open to them.

Ryerson Institute:

A successful "Riot" was held on the stage of the newly revamped Ryerson Theatre. Mr. H. H. Kerr, principal of Ryerson, said that the skits were topical and well written.

BULLETIN BOARD

The Social Committee of the Student's Union is tentatively planning Friday evening Socials to take place between 7:30 and 10:30. These Socials will consist of a number of activities ranging from bridge to volleyball. It will give students a chance to get together in mental and physical relaxation.

Discussions are in progress concerning the inauguration of a two year teacher-training course instead of the old one-year system, beginning the fall of 1963. It is hoped that this two-year course will raise the teaching standards on the Island which will raise the calibre of the elementary and secondary education. Those wishing further information should check through the bursar's office.

Information concerning new scholarships and job opportunities may be found in the library. This should be of special interest to those students interested in taking post-graduate studies.

A notice from the Dean of Men has been given stating that resident students who refuse to comply with the order to park their cars in the area already designated, i.e., north of the Gymnasium and west of the Rink will have the permission to keep a car on campus recinded and will be fined.

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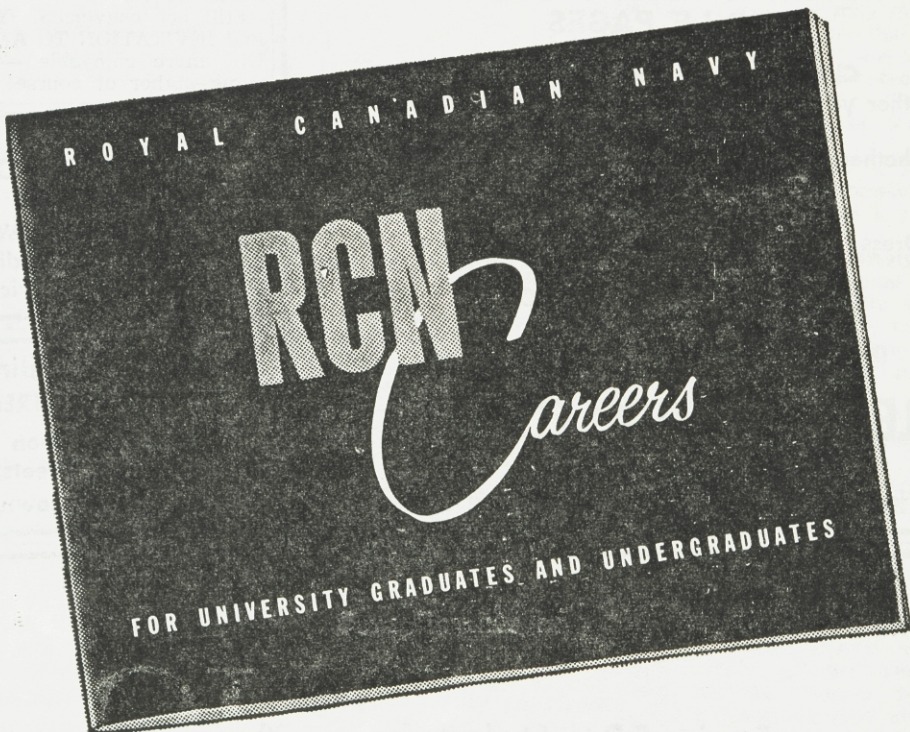
Les Libéraux gardent le pouvoir

La Province de Quebec fait vraiment parler d'elle ces mois-ci: il y a quelque temps, elle etait creditiste, et voila qu'aux recentes elections provinciales, elle est entierement liberale. C'est a savoir ou elle veut en venir.

Ce resultat donne suite a ce que j'enoncais dans l'article du numero precedent, disant que: "Les Quebecois, apres avoir vote Credit Social, retourneraient aux vieux partis." Nous en avons la preuve avec la reelection du chef liberal Jean Lesage. La Province francaise du Canada, a trouve dans la doctrine de cet homme une reponse a leur exigences: former une province mure, integre, capable de pourvoir a ses besoins, pour en arriver a une autonomie saine.

Les Quebecois ont eu la chance de juger les Libéraux pendant les deux ans qu'ils furent au pouvoir et ils savaient a quoi s'en tenir. Pour une fois, ils furent approuves par d'autres provinces dans leur choix: le premier ministre de l'Ontario lui-meme a fait l'eloge de M. Lesage, affirmant qu'il voyait en lui un homme apte a continuer la lignee des Laurier et des St. Laurent. En d'autres mots, on juge le Premier Ministre Quebecois comme ayant les capacites necessaires pour occuper le poste de "Leader" du parti liberal.

On a meme demande a M Lesage, s'il etait interesse a retourner a Ottawa: sa reponse fut breve, mais remplie de sens: "mais, pourquoi." Pour le moment, Lesage semble trop interesse au bien-etre de la Province pour porter son attention ailleurs. Tombera-t-il en decadence, sera-t-il renie comme la plupart de nos premiers ministress dans le passe? L'avenir nous le dira.



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