

# Letters

## Confrontation Tactics

The morality of American society is always being unmasked by a radical minority on American campuses. It is time for the morality of the minority to be unmasked.

The news media have little idea of the real issues behind the increasing disruption of colleges and universities. At the University of New Mexico the war was not the real issue, nor was the primary purpose of the recent "strike" to protest the war, although there were many sincere people involved. The "strike" was first announced by radicals on the faculty whose primary purpose was to cause disruption with a view toward forcing "reform" on the university. The war protest was a moral mask behind which radical faculty members manipulated a minority of students and nonstudents in an effort to gain control over the governance and curriculum of the university. They have partially succeeded. The radicals are a tightly organized group opposing a confused faculty. They take advantage of, and callously use, the values of academic liberals while threatening disruption and violence if their demands are not granted. What is underway is a subtle exercise in fascism. The struggle for power by the minority will continue under another guise after the war is over. The threat to academic standards and academic freedom at UNM is not from the people of New Mexico but from radicals on the faculty.

Generally speaking, faculties are impotent in the face of such tactics, partly because they are composed primarily of academic liberals, who are very aware of the problems and imperfections of society. Many have spent their entire lives studying the ills of society, and perhaps they feel that some of their efforts toward legitimate reform have been frustrated by vested interests. If they become mildly disaffected, they can be easily used by a radical minority that is totally disaffected. Also, liberals are proud progressives—

a fact which radicals exploit as they push them to the left with threats of denouncing any laggards as reactionaries. In this manner, academic liberals can be forced to abandon some of their traditional principles in order to maintain their progressive image.

Disruption in the universities stems partly from a contradiction in our intellectual foundations. Morality has long been secularized. Moral fervor, once expressed in individual striving for religious salvation, has been given a social and political purpose which demands the moral perfection of society. At the same time, due to scientific scepticism, morality and moral expression have been explained in the classrooms as being mere rationales for class interest, sex drive, and so on. The consequence of such "sophistication" is that students are very suspicious of any moral expressions in defense of existing society. They regard them as mere expressions of conformity, self-interest, hypocrisy, or jingoism. The contradiction between instilling students with a moral fervor to perfect society and simultaneously teaching them to be suspicious of society's morality resolves itself as follows: to students, moral expression appears honest only when it asserts the immorality of existing society. Thus it identifies with socially destructive, even revolutionary trends. An attack on existing society becomes the only legitimate form of moral expression. People who attack their own society often have more influence than those who defend it.

This contradiction appears first in the universities, our intellectual centers, where it may exist for a long time and even promote social reforms. But eventually it breaks its barriers. Nothing remains inviolate—even patriotism and veneration of the Constitution have fallen. As a negative force, the power of morality is destroying civilization—that is the real confrontation.

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## Yogurt: Too Much of a Good Thing

The paper by Richter and Duke on "Cataracts produced in rats by yogurt" (12 June, p. 1372) adds a great deal of oil on the fire under the already steaming cauldron of food additives. Many food additives, particularly several of those generally recognized as safe (GRAS), will be subjected to close scrutiny in the months and years ahead. Why stop there? Why not question the safety of each and every one of the thousands of trace substances (nutrients, metabolites, and so forth) we ingest daily with our diet?

I can already predict that most experimental animals will react adversely to any food or substance if this is fed exclusively. Richter and Duke have brilliantly demonstrated that too much of a good thing is indeed bad. Important as the findings may seem, namely, that high-galactose intake leads to development of cataracts in rats, it is the emotionalism of overly concerned people who in their confusion over reality and remote hazard often misconstrue such results at the expense of otherwise harmless substances, beneficial products, or an entire industry. If yogurt and, possibly, the whole gamut of fermented and other high-lactose milk products should see their images tarnished, it would be more than tragic, especially in view of the thousands of years these foods have benefited man. To question this experiment further, it should be kept in mind that the investigators fed a low-fat yogurt, thus possibly inducing vitamin A deficiency symptoms. It is known that vitamin A occurs in the fat of foods and is necessary for normal vision.

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## Fertile Period after Vasectomy

In her letter (26 June), Anne Roe suggests the need to "determine the length of time during which viable sperm continue to be produced after vasectomy." Those sperm stored in the seminal vesicles appear to be able to survive at least 6 weeks if retained in that nurturant environment. I base this comment on experience with some 70 patients on whom I performed vasectomies. For one particular patient, post-

operative sexual activity was nil for a 6-week period. Microscopic examination of his semen after that length of time revealed active spermatozoa. He was convinced my surgery had been poorly performed. Resumption of sexual activity, however, (using condom protection) soon used up the supply held in the seminal vesicles, and within 2 weeks, there were no active sperm found on repeat microscopic examination of his semen. Both of us were relieved.

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### Immigration Yields

Kelman (Letters, 15 May) suggests that "from a purely scientific point of view, it is inefficient and ineffective to tell Americans to abort their children and kill their old folks because of the population crisis, and at the same time allow a net positive migration of over 4 million each decade." Obviously, it is a waste of time to tell Americans to do anything they do not feel like doing; it is equally obvious that it is very good business to import 4 million, skilled or educated adults ready made (so to speak) instead of rearing and educating the same number of Americans; it would still be profitable, even if countries of the immigrants were repaid the costs (food, housing, and education) of raising them, plus a reasonable profit because of the lower costs of most foreign educational systems.

Americans have been in the past and continue to be beneficiary of a huge foreign aid program, not at least from the underdeveloped countries.

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Kelman would solve the population crisis in the United States "instantly" by stopping all immigration. His solution is as "irrelevant" and "extreme" as that of Hanzlik whom he challenges.

Francis A. Walker, one-time director of the U.S. Census, contended that our total population up to his time (late 19th century) was in no way affected by immigration; that, had there been no immigration, an equal increase in population would have resulted from an increase in births. Population

growth, as revealed by the census counts, supports his thesis. If the population data from 1790 to 1960 are plotted on a semilog graph they show a steady growth. It is an easy matter to fit a mathematical growth curve to these figures (or even to draw a smooth curve through them) in order to portray the direction of long-time growth. This growth rate is astonishingly steady, with a high degree of linearity from 1790 to 1860 and a very slowly declining rate of growth thereafter; there are only three deviations of sufficient magnitude to be recognized easily on the chart. Population figures for 1830 and 1840, maybe even 1850, show a slight dip below the hypothetical linear trend; the figures for 1870 show a considerable fall; and the data for 1940, 1950, and 1960 the greatest dip of all. These facts support the hypothesis that a vast complex of economic, sociological, and biological forces bear upon population reproduction, and that they tend to produce growth in numbers but, in time, at a declining rate—all in a complex relation of human needs to resources, and that, in an environment such as the United States, the end result will be a stationary population (zero growth). The exceptions to this steady evolution toward a stationary population have always, in the U.S., been a temporary downward thrust of growth rates, due to some fairly catastrophic situation, followed by a catching-up. There has been no catastrophic upward surge in the U.S. to a position in excess of the long-time trend. . . .

Some single-factor solutions to the population "explosion" may be less effective than claimed. Birth control and family planning, for example, can be supported on their merits, but they may not be adequate to control or slow down a population explosion. Rather than wait for the slowdown indicated by the existing curve of U.S. population growth, it would be well to have some far more extensive and comprehensive studies of the relation of population growth to family income and level of education. . . .

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### FDA's Altered Memo

Boffey's review of Turner's book *The Chemical Feast* (17 Apr., p. 349) referred to Marvin Legator's memo,

written in January 1969, in which he recommended that "the use of cyclamates should be immediately curtailed, pending the outcome of additional studies." Boffey reported: "The memo was passed to Legator's superior, Edwin L. Hove, who disagreed with the recommendation and deleted it from the memo." He repeated the charge made in the book that I had forwarded the memo, retyped and altered, without informing either Legator or the FDA Commissioner or the person to whom the memo was actually addressed (the Associate Commissioner for Science at the FDA) of the deletion.

In his memo Legator repeated a verbal report he had heard from a reputable source that *N*-hydroxylated cyclohexylamine had been identified in the blood serum of two men receiving cyclamate. Legator felt this to be very important because some *N*-hydroxylated compounds are known to cause cancer, and therefore he recommended that the use of cyclamate be immediately curtailed. To me that recommendation seemed pretty far out. As I did not wish to concur with it, I wrote on the margin: "I do not concur; insufficient basis" and then I forwarded the memo to my boss, the Director of the Bureau of Science. The memo intact except for my margin note was received in the Bureau Director's office.

The deletion in the memo of both the recommendation and my note had occurred when it was retyped by order of my boss, the acting Bureau Director, prior to forwarding it in final form to the Associate Commissioner. I did not make the decision to delete Legator's recommendation, and I am no longer certain where it was retyped. I have authenticated documents which trace the step-by-step progress of the memo through official channels. Many of the other "finds" reported in Turner's book are perhaps as irrelevant, inaccurate, and false as the issue of the Altered Memo. . . .

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Turner's book charged that a crucial memorandum had been altered at the FDA without informing the originator or the addressee, and that Hove was the one who altered it. Hove does not refute the substance of Turner's charge that the memorandum was altered, but he says the altering was done by someone else.—PMB.