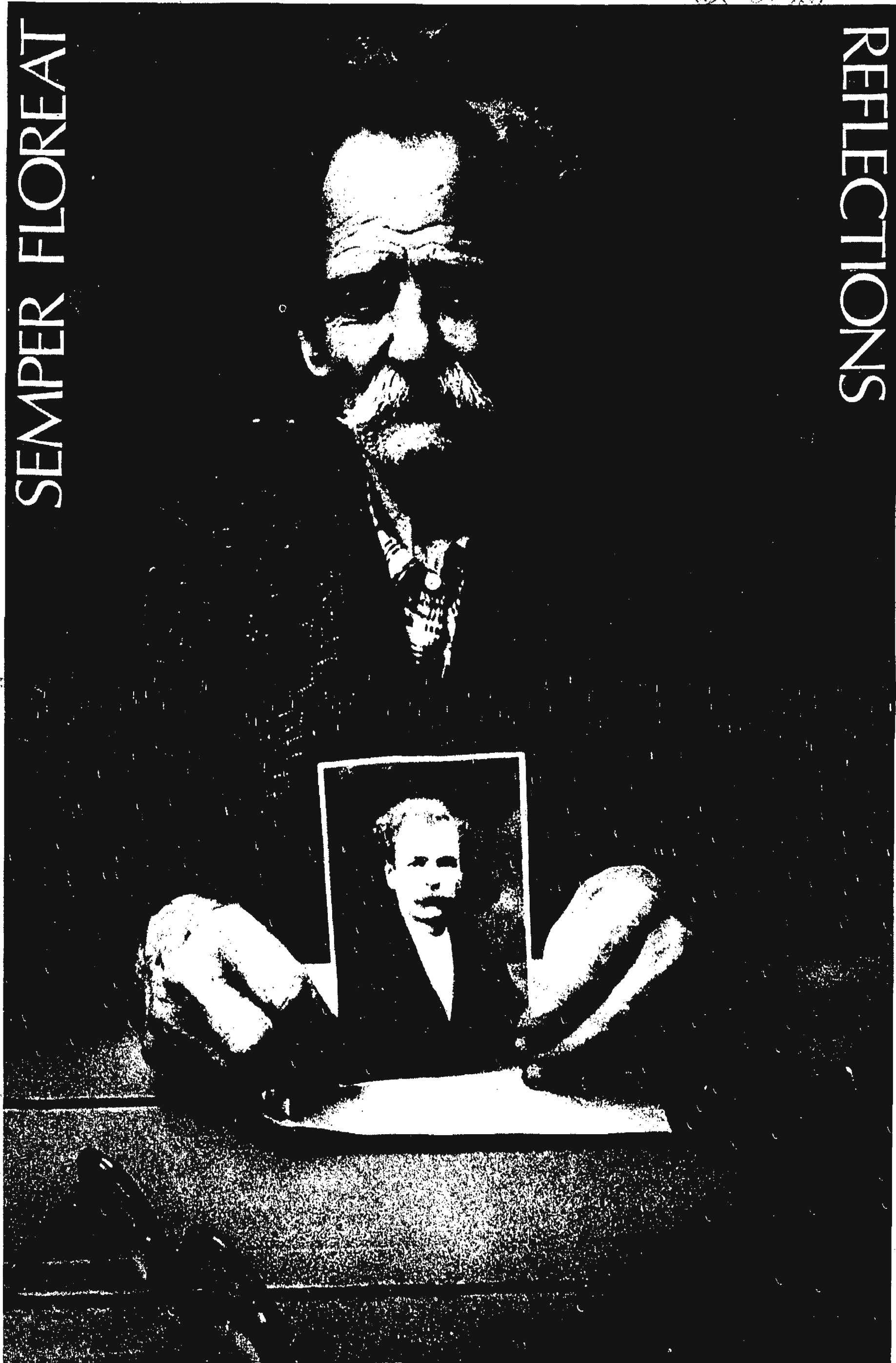


SEMPER FLOREAT 1974 news/magazine of the union  
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SEMPER FLOREAT

REFLECTIONS



In this, the final issue of Semper Floreat for 1974, we examine the growth and changing nature (some would say 'decline') of the Movement of the Left at this University; and seek to understand what kind of political future we face on a National and World scale. The Vietnam War is by no means finished, and both America and Australia continue in their support for the corrupt Saigon Regime, in violation of the Paris Peace Agreements of 1973. The University Master Plan continues to astound with its unimaginative and dangerous ideas of multi-level car parking to be implemented by 1984 (?).

# A DECADE BEING REFLECTION REVIEWED AND PROPHECY UPON THE LONG MARCH OF THE RADICAL MOVE- MENT WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION  
bruce dickson

The main intent behind conducting these interviews was to offer to those students and staff who were not present during the relatively exciting events of the sixties an opportunity to hear from people who played a role in the actions of that era. These people were asked to reflect on the significance of those days and also to contribute their current views on the state of our society. (Their answers are in response to a common set of questions published herein.)

The people I invited to participate in the interviews were logical choices. They were chosen from:

(a) those who had been most vitally involved in the radical movement right from its earliest years. Among the names that immediately came to mind here were Dan O'Neill, Peter Wertheim, Brian Laver, Mitch Thomson and Peter Thompson, all of whom in my view comprised the backbone of the movement then (regardless of whether they may feel it correct or desirable for themselves to be described in such a manner).

From this group, Dan O'Neill and Peter Wertheim were readily available to participate and their responses are published on the pages that follow. In addition, the views of Merle Thornton who has been politically active in Brisbane for many years are included.

And (b), other people on campus at the time who might present a different perspective because of the varied positions from which they were able to view the proceedings — in this case — Bob Wensley and Professor Webb.

As it turned out only five interviews were able to be included even though six were sought, with the result that the perspective of one intellectually important and active on-going group on campus has been lost because they declined to participate. (This was unfortunate when it is considered that another intention of the interviews was to initiate a new dialogue amongst those persons still active politically.)

One other factor became a major consideration in gaining the participation of Dan, Peter and Merle. Even though the old radical movement of which they were a part has broken up, all three have continued to exhibit a positive spirit in their approach to life and its problems. They continue to recognize the vital need for greater effort to be directed towards achieving radical social change.

Why the possession of such a spirit should even be an important consideration I feel can be understood once it is known and recognized where many of the once

active members of the radical movement have disappeared to, and what changes in their approaches to life have occurred since leaving the movement.

—Many of the "ex-radicals" who were once part of a movement which Dr Jim Cairns believed to be politically very significant and which had been described elsewhere as the most serious and intellectually advanced in Australia, can now be found most nights engaging in the pursuit of pleasure either by

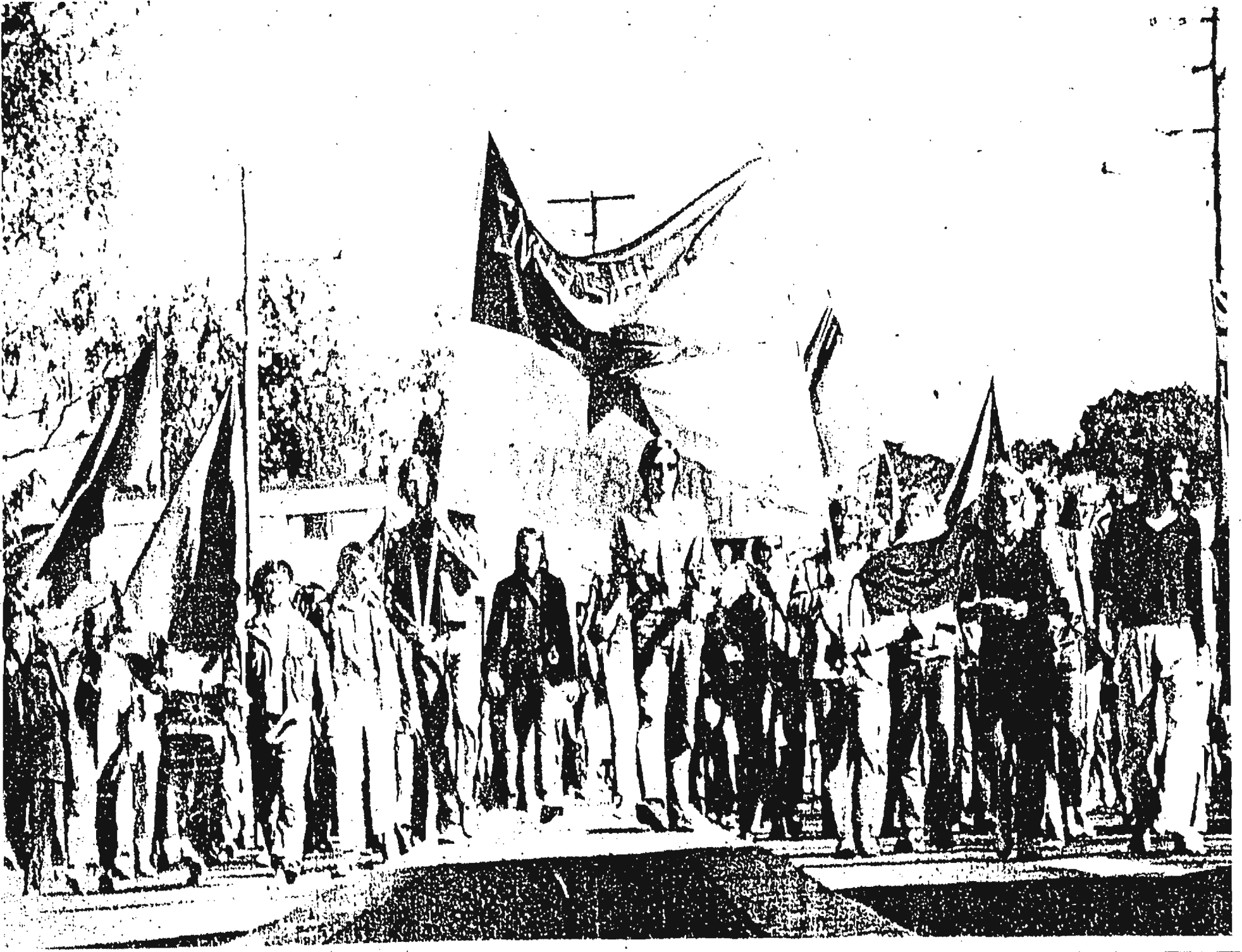
- (1) guzzling beer in the Royal Exchange Hotel,
- OR(2) perpetually talking of how "bad" Brisbane is rather than changing it
- OR(3) rumour mongering over 'who has fucked who' and under what circumstances, or alternatively finding enjoyment in other people's unhappiness difficulties or problems,
- OR(4) discovering where the next "rort" (party) is on — NB, a "party" becomes a "rort" as soon as this crowd turns up,
- OR(5) glorifying "madness", being a "fucked person", a "degenerate" etc because by doing so they can attempt to rationalize away any more realistic assessment of what they really are doing with their lives,
- OR(6) interacting with each other on the most superficial of levels. This being true regardless of whatever outward impression a casual observer may gain when looking at the incestuous nature of their lifestyle,
- OR(7) engaging in constant "put downs" and cynical, non-creative thinking or otherwise whatever else is necessary to avoid facing up to themselves and what they have become, i.e., in general, developing whatever mental states they can find which remove them further from the possibility of introducing changes which could transform their whole vacuous mode of life. (As well as that of others caught in similar traps.)

Many personal tags could be applied to this group of people, (e.g. manipulative, exploitative, selfish, self-indulgent, repressed, nihilistic, fatalistic, escapist - in fact anti-radical) and it is arguable that most would be correct. Some of the persons within this group actually take pride in describing themselves in such terms.

These people through their action(s) (or inaction) have shown that the they are not interested in acquiring a radical understanding of their own psyche, of their alienation from themselves and from one another. Without such a radical understanding (i.e. one which delves into the roots of the the problem) they will never break free of the forces repressing them (and all of us), of their fears, and of their present selves.

If all that I have said about these "members" of the old movement is even partially true, then it is difficult to escape the conclusion that they were never really a genuine part of the radical movement to begin with.

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Having suggested this, I may come under fire for apparently being self-righteous, for being "presumptuous", for "sitting in judgment" - however judgements do have to be made in life - those I have been speaking of do it all the time. - Our real concern should be in the substance of our personal statements (although being critically aware of one's own deficiencies and genuinely seeking to change for the better is obviously always of great importance even if rarely undertaken).

My purpose in raising the question of what happened to this group was to attempt to learn from their histories - what it is that can go wrong, and what a new radical movement in order to succeed would need to overcome within its own ranks in future.

One lesson is immediately apparent and that is that rather than allowing what has been described as the "death trip" of this particular group to subvert any new movement for liberation in Brisbane, all those "positive" forces which do remain (as well as those who wish to join them) should now come together in an attempt to mount a fresh attack on the barriers lying between all of us and the achievement of a more humane society.

In the process of formulating the questions for this interview I found myself forced to think carefully about what they seek to discover, and later I felt it wouldn't be inappropriate if I was to also herein offer some of my responses. I hoped that this too might help stimulate the type of discussion many of us are seeking.

It should already be apparent that one of the great shortcomings of the radical movement at Queensland University has been the failure or inability of its members to manifest in their own personal lives much of the sound and important values which it has proposed all others adopt. However I still believe that only a radical movement involving many people and offering genuinely humanistic and libertarian alternatives, is the answer to the advances being made by the oppressive and repressed "thinkers" of the right who currently control our lives.

The essence of the alternative view which a movement needs to offer is the understanding that the greatest human need is control of our own lives coupled with adequate opportunity for all to understand the real nature of the problems we will always face, and of how to overcome these. - All social problems today can be more easily understood within this framework.

Control of our own lives (but not of others) cannot be achieved via a single victory. There will always be a need for humanity to overcome the potential "oppressor" lying within all of us and to constantly work at transformation of our society and ourselves.

For continuing success here, a radical movement needs to attempt to break down the mythology which blinds us, so as to leave us free to work for such a goal. The movement also needs to draw out in itself and in others the following human qualities: empathy, sensitivity, humility, faith in people and in reason, love and co-operation. The movement must be pro the collective egalitarian and communal spirit and anti the competitive spirit as well as selfishness, all forms of human oppression - particularly of one sex over the other, the false belief that our greatest pleasure is derived from wielding power (in any form) over others. A preoccupation with ownership of material (or the more human) possessions, the consumer ethic, must be challenged also.

The movement must exhibit consistency between its words and actions and also always seek to discover weaknesses in its theory & practice. In my view, preoccupation with theory and too little concern with practice (or how social change based on those theories can be achieved) has been the greatest weakness of most sections of the radical movement in Queensland and Australia. (One possible exception here would be the women's movement.) Many people on campus have been so consumed by their desire to always think on what they regard as a high intellectual level, that they have become divorced to such an extent from what we experience everyday that a connection cannot be found, and probably never will be found between their theories and any potential application of them.

Possibly their definition of what really constitutes intellectual thought should be re-examined occasionally. (On this point much can be learnt from Mao Tse-Tung's approach which is often attacked as being "anti-intellectual" when in fact it is anything but that within the context of Chinese society).

Most social theories, which are never put to the test of life and I don't mean "reality" as defined by conservatives, are useless. Our universities are full of theories. Some are possibly very important but no radical attempts at their practice as yet, have occurred (i.e., attempts which did not conform to existing oppressive beliefs.)

If we were to place our faith in one of Marx's theories and all sit and wait for the collapse of capitalism supposedly to be brought about as a result of a crisis arising out of its inherent contradictions, we could all die of old age. Regardless of how bleak (or to some encouraging?) the economic situation appears to be for those in the West at present, it should be obvious from experience that capitalism usually avoids near (?) collapse because it has always been able to (by some means - oppressive or otherwise) adapt to the situation at the last minute to avoid defeat. OR - alternatively, if this skill at "adaptability" (combined with co-option and manipulation of the people) were no longer able to be used successfully, the system can quite easily resort to its ultimate weapon viz., the immensely powerful social control mechanisms (violent or otherwise) it already possesses through its monopoly of technology and of the social sciences.

Couple the use of these with an obvious contempt on the part of the oppressive elements in control of the system, for other human life and human values, and where does this leave us? We are left taking the only "sane" course of action possible in the face of such and that is - setting out to appeal to the power of reason in the human race (subject to the prior destruction of the existing oppressive social mythologies which distort our reasoning capabilities), and to those better qualities presently lying repressed or unreleased within us. This is not easy.

However the only alternative to placing our faith and hopes in the ability of most human beings to change and transform themselves on a scale sufficient to regain control of their lives, is despair leading to madness.

As I have suggested the central question remaining (which is most often left untackled in any serious and intelligent way by the Left) is through what actions do we achieve such social change - change in values, in perception, and in lifestyle - which would lead to power being removed from our oppressors.

The development of such a theory of social action which would be rooted in our own Australian societal experience has never been adequately attempted. To understand what is really needed here, much can be learnt from Paulo Freire in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. (This book as Dan O'Neill has suggested in the past, should be essential reading for all students and staff.)

Freire sees "dialogue" between humans in order to "name" the world as the means to achieving liberation or what he calls "conscientization". (The term conscientization refers to learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of society.) This is the basis of his dialogical theory of action.

*"Dialogue is the encounter between w/men, mediated by the world in order to name the world. Hence dialogue cannot occur between those who want to name the world and those who do not want this naming - between those who deny other w/men the right to speak their word and those whose right to speak has been denied them. Those who have been denied their primordial right to speak their word must first reclaim this right and prevent the continuation of this dehumanizing aggression."*

*"If it is in speaking their word that men transform the world by naming it, dialogue imposes itself as the way in which men achieve significance as men. Dialogue is thus an existential necessity."*

One barrier to be overcome to achieve maximum success through engaging in "dialogue" is the mythology fed to the people by the oppressive elements. Thus Freire argues that the task of revolutionary "leaders" is to pose as problems all the myths used by oppressor elites to oppress. However, at the same time, revolutionary leaders cannot believe in the myth of the ignorance of the people - "they cannot believe that they and only they know anything - for this means to doubt the people", and have no "faith" in them.

Radical leaders and movements must not sloganize but must enter into dialogue with the community at large. *"The object of dialogical-libertarian action is not to 'dislodge' the oppressed from a mythological reality in order to 'bind' them to another reality. On the contrary, the object of dialogical action is to make it possible for the oppressed, by perceiving their adhesion, to opt to transform an unjust reality."*

Learning how to "name" the world must be done with the people and not for them if manipulation - the technique of the oppressor is to be avoided which it must be.

In my view the most important task that radical movements in Queensland have failed to tackle in a systematic way is the destruction of the current mythology. As Freire states "in order for the oppressed to unite, they must first cut the umbilical cord of magic and myth which binds them to the world."

I believe that only by doing this can they really see the world and really be in a position to perceive the alternative forms of society which are possible.

If radical movements try to present their concept of the ideal society to the people before they have destroyed the misconceptions about the present society which are blinding the people, they are putting the cart before the horse.

An approach to social action is needed which first recognises the nature of the existing consciousness in the particular society in which the movement exists. (As Freire suggests in order to adequately do this it is essential to have an increasingly critical knowledge of the current historical context, the view of the world held by the people, the principal contradiction of society, and the principal aspect of that contradiction.) Such a specific knowledge of a social experience cannot be imported from another society. To my knowledge no radical group (other than the feminist movement at times) in Australia has ever done this properly and this fact constitutes a fundamental failing. (The successes of the women's movement in my view have occurred because they have had this understanding and have created political programmes welded to the reality of many women and with which it is possible for women to identify.)

However, if the movement were to gain such a knowledge the next step would be to expose existing mythology and then offer to people the alternative of viewing their experiences in a broader context - a context which the radical movement would argue is more desirable and which is based on a non-oppressive, non-hierarchical, non-competitive view of humanity.

Ralph Nader has always adopted such a three pronged approach to achieving change and he (by contrast) has seen some success.

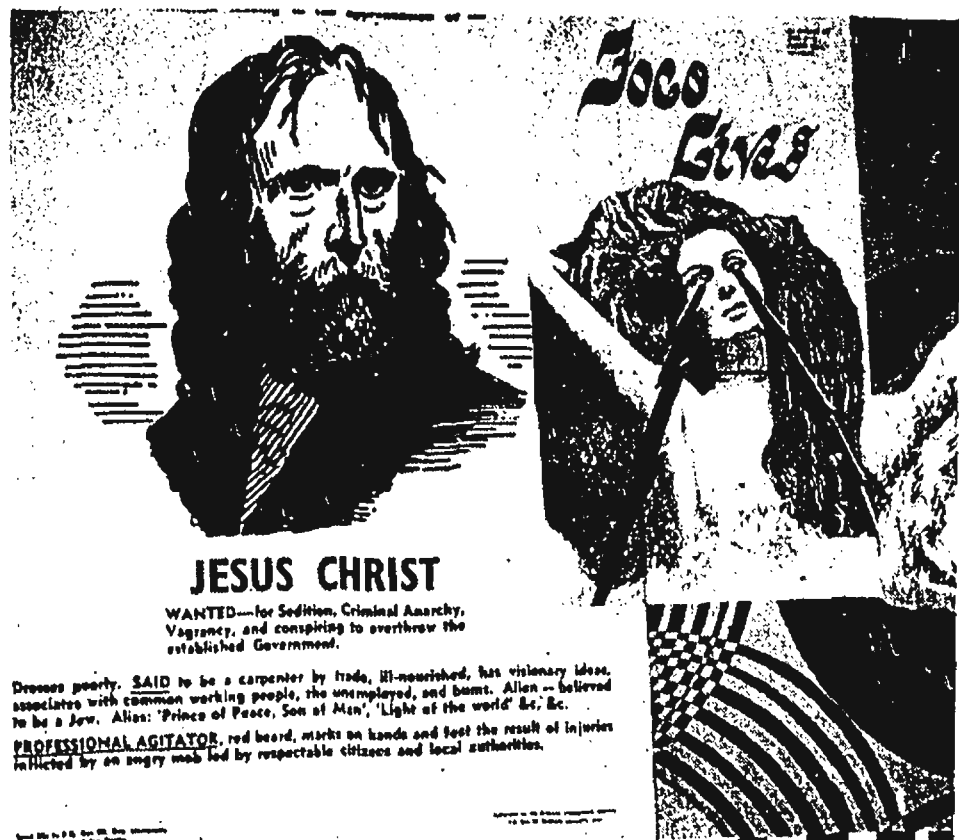
Many in the radical movement branded him as a "reformist" before he visited this campus to address students and staff some years ago. The truth was that Nader had an approach to social action which was highly intelligent and even "theoretically strong". That many of his critics on this campus later grasped this fact became clear on hearing their revised assessments of his position after he left.

One of the greatest misconceptions people suffer from in Australia is their view that politics plays a limited role in their lives (other than in the cost of living and level of their wages) and that consequently they are not interested in discussing it. This misconception provides a formidable barrier for a radical movement to tackle since if it is not destroyed any hint that what the movement is doing is of a political (e.g. 'communist') nature could alienate the person the movement wishes to undertake a dialogue with.

One solution (once the nature of the people's experience is understood) which has been and still is ignored too often by radical groups is to establish a starting point for the political dialogue with which the person in question can identify.

Radical students who have bothered to try using this approach have often been unsuccessful because they have been unable to fully appreciate the perspective in which the person they are talking to views the world. Alternatively in their attempt at a dialogue the radicals have failed to genuinely empathise with the other person.

Once the mythology has been destroyed (who has ever tried asking why China is not experiencing inflation - this fact alone must be worth unprejudiced contemplation), the next important stage as we have seen is the development of an aware-



Union Noticeboard Detail, 1969.

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nness of the alternatives. To quote an example of how important just having the choice of an alternative view of the world can turn out to be — we can look at India — until the untouchables who were the lowest of the low in India's caste system were able to simply be presented with a new perspective which said "this doesn't have to be the way things are", they basically accepted the social system in operation as the way the world must be. That is, "reality" — How many people in our society would realise that usury (profit making) in the middle ages was considered to be a cardinal sin? — Sometimes the most simple alternatives in life are the hardest to grasp.

Adequate presentation and discussion of alternatives can be crucial to social change. Ralph Nader recognises this when he presents to the public thoroughly researched alternative information (something the radical movement knows very little about) on matters of concern to them. In doing so he weakens many of the public's previous beliefs (their faith in the big business and private enterprises for example) and potentially causes them to question some broader possibilities. He also offers the prospect of actually experiencing some level of success (following effort at social action) to those people who would possibly be contemplating whether they should either let their fears of the world overcome them and escape via the Guru Maharaja Ji, thus accepting the false notion that the type of world we live in is not of our own making (see SMG leaflet "Fascism in the Counter Culture") or whether they should act on the world in an effort to change it.

In presenting alternatives and in creating a dialogue situation the radical movement must learn to fully utilize all those modes of communication open to it which are currently being used so successfully by oppressive elements against the people. A myth exists that in our "democratic" society choices do exist — the radical movement's efforts should be directed at ensuring that by presentation of alternative perspectives, choices really do exist. However these alternatives must be tempered by practice.

Mao Tse-tung long ago recognized the importance of Marx's "dialectic", when manifest in the form practice-theory-practice-theory-practice etc. Thought leading to action (praxis) is the principle that has seen little application amongst many radical groups — their lack of significant success should bear witness to the fact that in particular their theory of action is inadequate (if not their social theory itself.)

At university level when the activities of radical groups are examined critically it becomes clear that they have persistently failed to help convert the idealistic and critical thought of many first year students (who hold the mistaken belief that the radical movement at Uni is alive and well) into action. They have failed also to understand the "world view" of these young students and once again have failed to follow the necessary steps of destroying mythology and creating real alternatives.

Ralph Nader has pointed out that what many radical movements lack is a realization that achieving radical change involves hard work and a high degree of organization and that persistence above all things will be called for. As Freire says "radical leaders will not always win the immediate adherence of the people ... however what has not borne fruit at a certain moment and under certain circumstances is not thereby rendered incapable of bearing fruit tomorrow."

It is my belief also that radical groups have yet to learn how to communicate what they have to say using terminology or examples which relate to the experience of those their words are directed at. Even when it is either not desired to or not possible to use different terminology fulfilling this criterion, then those words (often emotive words) which are used should always be explained properly or adequately defined — This is rarely done.

Nader's criticisms with which I fully concur were definitely applicable to the approach of the greater number of people involved in the radical movement of the sixties at Queensland University. This movement when examining the failures of many of its actions neglected to apply the vital principle that the problem to which you must first apply yourself is defined as whatever is found blocking your path.

In conclusion, I would like to once again quote Paulo Freire's obvious truth — "Just as the oppressor, in order to oppress, needs a theory of oppressive action, so the oppressed in order to become free, also need a theory of action."

This theory of action once achieved also must be directed not purely at an intellectual elite (e.g. university students) but at the community at large — the people Queensland's radical movement has rarely been in contact with and has known very little about. — "Joining the oppressed requires going to them and communicating with them"

All that remains to be said is — why don't those of us who realise what is at stake and who desire change — "DO IT!"

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### peter WERTHEIM

3 I want to answer your third question first, because I believe that by so doing, I can say more accurately what I want to say about the other questions. I want the weight in answering question 3 to fall upon our society not on Communist and third world countries, though I'll refer to them briefly.

Western society is, in my view, facing a major crisis or challenge, depending on which way you look at it. The crisis is so great that it is impossible in a few moments to characterize it adequately; but, in my view, one thing is certain; in order to overcome this crisis, the profoundest changes must take place in the structures of our society, right throughout our political and social order and in the values that underlie those structures.

The crisis is at its deepest level a spiritual one. It concerns how men see their own individual and collective lives. What kind of individual and collective life is worth living, what are the sources from which men draw their ultimate good, and what is their ultimate destiny? What is the relationship of men with nature? And with God?

The present dominant thrust of our society can be summed up by all that is wrong with capitalism and capitalist values, taken in the wide sense. Amongst leading values of our present capitalist society are dominance, aggression, competition and acquisitiveness.

These values are not only false and destructive in themselves, but they've largely destroyed the power of many people to appreciate what is truly good in life: community amongst persons in work, and in the enjoyment of life together, communion with and community with nature and with God, the manifold enjoyments of the capacities of man, of sight, sound, smell hearing, touch; the enjoyment of nature in these manifold ways, and the exercise of these capacities in enjoyment with other persons; the exercise of the creative power of persons in work which is valuable individually and to the community and which is organized in a communal and non-authoritarian way.

It is because our present mode of life has to a great extent destroyed our power to enjoy these things, that the task before us seems so great. We are cut off from the sources that

renew human life, the things that man did not create. We are left with a debased enjoyment of the things man did make. Not that these things are not of some worth, they are of some; but the sources of human good and human renewal are given to the world, not created by men. Our society in a long historical process has to a great extent eroded these "givens". But those "givens" remain there to be discovered, and in my view, they will be discovered under necessity — under the necessity of turning away from the despair which comes from focusing our eyes on what is trivial, and neglecting as I've said, the profoundest sources of human good.

In saying this, it must be clear that I believe the crisis can be overcome or the challenge met. But the meeting of the challenge may well involve very considerable disasters before we get through it. All actions — by ourselves, or people in the past — have consequences. We are going to have to pay, and are already paying for, the consequences of actions taken in the past. We cannot avoid that; part of a realistic response to our present situation is to penetrate to the heart of what's wrong, to recognize the consequences that must inevitably follow from that, but to begin to do what one can to build up a new set of values, and a new set of human structures. In my view, that's what has to be done if the crisis is to be overcome.

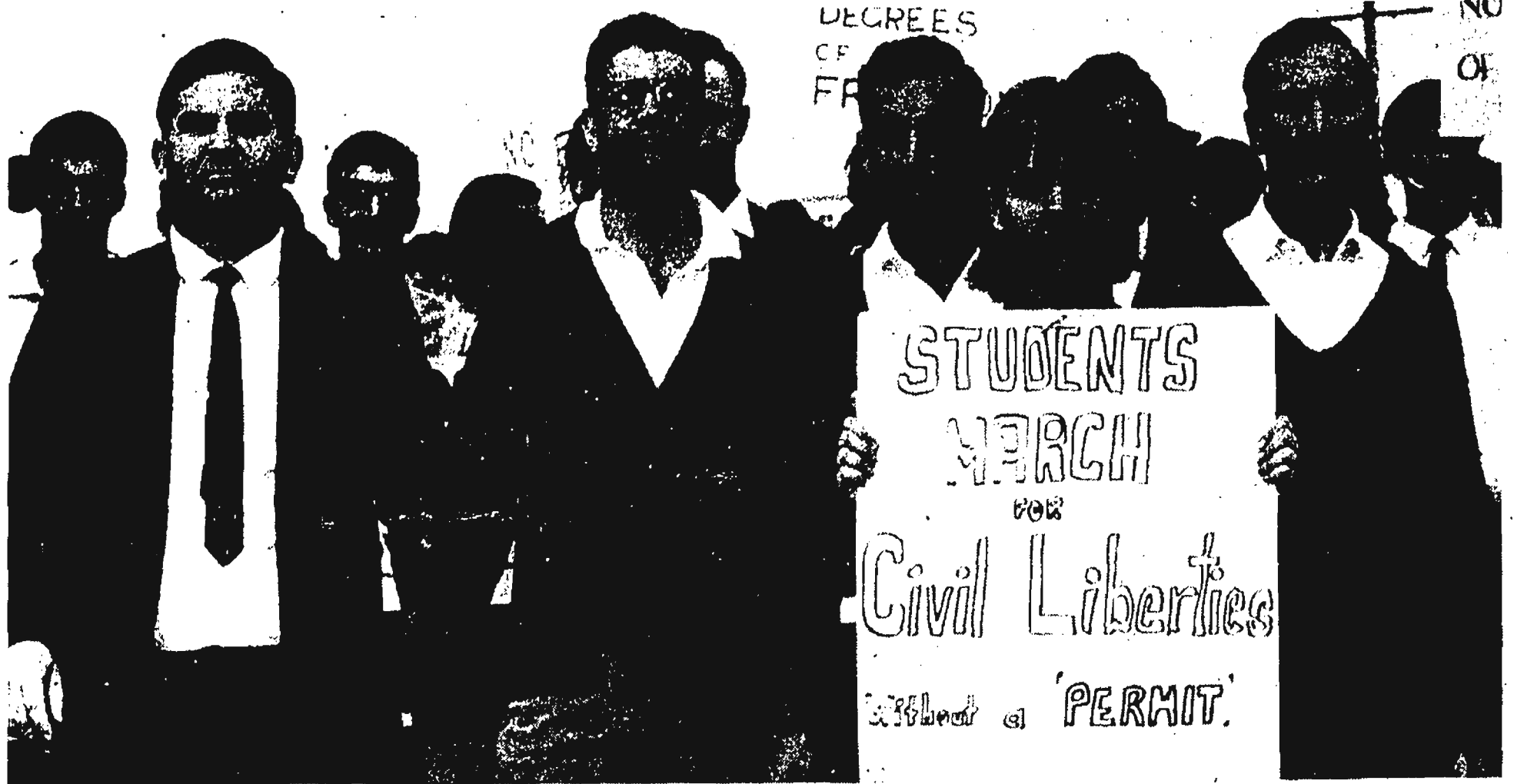
Briefly, about some communist societies and the third world: the situation of these countries is much too varied for me to make any definitive comments, but it's clear that some societies are in a quite different situation from ours. For example, China has never known capitalism in quite the way we have; it's undergone a profound revolution, it still is essentially communal in nature, it hasn't been as heavily industrialized as the West, it hasn't been given over as profoundly to Western scientific hubris and so its situation — in many respects — is much better than ours. As for the third world countries, again their situation is so varied that it's impossible to comment at any length. One thing a number of them have to do is to see they do not fall under capitalist oppression, or that they resist as much as possible falling under the sway of capitalism. They must fight — as some of them are fighting — to establish within an indigenous form of life (that is still communal) reasonable goals of human material prosperity. However

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### GREAT COURT JULY 2ND, 1969



The Great Court Debate on 'The Role of the University'. Seated from left: Bob Wensley, unidentified speaker, Peter Wertheim, Edwin Webb, Frank Varghese, Phil Richardson.



FRONT LEFT: Frank Gardiner (Union President, 1967), Peter Wertheim, Dan O'Neill (under "degrees"); far right, Ralph Summy.

from page 21, Peter Wertheim

these would retain their vision that the essential aspects of human life are spiritual, and not material. By spiritual, I don't mean something disembodied, but a form of life between persons, between persons and nature, and between persons, nature and God.

As for the Soviet Union, it does share some common problems with us. It too, has to work towards a truly communal form of life in which authoritarian and elitist power relations are eliminated. It must break the strangle-hold of an authoritarian party and a totalitarian mentality that thinks that human life can or should be under the control of leaders who 'know'.

Having made some remarks about Question Three, I can now more easily turn to Question One.

**1** To my way of thinking, the first years of the Movement from roughly 1966 to the early seventies saw the first movement (on this campus) of the human spirit towards understanding the depths of the present crisis and towards moving to meet it. But this early consciousness did not understand the depths of the crisis, and in my view it's only in the last two or three years that on this campus and I think, throughout Australia - something of the real depths of the crisis or challenge before us has begun to be understood at depth.

To me those early years were in a sense transition years.

Much of the activity that took place did so within the parameters of thinking of standard politics. Some of them of course, contained an impulse outside that; but the question had not been clarified. Nevertheless, those early years were crucial in developing the consciousness that we've now got - that is, a consciousness of what the real dimension of the problem or problems are.

*You make it clear that you personally believe a substantial increase in the depth of consciousness has occurred within different participants in the radical movement. Couldn't one possible outcome of this particular change in awareness (i.e., to a greater understanding of the problems being faced) be to make the prospect of achieving significant social change even more daunting?*

Yes, I think for at least one strand of person this is true. I think part of the reason for that lies in what I said earlier about the way in which our society has cut people off from the sources of hope, renewal, happiness, satisfaction and pleasure. My own belief is that as those sources are returned to people, the sense of faith and hope, power and energy necessary to fight against that despair will be returned to them also.

Thus, the most important aspect of those early events (1966 to 1972) were that they were a period in which the inadequacy of what we were doing in various ways gradually became borne in on us, and that led the most serious people in that movement to reach a new and deeper understanding of what the problems were. From the failures of the various forms of activism we learnt that the problems facing us were more profound than we had thought. They could not be touched or realized or overcome merely by action - or at best not the form of action that we thought of then.

In saying this of course, I'm not saying that all the action was misdirected. Indeed, quite apart from the change in consciousness which to my way of thinking is the greatest gain we've got there have been considerable actual changes in this university - in its structures, in the mode of going on between students and staff, even in the content of courses and the way they are taught. All these things have changed considerably in the last ten years, largely because of that movement and its interaction with the University. These changes, however, are relatively minor compared with the changes which await to be made, both in our university, and in our society at large.

Another point about that earlier period

was that the local and national society in which our university actions took place was itself much more restricted in understanding than it is now - that is to say, not only in our university, but throughout Australia, the new consciousness of which I'm speaking has developed. Of course, it's still very much a minority consciousness. There are groups now, though, all over the country - women's groups, environmental groups, black groups, prison reform groups, artistic groups - in which the new consciousness has and is developing. Moreover, within what might be termed 'status-quo' society, there is a profound mood of unease about what is happening. Complacency is giving way to a profound sense of anxiety and fear; fear that deep changes may be brought about in our society changes that the status-quo fears, does not understand, or does not want. This kind of thing is leading to the formation of groups dedicated to stopping change, groups from a conservative consciousness that doesn't understand what is going on.

These, then are changes in the wide society that parallel to some extent the changes that have taken place in the University consciousness.

Now, one thing that we should have learnt, which I don't think has been fully learnt from our earlier experience is that if our society is to be transformed, it will have to be transformed by what in the Australian circumstances is a new social movement. A social movement built not on the 'right ideology' but on something much more profound than that. I think that this point has still not been grasped by all those people who form in my view the matrix from which a genuine social movement can grow. I think there are people still about who think that ideology must be the centre of a social movement rather than something that is in the service of a social movement. Mind you, until they give that up, they will remain to that extent part of the problem and not part of the solution, though in much of their action of course they will be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

**2** Yes under one description the radical movement as we knew it in those years, has disintegrated. This is no loss, this is part of the disintegration of the old world. In my view, a deeper radical movement has taken the place of the older, and that movement with a bit of luck will begin to embody itself in more public actions over the next two or three years. This movement will no longer be confined to the campus, but will consider itself part of a nation-wide radical movement of which the university people are simply a part.

Yes, there is amongst some strands of students, apathy, cynicism and despair. But that's there to be overcome. It's partly a resultant consequence of retaining the older form of thought. However, there are new currents of student life which are not deeply touched by that, though they are of course touched by the question of faith and hope before the profound nature of the problems that face us.

To summarize, I do see a radical movement still in being, deeper in consciousness than it was before, and about to enter into more fruitful action than it has in the past, precisely because its consciousness is deeper. Given the problems facing Australia, I'm not saying that this consciousness will immediately win out in the struggle with these problems. Indeed, to be realistic about the situation is to realize that it's quite possible that in one sense of "defeat"; the present consciousness will be defeated in Australia in the next few years.

**4** It is quite probably that in the next few years Australia will undergo - for want of a better term a right wing or conservative backlash and that the scenario for people with the new thought will be very hard. It's even conceivable in the somewhat longer future, that unless we can raise a social movement of the required strength and depth soon enough,

the kind of Chilean scenario is one that we have to look forward to in Australia. None of these realistic possibilities should blind us to the view that much has been gained. We have now, emerging all over Australia, the kind of consciousness and the kind of dedication and commitment which is necessary before any social movement capable of bringing about profound changes in our society, communal and individual lives may exist. The next phase of the struggle is to deepen that consciousness link up the people who share it and build it into a social movement capable of dealing with the mess that we've got ourselves into, and the kind of crises economic and other wise, that may in the near future fall upon us. ●

## bob WENSLEY

**1** I think the successes were significant, but not great. Let me treat the failings first. They were the failings you'd expect of a young and enthusiastic movement which had very little experience and lots of beautiful exuberance and idealism. In particular, the failings were of the sort that were associated with lack of perspective, lack of greater experience. The movement, although it claimed to be very humanitarian, tended to be less than this in its attitudes towards the people it opposed or sought change from. I don't think it had enough empathy for other people, it tended to see things in terms of black and white, not to see the other persons' point of view and not to appreciate that many of the older, establishment people against whom they were working had good and valid reasons for being the sort of people they were. Their approach wasn't sympathetic enough, and I think at times it tended to be very doctrinaire, very dogmatic and for that reason, inhumane at times.

The second big failure is that the movement to some extent failed to reach the sort of people they should have reached - the ordinary man in the street. I don't really think they made a significant impact on Edna Everedge. There was an increase in awareness - whether this was because of the movement or that the student movement was part of a growing awareness which was there anyway, I'm not sure. But I believe that the increase was spread thinly apart from a few concentrated pockets of increased awareness.

On the other hand, the successes were that either because of this movement or as I said because the movement was simply part of something that was happening, there was an increased awareness in areas where it counted, particularly in political terms; and there's no doubt whatsoever that what happened over Vietnam, here and in America in particular, led to our getting out. That's obviously a considerable success. Things have trailed off considerably since then, possibly because now there isn't the concrete issue to focus around that there was then.

As far as achieving change in the University is concerned, I think the level of success there was very much higher, and there have been significant structural changes in the University which can only be attributed to what happened in that period: the amendments to the University Act, the greatly increased number of student representatives on bodies. The attempts which the University administration has quite honestly made in say the last two or three years to open up channels of communication and to make sure that certainly the Students' Union is consulted on all issues which concern them - these obviously stem directly from what happened in the late sixties and early seventies. I think you've got to chalk that up as a significant success, and that's a much more localised thing than what I was talking about before in the outside scene.

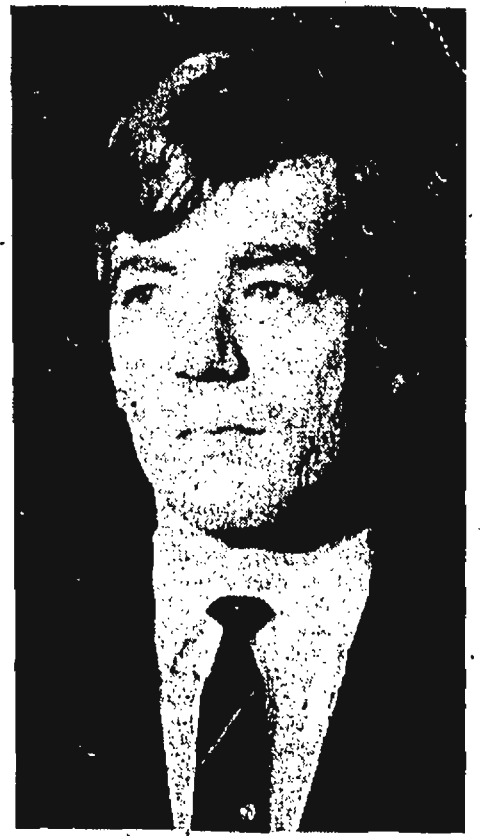
One lesson which we can learn from that era is that there is an obvious, even symbiotic relationship between the radical group and the reformist group in that while quite often at that time when they were at each other's throats, they were both clearly important to the other. If you take the example of the University when the official Students' Union was pressing for reforms through the system. It was a significant help for what they were doing for the radical movement to be working outside the system in a completely different way, but bringing very strong pressure to bear on the same issues. And vice versa: what the reformists were doing was of assistance to the radicals. I don't know what's going to happen in future, but I think that if those two different sorts of groups realize that they probably do need each other, and spend less time disputing among themselves, and more time looking for common ground, that would be a lesson well worth learning.

I've spoken of the need for greater human understand and empathy on the part of the people who want change, whether as radical or reformist change. I think that's a very important lesson.

The most important lesson is that no amount of idealism or enthusiasm is of necessity going to generate results. In other words, if people are going for social change, I think they've got to learn quickly that they won't get very far very fast, and accept that fact, be prepared not to give up after they've been knocked back once, twice, three and more times and keep going. But this obviously has to do with the depth of conviction, depth of consciousness; if a movement can learn that lesson early, then it won't give up too early as did happen here. It didn't go far enough because it failed to go far enough fast enough.

**2** I think the answer to this question is "yes". It's of less significance now and it's disintegrated to the extent that there are a small number of isolated and different groups working in different ways where before there appeared to be a much more coherent and larger whole. I guess I'd say it's splintered, rather than disintegrated and I think it's lost a bit of the peripheral people who came in on

Bob Wensley, when candidate for Union President in 1968. He subsequently became President in 1969.





from page 22, Bob Wensley

one issue and have since gone. I think it will probably revive naturally because of the 'pendulum effect' but more importantly, I think it must do so because of the increasing pressures of problems at a University, social and world levels which we face. That's got to generate some sort of response, and its either going to generate a response of apathy and cynicism a shrug of the shoulders, or it's going to generate a response of more activism. I think probably the former is more likely, but the latter could happen - and I hope it does. Looking at what it's beliefs will be, if it revives - I suspect it's likely to be much more introspective, concerned with more local issues than with world issues of great and general principle with issues closer to home and affecting the people involved in a personal way which starvation and the war in Asia didn't do.

I think that's a trend which is very evident in what's happened since 1971, 1972. People are willing to be active, but they're less willing to be active on broad problems. I still think there will remain a small, very deeply committed group who will take a very broad perspective, but these people will become more and more specialist and theorist if I can put it in that way, and more and more isolated from the University community and the wider community.

As for the present, I believe that there are very many less students as individuals, or in a group, actively involved in any sort of political and social activity today than there were some five or six years ago. In a way, what's happening on a student scene reflects what's happening on a national scene: up to the Labor victory in 1972, there was a swell of increasing awareness of social issues and a wanting to throw off the trappings of the past. Labor came in with a gush of good feeling, sympathy and hope for reform. I think what's happening now is that the sort of tremendous cynicism and apathy which you see in Britain has its paler counterpart here in that many of the hopeful reformists of 1972 are now realising that perhaps the political system we have, regardless of which party is in power, is simply not capable of tackling the problems.

So, there's a retreat into self. There is a greater concern with self-interest which I think is very evident on the campus.

The people who are concerned are getting more and more worried; that maybe they won't be able to achieve anything at all, that their very best efforts won't be able to stem the tide. As this feeling develops, 'fringe groups' spring up. This is one explanation of the 'Jesus Movement' for example, which in my conception is not highly realistic, though probably very satisfying in a very personal sense for the people who choose to take that route. I don't know that it's very productive as far as social change which affects other people is concerned. Again this goes back to my point of people becoming much more introspective, more concerned perhaps with setting their own house in order, having their own minds in a state of satisfaction and less concerned with what's happening in India and Vietnam and beyond their own small circle. I think you can characterise the present situation on campus as about 95% apathy and self-interest. Those who are involved are in Freeways, Aborigines, Women's Rights, - localised interest groups.

3 A lot of what I've been saying leads up to the third question, namely whether there's any major significant threat to our society as it stands. I think the very definite answer to that is "yes". There's a vast threat to our society, to the whole of the Western world. We've reached a point now where the expectations which the system has built into our present generation are now beginning to be seen by more and more people as simply unachievable - and this is a shocking realization to many: the fact that the system doesn't seem to be capable of continuing, for instance, to produce more and more goods and services at a cheaper and cheaper price (the economic expectation of the growth ethic). I think it's inevitable that this happens, but it comes as something of a psychological shock when you have been brought up to believe that this trend has to go on and will go on. You suddenly realise that there are in fact limitations on what any society can do in terms of its material and human resources. The Western industrialised nations are going to have to take a substantial cut in their living standards. People are going to be very very loathe to accept this, but in the dynamic process of it coming about anyway, there will be tremendous in-fighting between individuals and groups as people see their slice of the cake being threatened. This means there will be a re-emergence of 'class-struggle' I suppose, although the classes are not necessarily the traditional class-groups, but they're interest groups within the community - struggling to hold their position.

Again, this 'inward-turning' of which I've spoken will tend to be accentuated, particularly if people do become less confident of the ability of the political system to deal with the problems.

They will then have to fall back upon themselves to solve their own problems and they will become selfish to that extent. This is what I see as the nature of the crisis: I don't think Western industrialized society can continue as it is; I don't think it's got the capacity or the will to bring about the change, which will have to come, in a smooth way. The change will be imposed upon it by circumstances - as resources run out, for example, rather than people planning for that situation.

The result will be social upheaval, in-fighting and an increased level of looking out for oneself and a greatly decreased level of general community, sympathy, awareness and consciousness of the plight of others. It's a very gloomy picture but this is the picture.

4 This leads on to the next question of course, and that is concerning what developments politically and socially are going to happen. The

key issues are those of self-interest. The vast majority of people in the Western societies, both the older generation who have come through the depression into good material times and have accepted that they've won their fight and deserve to live in peace with material welfare; and also the younger generation who've known nothing else, and have been bred to believe that that's their God-given right; both these generations will fight to retain their material possession. There will be an increasing concern with self, and the wider social issues - the concern for one's brother - will become less.

I still think there'll be a small group, there will always be genuine humanitarianism in the community - these people will do their level best to ensure that this trend is stemmed to some extent. But I believe they'll fail, because the conflict between the honest idealist and the pragmatist will mean that, as usual, the pragmatist will win because he'll be willing to use more 'tricks of the trade', if you like.

Do you ever feel (as Peter Wertheim does) that a change in people's world outlook towards a more humanistic perspective will be forced on to them by the circumstances of this crisis? In fact, the change could be so significant that it could lead to the creation of a new and better society.

Yes, but I think that's a generation away. The adjustment required of the adults alive today will be such that it will be difficult for them to become completely new types of people; the kind of people that are going to have to exist in order to cope with the next twenty-five years.

Do you think that a trend has already been in operation in which the mechanisms for control existent in various institutions have been tightening their grip on people's lives or do you feel they have loosened and that the people are now gaining more control over their lives?

I think there's been an increase in the institutional restraints; at the same time there's been a decrease in self-imposed restraints. Particularly the younger generation is much more short-term in its thinking, much more hedonistic in its outlook. That's not a criticism, however, it's just an opinion; the result is that there's very little self-discipline. The star, then, of authoritarian imposed discipline has ascended in response; there's a great plethora of rules, regulations and edicts being disgorged by all the bodies in authority all over the place. They're certainly wrapping people up. I don't think that's going to stop, either, the natural consequence of the problems we're going to face is either a cataclysmic eruption in individual countries worldwide, or a very natural progression politically towards dictatorship.

The most likely political outlook for Australia in the next ten years is a dictatorship of the Right. I don't find that very attractive. The events in Europe in the thirties indicate that in times of great stress when people are faced with a multitude of problems which they realise that they cannot solve themselves, they will accept very strong very rigid authoritarian impositions.

You hear talk of "Future Shock": one of the problems of a free society is that you have many more decisions to make. Psychologically for a lot of people, the fewer choices you have to make, the less difficult your life. Speaking to people, I get the feeling that lots and lots of Australians would be prepared to accept those impositions.

In the very short-term politically, I think that what will happen is that the Labor Government will go out within the next twelve months and it will be consigned to the back benches for a generation at least and that the right-wing group within the present opposition will become very much more dominant within the government.

It will gain in support, rather than lose in support. Beyond that, I wouldn't like to guess.

## BIOGRAPHIES

## edwin WEBB

Peter Wertheim is a lecturer in philosophy at the University. His history of involvement with radical activity on campus has been very similar to Dan O'Neill's. Peter's concern with the important issues confronting humanity and the need for a recognition of their seriousness has been reflected in such things as the courses he has established. Along with Dan he has been one of the most energetic and prolific of the radical and activist writers on campus as well as being one of the most thoughtful.

Bob Wensley was President of the University of Queensland Union in 1969 and since then has worked in the position of Assistant to the Vice Chancellor at Queensland University as well as Editor of University News. He was once described by Frank Varghese in Semper 1970 as the "only Union President who has attempted to justify his policies and actions in intellectual terms and who is actually able to articulate an argument for 'moderation' not based entirely on petteer considerations of so called practicability."

Bob has been very active within the Australia Party in Queensland and stood as its candidate for the Senate in the recent Federal elections

Edwin Webb is the current Deputy Vice Chancellor (academic) at the University. He has long exhibited a ready willingness to participate in and contribute to many of the more important discussions regarding the quality of our education and the role of the University in the community, etc., which have occurred over the years on campus. In fact, you will note in his interview that he was one of those who marched into the city in 1967 over the issue of Civil Liberties.

Merle Thornton is another member of the teaching staff who has long been involved with progressive movements for social change. She has been particularly active within the feminist movement. In fact it became clear during the course of the interviews that past actions in which Merle participated such as chaining herself to the public bar of the Regatta Hotel in 1964, preceded the more "public" period of the Vietnam orientated radical movement on campus by a good two years. As well, this action plus the creation that same year (arising out of the chainings) of the Equal Opportunities for Women Association preceded the contemporary "public" era of women's liberation on campus by at least five years. Another little known fact is that the feminist activities of those years according to Merle occurred as completely independent events - there being no formal or informal ties with the left movement on campus.

At the end of last year Merle was also largely instrumental in establishing the first "formal" women studies course at Queensland University in the Sociology Department (even though Peter Wertheim's earlier philosophy courses had touched on this area). Since then as a result of further initiatives by Merle and other feminist staff members and students, accredited women's studies courses on this campus have reached the most advanced stage of any in Australia.

Dan O'Neill is a member of the University's lecturing staff and throughout his years of involvement with the radical movement has contributed greatly to the creation of a higher level of intellectual thought on campus. Just one high point of his involvement with the left was the publication by himself and a large body of libertarian thinkers of the radical critique of the University called Up the Right Channels (1970).

1 The first thing I'd like to do is make a comment that relates to both questions one and two. As you probably know, I've been in Universities all my life and I've seen this alternation of periods of intense political awareness and student activism and periods when students seem to be concerned with nothing but their studies.

My last few years at school and first years at University were in the period of the Spanish Civil War and of course, there was world interest. I remember taking part in political demonstrations in support of the Spanish Republic and against so-called 'non-intervention' by the British Government. That continued during the war years, and then immediately after the War in a period of Labour Government in England tackling the problems of reconstruction, the students seemed to have lost all interest in politics. Now in a sense, I think we've gone through a similar period here. Activism in Queensland and other Australian Universities really arose out of the problems of Vietnam and Conscription; when the war ended and a change of Government abolished conscription all that seemed to die down. So this rise and fall of activism is by now means a new thing.

But now let me say something specifically about the Queensland scene. The period of activism in the mid to late sixties started very clearly as a response to (a) Vietnam on the world scene; and (b) Civil Liberties on the Queensland scene. You'll remember that the first great 1967 Civil Liberties march attracted enormous numbers of staff, as well as students. I myself was in that march and there was an intense interest in issues outside the University. But the striking thing was how rapidly the local discussion turned to internal University issues. You'll remember the afternoon of the Great Court meeting (July 2nd, 1969) when teaching was suspended, people came together and were allowed free comment on "The Role of the University". Lots of the comments related not to Vietnam, but to things within the University: the lack of interest in student problems, the anonymity of the big university, the lack of any mechanism for making their views felt. And it seems to me that one of the things which has happened and seems to me permanent is a change of attitude with regard to internal things. I myself try to encourage organizational changes; remember the question of putting students on Faculty Boards, the democratization of departments, the creation of consultative committees and so on.

I think a lot of students would say that these have not really been the success that they thought they would - 'the forms are there, but it really doesn't make any difference'. Indeed, in recent years it's sometimes been difficult to find a students who's willing to go on a Faculty Board. But what I think is real is the change in attitude in many parts of the University to the importance of student views. Before that time, I think the majority of members of the Professorial Board would simply dismiss the idea that if you wanted to make a change you would find out what students thought.

Even if it may still be difficult to get changes at least there is a consciousness that one of the factors in the situation is the viewpoint of the student body. So I think the internal effects of a period of activity which started from outside has certainly been real.

2 You ask me in these questions whether the radical movement has disintegrated. Of course, I'm not so in touch with student politics and Union factions and so on as your other interviewees will be; but I certainly do get the sense that we're going through one of these periods when there's a certain amount of political apathy - that the majority of students regard candidates for Union elections as 'play-acting' and not as representing anything that's got real meaning outside. Though in another sense I do see signs of real interest in problems facing the world and this links up with your third question.

3 Increasingly many people are realizing that as well as the 'conventional' political problems which have faced Western society - and these have not of course disappeared, there are still extremes of wealth and poverty throughout the world and in Australia - there are other problems which the Communist and Western worlds will have to face.

These are the problems of over-production over-population and over-exploitation of resources; the whole future is seriously at jeopardy unless we first recognize the problems and then do something about them.

Let me say here that I'm not myself a doomsday thinker, I believe that if we make use of solutions that science can offer in population control, and then in sensible exploitation of resources, the development of things like solar energy, we can surmount this crisis.

But coming back to the University, I think that there is amongst students and younger staff alike, a real consciousness of these problems so while overt political activity of the late-sixties type may have disappeared, there's always a very good audience at some of the seminars dealing with these problems.

In the past, the comment was often made that the activities of the radical movement were going to prime the image of the University into dis-repute within the Community. Do you think there was ever any real substance in those sorts of comments, looking back now?

The first thing I want to say about that is that I don't think the reputation of the University in the Queensland scene was ever very high. One of the things that I found disappoin-

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ting when I came to Australia was the very anti-intellectual atmosphere particularly in the Trade Union and Left political movements. I came across from England where the scene was very different.

Obviously it's true that public reaction to the University was hostile to some of the things that went on, but I myself never regarded that as a reason for attempting to prohibit the people from expression of opinion on things which were of great importance. Of course, the fact is that in Queensland, thinking about the public scene outside the University, student activism did achieve a great deal in that it did get reform of the regulations and laws relating to public assembly and demonstrations and got them a little nearer to what had been common in Great Britain for the last fifty years.

**4**You say that you don't ascribe to the doomsday predictions we hear from many people: the reason I raise this point is that two of the other interviewees see a serious crisis approaching in terms of, say, a Chilean scenario: a right-wing movement generating authoritarian government. Do you see any substance in these views?

I think there's a real danger of this happening. But let me clear up what I mean by "doomsday predictions"; there's a school of thought which seems to say that doom is inevitable, that the seeds are already there and that nothing can be done to alter the logical development. What I'm saying is that if we make the right decisions, then in fact the accumulated knowledge of generations is enough to get us over these difficulties. Clearly, one of the crucial issues is population; I think that if we spent anything like the kind of money spent on nuclear research in effective methods of controlling population, we would be able to stabilise at present numbers, or even get them down within a generation. And, of course, there's a lot more that can be done in increased food production and so on to cope with the further increases that are inevitable before we stabilize. Whether it will be done depends upon political decisions.

I think that even in a capitalist society, strongly controlled by a government motivated in the way that by and large our present Federal Government is, a belief in the use of resources to give a reasonably equitable standard of living and at least equal opportunities to all people - at least it would be possible to divert resources, energy, scientific research and so on in the right direction to solve these problems. The danger is, of course, in the world at large that we have many governments which are not so motivated and still believe it important to spend a very large proportion of their resources in the development of nuclear and other armaments, getting at much coal and oil out of the ground as they can and using it up as rapidly as possible. Such an approach could stimulate a right-wing military revolt in an attempt to prevent disaster, and at worst, lead to the ultimate failure of the human race on earth. But I'm still optimistic that there'll be enough people who want the right answers to enable us to use our resources to get us out of these difficulties.

*Peter Wertheim put forward the view that we must necessarily see a change of values toward the more humanistic. Would you agree with this comment?*

I agree that this is important and furthermore I believe that it's happening. A lot of features we see in the younger generation, I personally find difficult to sympathise with. I suppose it's true that I was brought up in a more or less Methodist Work-ethic; I find it difficult to understand the young people who simply cut themselves off from society, who don't work, who live hippie-style and so on. And yet in a sense it's very encouraging that people are beginning to see other values as important compared with the values of having the highest standard of living in material terms. Take a specific example - it is obviously absurd that the development of the motor-car has meant that the whole world economy is determined by the supply of oil; and clearly the supply of oil is going to run out. If we can't have motor-cars then we'll have to go back to walking or cycling. Now, this may seem a trivial example, but it does represent a change in values which younger people are beginning to accept. While my generation will never I think adapt themselves to going back in this sense, the next generation may have to. It is heartening to find younger people seeing human values as more important than material values.

*One attitude which surfaced often in the past amongst senior officials of the University was that the University was essentially not a political place at all. They didn't and don't seem to recognize that a lot of the things taking place in the University, in the education - in a sense have a great political import on the community at large. Do you subscribe to that belief yourself?*

No, I'd never believed that. The one thing that has been said officially by senior people in the University I would agree with, is that the university as an institution ought not to take a stand on things. Sometimes the University has been urged to formally come out in support of aboriginal welfare or something of this kind, but I don't think that should be applied to the University as an institution. I've always believed - and it's certainly been true for my years at University - that it ought to be the focus for the development of ideas which are the real issues in society; that having formulated a view, then its up to the individuals in the University to use all their power and influence to see that others are made aware of them. I've never taken the view that the University ought to isolate itself from the community. It is not a part of the interchange of ideas which leads to a forward movement of society.

*Perhaps we could conclude with just one*

Courier-Mail editorial, 21/8/1971

*Our Liberty depends on the Freedom of the Press, and that cannot be limited without being lost. — Jefferson.*

## Change at St. Lucia

**T**HANK goodness someone in authority believes Queensland University has been improved by all the disruptions engineered by radical elements.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Edwin Webb this week ventured the opinion: "After 30 years of university life, I cannot recall a more stimulating time."

Most Queenslanders probably would choose terms such as "violent" or "troubled" rather than "stimulating." Whatever the extent of the protest, it still wasted a lot of highly expensive time with antics of often quite juvenile character.

*other question. The Self Management Group are arguing that one of the basic problems with the present way we run society is that the continuance of hierarchical structures of decision making, and the failure of people to pursue a horizontal form of decision making which would involve them in more direct forms of control over decisions is effecting them. What's your view on this?*

I've always been a bit doubtful as to how realistic this view is not only in the University but outside. I would say it's difficult just looking at the Australian scene to expect change here. I don't believe that if real decisions about the way Australian society went were to be made at the level of the smallest group, then we would get a government (and Australia as a whole) behaving in a way which was more conscious of the problems of the world at large.

I rather feel that exactly the opposite would be the case; and really I do believe in having - perhaps it's an elitist view - some intelligent people sorting out what the problems really are, and trying to solve those for the population at large.

I think the change in the Federal Government was a step in the right direction. I don't think it would have taken place if Australia had been governed by a grassroots democracy.

## merle THORNTON

**1**The basis of the questions you have asked me is to relate the present political climate at the University and more widely relate to the kind of student politics and demonstrations that were taking place in the late 60's and early 70's and perhaps, should say that I wasn't here for part of that; I was out of the country until August 1969. One thing that has changed spectacularly is the style of politics, the age of the very big demonstrations seems to be at least temporarily, in abeyance and I think that is something that makes people feel there has been a fundamental political change - I don't really know how fundamental it is - it means to me that there were indeed issues then that lent themselves to demonstration of a mass movement kind which don't exist in the same way now. The fundamental issues still exist, but the way of relating them to people's personal lives don't exist in quite the same way. The thing that made the big demonstrations possible (though they weren't all around this issue) was the big conscription issue. This forced students to face a major personal decision in their lives which involved the major political problems of our time in a critical way at a certain time - their 20th birthday.

The underlying issues are still every bit as urgent - especially imperialism, which people were radicalised to realise because of the conscription issue, but the necessity for students to decide at a certain stage of their lives, their attitudes and what they were prepared to do - whether they are prepared to make a fairly major personal sacrifice to join the forces of anti-imperialism - that's gone and it was a major radicalising force.

On the other hand, it's fairly customary for people analysing the political scene to leave out the women's liberation movement altogether. Women weren't faced with that personal decision, but they did play an important part in demonstrations and the consciousness-raising of that period. It's really interesting that women's consciousness was being raised worldwide in a major way without an issue like conscription that arose in Australia at that time.

When I think of the way the women's movement did relate to the University radical movement and to the whole Moratorium movement, I realise that some of the arguments we were using then were important.

For example, I remember myself writing in a pamphlet that was issued by the women's liberation movement at one of the moratoriums that we believed the issue of women's oppression to have a certain psychological priority; in essence, that the first discrimination human beings learn is sexual discrimination. It's by an extension of the techniques of subservience and oppression learned in sexual contexts that we are able to extend our activities to racism, imperialism and the major oppressions. So we thought then that there was an important theoretical connection between the women's liberation movement and the moratorium movement.

When the Springboks (the South African football team) were here in 1971, the liberation movement conducted a "hexing" of racists and sexists, specifically linking the

**BRISBANE, September 8**—Police arrested 114 demonstrators today following a march by 3,500 Queensland University students, lecturers and others from the university campus, St. Lucia, to the city.

Some marchers were dragged by their hair to waiting police waggons which filled rapidly as dozens of arrests were made. Several people were punched and kicked by police and one man on crutches was knocked to the roadway and dragged to the footpath by four uniformed police men.

The students were demonstrating against Queensland Government regulations which require demonstrators to apply for a permit before holding a demonstration in the city.

Above: The Civil Liberties March in September, 1967. Peter Wertheim, Dan O'Neill and Brian Laver were amongst those arrested.



Merle Thornton

two by the connection they have in human psychology; that is to say, learning to be an oppressor, or learning to be subservient. In fighting one of these things, you can achieve freedom from the other.

As for the use of the demonstration as a political weapon: for a mass demonstration you need the kind of issue that people can feel is close to their own lives, they can feel is urgent for now. For this reason, the conscription issue could be regarded as the catalyst which made possible the great demonstrations at that time.

Potentially the other movements did offer a different way of life, in that being committed to anti-imperialism ought to have had all sorts of implications for the way one lived. It required, however, more than a decision to tear up one's draft card; it required the decision to commit oneself to a life of fighting imperialism. This was more than most students seemed willing to do.

One thing, I believe, that was essential to the women's movement offering a new way to live was the emphasis particularly on consciousness-raising, making an appeal to psycho-analytic, psychological management techniques, relating to those used in group therapy. Women sought to re-inforce one another in raising consciousness about the way general social realities are related to the details of one's personal life, including the most intimate details, and I think this accounted for a genuine intellectual breakthrough in the women's movement that was not evident in the other radical movements of that time, or indeed of this. What I mean is the very healthy refusal in the women's movement to discuss very general theoretical concepts without making sure one could relate these to one's personal life and that one actually knew what the great theoretical generalisations meant in human terms.

I believe that has been exhibited in the growth of the women's movement while the other political movements - at least in an organised sense, have dwindled. I'd now like to make a few critical remarks about the things that I thought then were deficiencies in the radical movement and the women's movement at that time and I think that they have not been solved yet.

One thing was most noticeable - the emphasis upon the personal decision (in the case of conscription) and also the affluent backgrounds of students of that time.

There was a rather self-indulgent emphasis on personal pleasure, the importance of personal experience, of expanding experience; a kind of psychedelic approach to life. This is linked with the approach to democracy in the University government, the emphasis on what you might call naive anarchism, the emphasis on the experiential aspects of participation in every level of decision making - it's good for you to make decisions, a fun experience - I'm exaggerating one kind of attitude and in an emotional rather than a theoretical kind of way, but I think these emotions were present and

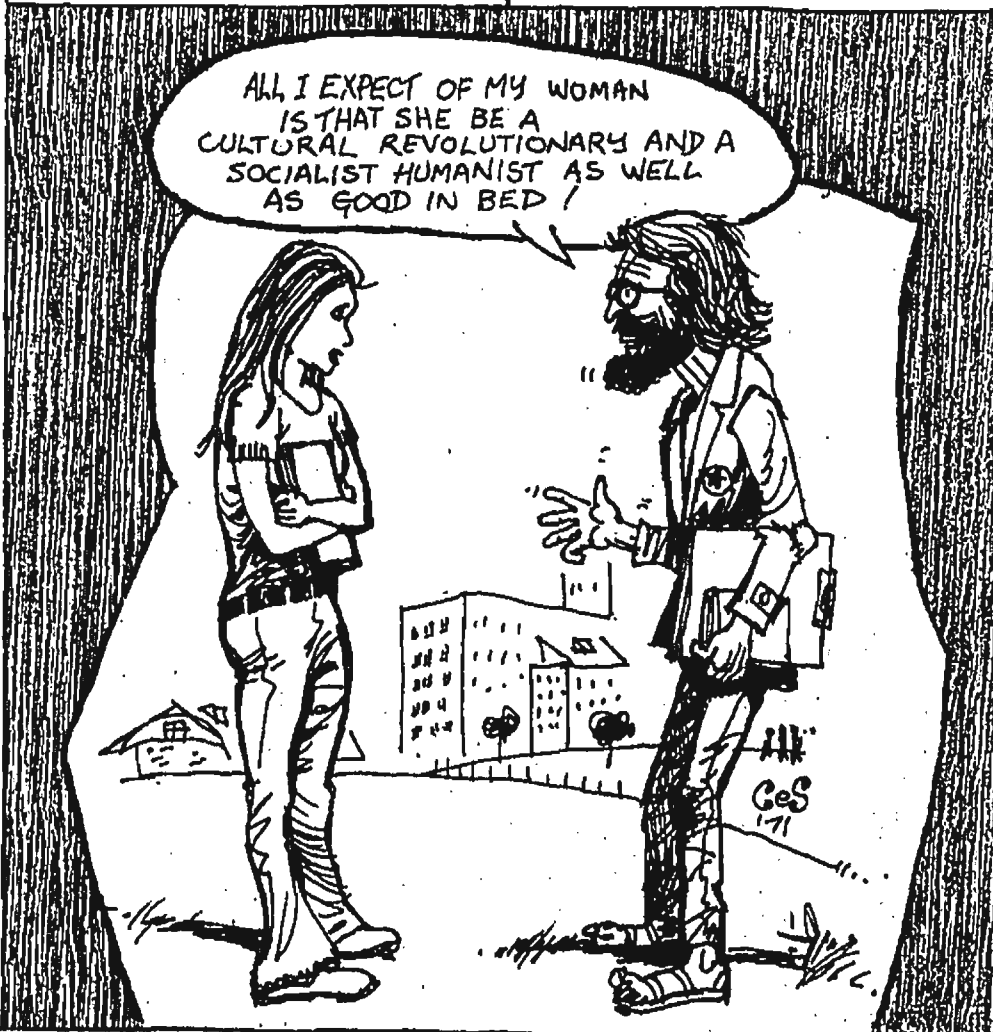
they did lead to a theoretical deficiency, a lack of willingness to build organisation for on-going programmes of improvement.

One last deficiency in the radical and feminist movements was an emphasis on the cult of spontaneity which didn't emphasise such qualities as taking individual and on-going responsibility, delegating responsibility, even making certain kinds of political trans run on time. Some of the more aware members of the movement realised this and they dug in for a long haul. This is evident in the way people have returned to their departments and tried to relate the theoretical side of their radicalisation to their own courses, their relation to students, to a radicalisation of the theory of their subjects and disciplines.

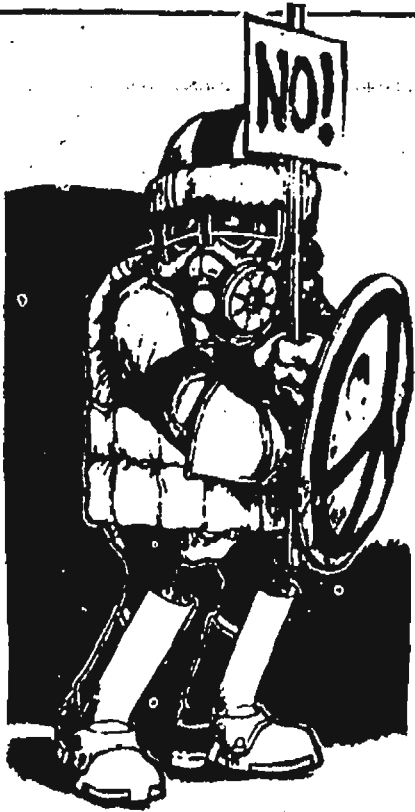
*I think this relates to what Ralph Nader has said; that the movement often failed to realise that what's called for in trying to achieve social change is persistence, hard work and really good organization.*

I think we do await a new kind of political analysis; this relates to theories that some have expressed - of a sort of swing to tyranny in the coming years. I remember a recent SMG pamphlet that said the eco-farming kind of people have turned to strong man type of leaders who keep their camps free from roustabouts and so on.

More widely expressed with considerable ballyhoo on the media has been the fear of a rise of fascism connected with a major depression in England and the same sort of thing in Australia. I think these fears are not altogether unfounded, but I think what is rather the case







is that we do await a fresh deep - striking political theory, which will form the basis for new initiatives in politics that haven't really been forthcoming.

What we need is something that carries the kind of conviction Marx's theory of class did in the last century. When first advanced that was a most enlightening theory - all sorts of problems with it have now emerged, but to hear it for the first time was certainly to be enlightened and it's changed people's mind's permanently. Now we don't have that same kind of deep analysis of sex oppression - something that will carry with it obvious implications for the way to proceed against sex-oppression, rather what we have is an agglomeration of insights together in one overall synthesising analysis.

I think that there has been a kind of theoretical and thus practical faltering in left politics generally and that, the initiatives of the time under discussion - late 60's, early 70's couldn't really be followed through for a fundamental reason - that there wasn't a sufficiently deep analysis of the problem and how to go against it.

I don't know if there's going to be a major crisis of capitalism in Marxist terms, it seems to me there is a bit of wish-fulfillment in Marxists who light upon the inflationary problem, and the problems of the world money system and so on. There's a bit of a down-turn and people see at last the justification of Marx's doctrine of the crises of capitalism. I'm not saying it won't happen and I don't have enough economic knowledge to venture my stance one way or the other, but I've seen nothing that convinces me it must happen. I think that if there's a major down-turn as distinct from a final cataclysmic crisis of capitalism, there will be problems of an emergence of tyranny. There will also be opportunities for radicalization for people to see the 'skull beneath the bouquet' of capitalism. I think that it will be a fighting situation; that the outcome is not to be determined in a fatalistic way for tyranny or for revolution. I think it is up to us to analyse the situation, and to show the initiatives. That tyranny is upon us, or that revolution is around the corner - I don't necessarily think that either is the case.

*The Women's Movement has a potential for change amongst both women and hopefully, men. Just how significant has its impact been so far on women at large and society at large? What role do you think it will play in any changes which could occur in the future in the total political sphere?*

The Women's movement is clearly the tip of the iceberg in a great period of social change with respect to sex-roles, the work allocated to the sexes, in the society and so on. It's important not to over-estimate the effects of the women's movement as distinct from the effects of that social change generally. In a way, the movement is itself a symptom of those social changes, but it can transcend that position by its own initiative. Its not destined for a great role of initiative unless it makes itself so.

But, without wanting to exaggerate it could be said that the women's movement has changed the general social consciousness to the extent that it has somewhat changed the framework in which people think of sexual questions. Not necessarily in the kind of answers that they give, it hasn't turned everybody into a liberationist, that's for sure. It has changed the kinds of things that peo-

*'Elitism was always present. Too often, those that felt they had established themselves as true 'radicals' or true 'feminists' could be discovered sneering at, or disregarding those other people who were still exhibiting 'bourgeois' characteristics, or who had only reached the 'reformist' stage. What was always forgotten was that the level of consciousness of any person (including those in the movement) does not change overnight. Radical thinkers are not necessarily born that way. B.D.*

ple think are relevant, and this is a very important impact for it to have had at a time when the media doesn't necessarily provide people with ready-made answers, but does very much set the framework of people's questioning. In this way, I think the movement has been successful, because the changing of social consciousness is fundamental for securing social change. I don't think that consciousness is all, but I do myself believe that with respect to sex-oppression, capitalist society may be in something of an equilibrium. As far as the economic system goes, it may be the case that the advantages and disadvantages to the system of diminishing sex-oppression at this stage may be fairly finely balanced, which provides a greater opportunity for consciousness-raising to have an effect. If we're not in a situation where the logic of our economics strongly counter-indicates the liberation of women, if we're not in a situation where economics demands that women shall be liberated, there may be a chance for us to exercise an initiative of consciousness and get something that's very valuable without being pushed into it by economics.

With respect to the relationship of the feminist movement and the Left generally, I think that there has been a good deal of unease both at the practical and theoretical levels within which people saw that connection. Among some at least there's been an attempt to relate their feminist hand to their socialist hand. Among others, there's been a feeling that their being into the feminist movement ought somehow to have wider political, probably left, probably socialist, implications but they could not quite see the connection. There's been a rather self-conscious effort to show how socialist theory, or Marxist theory somehow covers feminist issues, or how feminism somehow involves socialism. The more I thought about it, the more it seemed to me that at the theoretical level, these two things are dissociated; that socialism is about class-oppression, and feminism is about sex-oppression, and those two 'oppressions' are not related by definition or some causal process. One could in principle end oppression which is specifically sexual, the oppression of women because they're women or as women, without getting rid of class-oppression.

Of course, they're both very major oppressions, and they both need to be fought, but this has many implications for the strategy of fighting them, implications which haven't been well thought-out by their opponents yet.

But if I'm right about the dissociation of those two oppressions in principle, then this realization would clear the air a good deal and make a lot of strategic decisions seem closer. It may also make closer the day when one would have a more penetrating social analysis generally. This would assist major and new political initiatives.

I think to some extent the feminist movement in the period under discussion, late sixties to early seventies, did stand aside from the other political movements because it offered a different way of life. It offered in a personal sense, a more on-going issue than the kind of catalyst in the other political movements. I think it has shown more growth, and hasn't been characterised by the phase of disillusionment and cynicism, present in the other movements. On the contrary, it's continued to be an extremely optimistic movement, and perhaps excessively so. While hardly a mass-movement it has much more claim with a recent conference for example of some 800 persons from all over the country, than other political movements of that time.

I think, though, it does share the same social context, it does need more thought behind it and a way to understand a democratic organization which is still organization and can carry out on-going programs for social change. It does need new initiatives in the same way that those other movements do.

I have said in a general way that the problems around which the great demonstrations were organized are still just as much with us but I'd like to point specifically to the problem of the Vietnam war with major casualties and offensives still going on, the terrible oppression in South Vietnam continuing and the draining of the North Vietnamese economy by war needs and casualties. And yet the tumult and the shouting has died in Australia which emphasises to what a great extent the personal issue of conscription was the catalyst to not just realising the problem, but being prepared to do something active about it even though fairly limited. I say that in spite of the considerable sacrifices made by a few individuals. The activism remained fairly limited, like going on the next march or becoming a draft-resister (which was of considerable impact, but only personally for those who did it, and only a few did). Many simply cheered them on, hid them for a night "for a big lark". Compared with the kinds of sacrifices being made in the Third World, in the war against imperialism, these are very small sacrifices.

The main thing is that not only the anti-imperialist issue, but even the Vietnam war issue is still here, but the direct experiential catalyst like a draft-card and the counter to it - the exciting and somewhat 'fun' thing (I say this with all great respect for those who made the most sacrifices) of draft-resistance, or, much more fun, just being a supporter of draft-resisters has disappeared. When that's gone, the movement's gone. It's a pretty sad comment.

*\* (For a more detailed answer by Dan O'Neill to the first two questions see Semper Floreat Vol 43, No 12 1973 and the ABC's published scripts of Dan's 1974 'Heresies' contribution)*



Dan O'Neill

## dan O'NEILL

Well, that's all very complex \*. It seems to me that you could say that particularly on this campus a rather complex series of events took place of the following kind. From very different traditions: the left wing of the Catholic tradition, from a tradition that I'd describe as Benthamite individualistic nationalism, from slightly more traditional left currents, and from within a very much American-oriented New Left position, a number of people embodying ideas out of these traditions worked from a stage of either sporadic action or concerted and fairly theoretical discussion, towards a situation that was triggered off by the traffic regulations. Although 4,000 people marched into town on this Civil Liberties issue, practically the rest of the University walked along beside them until there was a conflict with the police. It wasn't really about any of the individual things it started out to be about, nor was it about Civil Liberties but it turned out that we'd brought ourselves into what you might describe as the struggle of our generation, and in particular into all of the issues that exploded out of the Vietnam war. I think what we brought ourselves into was the fact of the emergence of the Third World, the breaking of the Cold War, the fact of world-wide imperialism; also, as it emerged more clearly later on, the really deep inner forces in people that were assisting those things to continue, and that were in a way introjecting the oppression. For most people there was a vast kind of green fog inside them stopping them from seeing the nature of the structural issues.

And that's why for so very long, all of those people seemed to be a kind of dissenting minority - no matter what the differences between them were - and it wasn't only in Australia but in all other countries, they seemed to be to the vast silent majority as it was called, a kind of lunatic fringe, because it seemed to me there was a sort of a space inside people between their oppression as an external fact and their oppression as an internal fact, that had the consistency and the stability of some kind of concrete.

It was this that prevented them from making the connections that a few people all over the western world and then later on in Eastern Europe were beginning to make with increasing trenchancy but more importantly with a renewed political passion. It seems to me that that political passion is the really decisive factor distinguishing the New left currents from the old left currents. So what was more important than the ideologies into which we all later became constricted was the sheer creativity of the intense refusal of a vast inter-related set of structures that were both outside us and inside us that we didn't understand. I always remember in this connection my friend Peter Thompson's continual remark that "the official world was crazy!" It was as if the massiveness of what we were against could only be described in terms that made it seem like one 'vast buzzing nightmare'; James Joyce had said this in one of his books. He has Stephen Daedalus say that history is a nightmare from which he is trying to awaken.

The short answer is that there was something so massive going on in the world and in the changes in the individual lives of those people who were sensitive to those outside changes, that you were always tempted to a short-hand description, you were always tempted to what one writer called "the great refusal". But what was really needed was what Rudi Deutschke called "the long march through the existing institutions". But what we didn't know at that stage was that the long march through the existing institutions wouldn't be a simple linear progression but would be in fact as tortuous a march as the long March through China from which he took the metaphor.

We attempted to take a short cut and we didn't know it was a short cut. Around 1968 I well remember the first day on which red flags and green flags were stuck up in the forum area. Now the forum area had become for me and for many others a symbol of intense collective discussion from many view-

*It is clear that the radical movement too often failed to learn from its mistakes. Thus, instead of being able to strengthen its resolve to evolve more sophisticated modes of thought and action, its failures only weakened its resolve. B.D.*

points. Now I think what happened was that after the triggering off of theory by the American New Left events, there was a sudden consolidation of theory in a premature way by an invitation of the New Left as it emerged in European countries.

We had a whole complex of concerns and preoccupations and a whole depth of new creativity, new passion, many positive and negative things inside us that were directed against, in a way, the manner in which the entire society was being run. That is, we were not only against its socio-economic organisation but we were also against the reasons why it couldn't seem to have any other socio-economic organisation. We were against a whole epoch of history, we were against, or at least I think we were against, the roots of industrialism, the habits of thought that led to industrialism and to capitalism, we were against Western rationalism, empiricism, we were against the misuse of technology and the roots of the misuse of technology, we were against in a certain sense Science, or the abuse of Science, we were against the connection of Science and power; we were against the connection of the University world with the military industrial complex, we were against all that.

And the only available ideology that had any pretensions to comprehending such a vast number of concerns was some version of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Now I think that the sad and awful fact is that the Marxist-Leninist ideology simply does not comprehend the immensity of the present crisis. I'd like to quote at this point one very pregnant remark of a man with whom I disagree on many issues but whose general analysis seems to me to have the tragic radicalism that is required by any analysis of this period. I speak of Ivan Illich. He says that we've been through a crisis IN our civilization before (in 1929, for example); we face a crisis OF our civilization in which there is probably going to be just one really big enormous crackup, and this crackup is going to be of such proportions and occur in so many interlocked dimensions that unless people have begun to prepare themselves spiritually and morally and mentally for it beforehand, they're just going to be utterly bewildered. And it seems to me that we can already see traces of that bewilderment around in that many of the existing Marxist groups are acting out long-established Western rationalistic defence mechanisms against a bewilderment which corresponds to a play of forces that can no longer be comprehended by any single ideology of any of the dissenting groups. What I'm not suggesting is that what we need is some new vast complex subtle and comprehensive ideology more profound, more powerful than the Marxist ideology, because I think that in a very different sense from the sense in which it was urged around the end of the Cold War, we've reached the end of ideology. I don't mean the end of ideology in Daniel Bell's sense.

I mean the end of ideology in the sense of regarding ideology as that level of the mind which can comprehend the immensity of the psychic forces and of the sheer institutional, class, ethnic, and sexual forces that are now in play on what's going to become (pretty soon I think) a catastrophic level of spectacularity. I think that what we're about to undergo could very well be either the apocalypse or something as slow and as dangerous as a kind of vast, collective, communal cancer.

What I'm suggesting is that we need, both those of us who would have previously regarded ourselves as "the movement" and those of us who recognise the seriousness of the present position faced by the world in both the Third World and the developed countries, to get together on a new basis where the solidarity is based

continued page 26

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from page 25; Dan O'Neill

on things deeper than concurrence in an ideology or the sharing of a list of propositions or the being in some organisation rather than another organization.

It's not at all clear to me what precise form solidarity should take. All that I can say with any certainty is that it must be the interchange of people's autonomous creativity. This will mean far more respect for the differences between one another than we've had up till now and a far greater wariness about the subtler form of interpersonal domination.

This brings in immediately the whole flood of issues about race and sex and creed and ideology and class; (if we could put all that in brackets for a moment) I would say that I agree basically with the position that SMG is consistently putting forward and that is that we need to take over control of our own lives. What's happened is that people are alienated from their own lives, and there are any number of ways, any number of methodologies by which you can analyse that alienation, but what has to happen is people gradually and communally acting together come into greater and greater possession of their own autonomy.

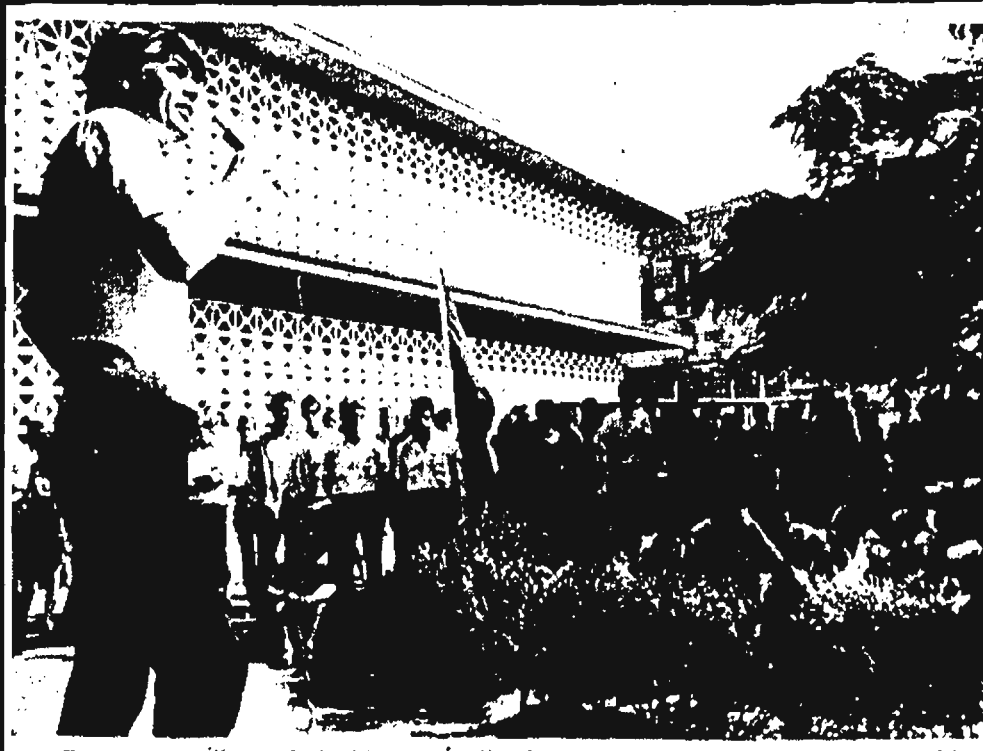
Extend that until it becomes the sort of thing that the workers' control movement is working towards, the sort of thing that the self-management movement is working towards. Now there are stacks of unanswered questions in there about the relationship of all this to the class analysis, and about how it relates to Mao's slogan "learning from the people and teaching the people" but that I am quite sure is the direction in which we have got to go. We must go into an anti-authoritarian direction. In fact, while I think that SMG has many, many weaknesses that at present they're making fairly strong efforts to overcome, I think that the one great strength of SMG to which I'd like to pay tribute is their persistence, the doggedness of their seriousness. What it brings to my mind is the fact that pretty soon after the Springbok tour (about 1972), although in many other parts of the world the common struggle that we'd all be engaged in escalated in Australia it didn't seem to escalate. In Australia it seemed as though, having been constrained by ideologies that didn't properly interpret our experience, we all began to fragment and disintegrate, both as against one another and within our very selves.

So that according to our temperaments or inclinations or interests or weaknesses, or strengths even, we all took different directions. Some of us I think took the direction of an increasing loss of faith in our own ability to understand what was going on; at first an increasing kind of endurance of and then almost something you could perversely describe as enjoyment of, our own bewilderment. So that gradually, states of cynicism based on frustration, and nihilism, on profound ignorance of spiritual states that we'd never experienced before, began to grow.

You can find that by mixing long enough with people around the Royal Exchange (RE) and I'm not exempting myself from this and I'm not exempting many people I respect and admire intensely from this. I think it's so bad that we now carry the temptation to nihilism, the temptation to cynicism around with us. I can understand for the first time, I think, at least from my own personal point of view, how it was that Nazism and Fascism (for example), at the present moment in Europe could arise, and is arising on such a scale.

I think it does arise out of daily life, it does arise out of the frustration of deep energies, the disconnection of deep energies from value systems that seem no longer to comprehend a person's experience or to interpret it. When this happens, I think people split in one of two ways. The whole trend is a kind of death trend but in a death trend there are what you might call the killers and the killed. There are the destroyers and the self-destroyed. And when I look about me and look at some of my own behaviour and the behaviour of some of my own friends, it seems to me that I see people who are caught in this kind of process of disintegration.

I'm talking about people who were intensely involved or even peripherally involved in the movement, but it doesn't matter, there are stacks of people around who are now in, what seems to be a kind of a drift leading them to encourage, a split between the deeper part of themselves (which they're increasingly incapable of understanding) and the superficial part of themselves (which they think they're devoting to ends like hedonism, enjoyment, escape). They think they're devoting themselves to some of the very things that certain phases of the old



The Forum Area, "a symbol of intense collective discussion". Phil Richardson speaking.

movement celebrated as necessary and congratulated itself on as distinguishing it from the old left movement. You've got to inspect all this very carefully because if what's going on is the thwarting of profound energies then there are those who'll get sucked in when the real crack up begins to come. There are those who'll get sucked into the mindless destruction of valuable things - all kinds of valuable things including persons.

There are those who are prey to the rise of powerful, fascist ideologies, powerful men who use their energy in a destructive way and there are those who'll get sucked into the sorts of states that other people prey on: the states of indifference, the states of need, the states of a desire to hate. But the hate has no object so if a person can point out the object to them, the hate can be switched onto it.

And the object can change very rapidly, so the hate can change very rapidly. It puts me in mind of what George Orwell described in 1984 as Hate Week, when the enemy of the people, Emmanuel Goldstein, was flashed onto the television screen and the hate would rise to a frenzy. One week the enemy would be one of the countries they were opposed to, and the next week that country would be their ally, but the hate would remain the same and would go on being poured out.

It might seem a long way from the Royal Exchange Hotel to Fascist rallies, to the anti-utopias of George Orwell but it seems to me that what we're learning the present period - as the ecological collapse continues as the collapse of the industrial mode of production continues, as the disproportion between the Third World and the advanced countries continues as madness increases in its many forms (but particularly in the developed countries) is that the gap is not so very wide between everyday life and Nazism.

One is the nightmare version of the daily life of the other, it's like the flipside of the daily life of one vast suburb of the world, like Australia. It seems to me that in a sense what disguises for Australians the real nature of their experience is the fact that we're probably the most suburban nation on earth. I only wish we could monitor the dreams of people in Australia and play them back on national radio and TV to them day after day so that they could see the horrifying shapes that are taking bodily and concrete form in other parts of the world; in Chile, in Italy where fascists are killing leftists and where leftists are responding with the necessary defensive violence, in Indonesia where 500,000 people were killed after the takeover, any number of other places where you'd care to mention.

We can't congratulate ourselves that Australia at least hasn't reached that stage, because we have reached that stage. It's just that the outbreak is taking different forms in different places.

I think it's no accident that there's so much preoccupation in the developed countries now among novelists, and psychiatrists and anti-psychiatrists and poets with the phenomena of madness and suicide, because that's what the cancer's like when it's got nowhere to go institutionally and has to go inside, down to the deeper structures of the personality.

I think that we're not interested enough,

of what you have said, how do you see them avoiding one possible outcome of doing this and that is: the psychological impact might just be too much for them, that is to say an appreciation of the depth or complexity of all the things that you've been talking about, might in itself make them lose any will before they get under way?

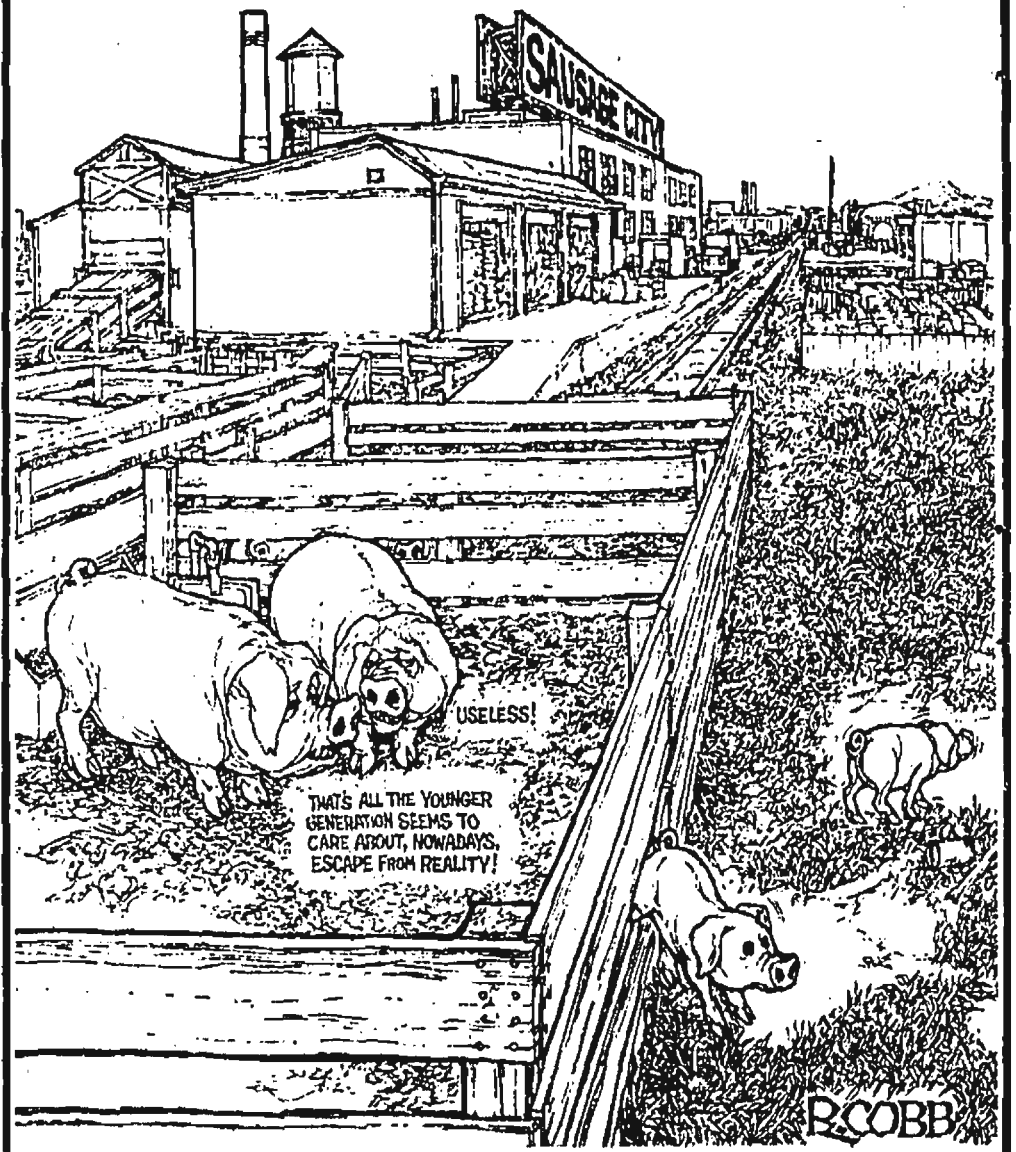
Yeah. That is a really interesting question because the first thing that flashed into my mind was a psychiatric expression: the general paralysis of the insane. I think there might be something called the paralysis of the supposedly sane and some people have already entered into that paralysis and for some it's a kind of necessary defensive mechanism.

If you look at what's happening to a lot of secondary school kids if you can believe what the younger Uni students tell you about their conferees or even about themselves, it sounds to me as if they've said "Look the rot's gone so far and the attempt to deal with it in terms of analysis, and theoretical constructs is so obviously inadequate that we may as well lie down and either wait or try to go away mentally, into some kind of spiritual exile, while remaining here. Now that's the way I interpret some of what to some people might seem to be cynicism and apathy. It seems to me that you can interpret some of these responses, especially by sensitive youngsters as a kind of anticipatory series of signals by some of the most responsive kind of spirits among the younger generation of the size of the chaos that they feel they haven't got either the intellectual or emotional equipment to deal with. That added to the fact that they know it's not going to improve if their elder brothers start to go to work and intellectually analyse it for them; they're preparing for some kind of liberation until the time when it really cracks up.

Because of problems relating to the transcription of Dan O'Neill's interview, his contribution does not proceed further, while complete to this point.

for example, in French intellectual movements other intellectual movements, like Structuralism in which I think we'd pretty rapidly find that the deep structures inside human beings, the things that structure human personality, have got intimate connections with the social structures of a society in which production is alienated, in which even suffering is now alienated from the people who produce and who suffer.

If people who agree with you were to attempt to come to terms in some way with much



## "Public entitled to ask about attitudes at universities"

THE public is entitled to ask some questions about attitudes at our universities: seeing it largely foots the bill.

Why should the universities be used as sanctuaries by those determined to wage war on our society and destroy our way of life as we know it?

Why should they tolerate behaviour which is totally unacceptable elsewhere in the community?

Why should these avowed enemies of our society continue to enjoy the privileges of tertiary education where nine out of ten people are still excluded from these advantages?

This rabid minority demonstrates its contempt for the University's administration by its continued outrageous behaviour, confident that the triple invocation of "freedom of dissent", "freedom of speech", or "academic freedom" will ensure their excesses are condoned or excused.

Does this mean that exposure to modern tertiary education results in profound confusion of values? Are our academic leaders

now devoid of all sense of moral direction?

Are they unable to agree on a course of action for fear of being labelled "wrong" by posterity?

If so this is certain abdication to those who believe they will bury us - Gordon Olive, Dawson Road, Run-corn.

[Mr. Olive is a former Battle of Britain pilot and organiser of Commonwealth Youth Week in Brisbane.]



"I'm glad you young people have seen fit to protest nonviolently. It shows you're civilized. Now get out."

Courier-Mail 9/9/1970. Letter to the Editor.