

The American Attitude

The American Government and people have underwritten Western Union. During the last war the United States guaranteed the survival of the British Commonwealth and Empire. There is no reason to suppose that American public opinion would oppose Commonwealth Union. Indeed, the United States might welcome and support Commonwealth Union with the consequent closer grouping of the democratic nations of the world.

The cardinal fact that we face today is this: Unless the Commonwealth and Empire is united, the whole system may pass away. The centrifugal and disintegrating forces now operating on the Commonwealth and Empire give us every reason to conclude that the Commonwealth and Empire has no divine mandate to exist.

*"Before my breath, like blazing flax,
Man and his marvels pass away;
And changing empires wane and wax,
Are founded, flourish and decay."*

("The Antiquary": Scott).

To survive the Commonwealth and Empire needs the moral food supplied to men's minds only by closer union; sentimental claptrap is no nourishment.

Non enim ignavia magna imperia continari: For great empires are not maintained by cowardice.

(Tacitus: Annals, Book 15, 1).

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DEBATING COMMITTEE

On November 28th and 29th representatives from eleven Maritime Universities met in Halifax where Dalhousie University played host to the annual Maritime Intercollegiate Debating League (M. I. D. L.) Conference. The conference this year resulted in a lot of very important work being accomplished by the various representatives. The regular M. I. D. L. schedule which provides for each member University having three official debates was drawn up, with the Law School drawing debates with Saint Dunstan's, Kings and Mount Allison Universities. A few important changes were made in the M. I. D. L. constitution during the course of the conference and on the whole the various delegates returned home with the gratifying feeling of having accomplished a good deal of work. A word here is in order to express our sincere appreciation to Dalhousie for having made our stay there a very pleasant one and for the capable manner in which the conference was conducted. Representatives from the Law School were, J. Eric Young and Ervin M. O'Brien.

It is interesting to note how we as an individual University fit into the national structure. Before the establishment of C. U. D. A. in 1947 the national aspect of debating was guided

by N. F. C. U. S. In 1946 it was suggested by N. F. C. U. S. that all University debating leagues such as our own M. I. D. L. and the Western University Debating League (W. U. D. L.) organize a national league under the name of C. U. D. A., which would be concerned with, "the arranging and promoting of debates between the East and West, and between the United States and Canada." Accordingly a constitution was drawn up and approved by the then members of C. U. D. A. The M. I. D. L. officially joined C. U. D. A. in 1948, although C. U. D. A. is now the parent body of N. F. C. U. S. still retains its committee on debating which makes recommendations and works in consort with C. U. D. A.

At present the C. U. D. A. is made up of four intercollegiate debating leagues called: (a) The Inter University Debating League, (b) The Maritime Intercollegiate Debating League, (c) The McGoun Cup League (Western University Debating League) and (d) Ligue des Debats Interuniversitaire—Trophis Villeneuve (French Speaking Villeneuve Trophy League from Quebec). We can see from the above that the debating scheme is carried on a national plane. Notwithstanding that C. U. D. A. is our parent body our close association with the debating committee of N. F. C. U. S. insures us a prominent position in the field of international debating.

To illustrate the extent to which our Dominion Universities are interested in debating, let us look at some of the highlights of international debating sponsored by N. F. C. U. S. before the organization of C. U. D. A. In 1928 a team from the Maritimes was sent through the West with great success, while at the same time a team from Australia toured the whole of Canada. In 1931 a New Zealand team toured Canada, an American team toured East of Montreal, and a British team was sent across Canada. Since 1931 N. F. C. U. S. has been instrumental in arranging debates with various other countries and this year the organization has a request from South Africa for a Canadian team to tour there. Maritimers have been featured on these various tours and it is also quite generally admitted in higher debating circles that the Maritimes have produced and are still producing top-notch debaters.

Perhaps the best way to illustrate just what N. F. C. U. S. does and what it means to us is to point out some of the purposes of that organization. Among other things N. F. C. U. S. aims for the promotion of Federal aid to University students. One of the failings of our present-day Democratic system of Government is that there are at present so many capable men deprived of a University training due to their inability to pay for it. In this connection N. F. C. U. S. prepared a brief to be submitted to the Royal Commission on Arts, Letters and Sciences,

which is currently sitting across Canada. Included in this brief are recommendations regarding scholarships and the costs of textbooks. Plans have been initiated by N. F. C. U. S. whereby the University of Montreal is attempting to organize seminars on a national plane with the hope of getting internationally famous lecturers to conduct them. Then again perhaps the greatest contribution to our great Canadian Nation and its institutions is N. F. C. U. S.'s constant striving to promote Canadian unity.

It is our hope that the C. U. D. A. and the M. I. D. L. will retain its close co-operation with N. F. C. U. S. in future—a future filled with uncertainty and a future in which international understanding and goodwill can be achieved only through a mutual knowledge and respect for our various histories, traditions and institutions and a sympathetic understanding of our problems and difficulties. Debating is and always has been one of our strongest expressions of democracy and through this medium the Universities of Canada today which are moulding the leaders of tomorrow can do much to promote that feeling of international goodwill which is so essential if peace is to reign over this much-troubled world.

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MOOT COURT COMMITTEE

In 1947, the University of New Brunswick Law School succeeded in filling a very serious gap in its student organization when Mr. Gordon Harrigan introduced the Moot Court. Owing to the diligence of the committee and the enthusiasm of the general student body, the Moot Court soon became established as a vital element in the extra-curricular set-up of the School.

The succeeding year witnessed further spade work in determining the working policy of the Moot Court and as a consequence several changes in its mode of function. At this time the Moot Court was so designed as to permit the third-year students to sit on the Bench as Judges. The second-year students pleaded the cases and the first-year students acted as Junior Counsels—the duties of the latter involved looking up pertinent material, under the guidance of the Senior Counsel, and making a short introductory address at the opening of the Moot Court.

This procedure proved fairly successful and yet was neither devoid of weaknesses nor immune to criticism.

The year 1949 countenanced several proposed revisions plus a sudden aftermath of startling controversy. The scheme recommended by this year's committee clearly set out the necessity of calling in practising Barristers in order that the students might acquire proper direction from the Bench. Also put forward was the idea that third-year as well as second-year students should do the pleading as opposed to locating the former on the Bench,—a position ill-suited to their capacities and present training.