



OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Teachers must stay in government's face regardless of inconvenience

Dear Editor:

In her June 20 letter, Judi Cross chaffed at R.N. Bramwell's style and method of presenting his beliefs as facts in his attacks on teachers. Mr. Bramwell then disabused Judi Cross of her argumentative notions and reiterated his belief in teaching "principled thinking."

A vast network of "principled thinkers" out there constantly push one particular ideology at us in letters and columns like this one. These ideologues and propagandists are now known as 'Randians'.

The most distinguishing characteristic of 'Randism' is that it presents its beliefs as facts. Hmmm.

Mr. Bramwell, have you now been keeping something back from us?

Randism is a pseudo-philosophy and intellectual affectation based on the atrocious bodice rippers and supercilious monographs of Ayn Rand. Randians are people who are vulnerable to a queer epiphany from reading 'The Fountainhead' or 'Atlas Shrugged'. They mistake Rand's received banalities for something new and trenchant.

The term Randism now covers its many factions, including the so-called libertarians at Queen's Park. No more hiding. They all force reason to get down in the mud and squeal like a pig.

Randism has been described as so far right it's left. Perfect morality is achieved by totally unrestrained capitalism in every facet of life. For example, a private-enterprise ambulance medic would be perfectly moral if he lets your child bleed to death on the street if he or she can't prove solvency on the spot.

Why should anybody care about a bunch of nutbars with bad taste in reading material? Well, Premier Mike Harris brought a cadre of backroom Randians with him, the Tom Long people, when he came into office. They were profiled as zealous libertarians in the Globe back then. Nobody noticed. Nobody, that is, except people like me who have lost friends and family to this and recognize the cant instantly.

Did you know that Randians desperately want into our high schools? They run a North America-wide high school essay writing contest. Cash-prize winners are those who best convey the principled thinking of Randism. If you ever sever an artery, and your daughter refuses you a free ride to the hospital because it would erode her capacity to accumulate wealth, you'll know what she's been doing in her spare time. At least, before you die, you'll also know she's got a brilliant future at the National Post.

Criticizing Rand, ever, is to "attack the good for being good," another important Randian concept.

No subject under the sun can fail to be better illuminated than by the Randian take on it. Feminism? Rand insisted, "the essence of femininity is hero worship — the desire to look up to a man."

The "principled thinking" of Randism, well remarked by other observers, consists of the ad hominem — the straw man — and the invincible ignorance-fallacies most notably. Invincible ignorance is the consistent transformation of evidence that contradicts a prior belief into support for it instead. Randians, stung badly by the clear-cut evidence of these and many other flaws have an interesting technique to deal with the criticism. Right now they're accusing everyone out there of ad hominem — straw man — and invincible

ignorance fallacies. Get it?

It's astounding that Mr. Bramwell accuses Judi Cross of exactly these first two fallacies, using all three of them himself to do so.

Judi Cross never in any way rejected Mr. Bramwell's right to speak, as he hallucinates. Mr. Bramwell couldn't possibly know what all the moral positions of all unions are or if Judi Cross would be some-

one who would abuse her powers if she had some position in government.

Mr. Bramwell, do you want to explain how I could possibly know what I believe I know?

Or should I write again and cross-quote six years of your epistolary nuggets with droppings from the actual sources?

Judi, the ideology Mr. Harris subscribes to makes the teachers' situation far more

serious than you may have thought. Randism is intent on destroying every last vestige of collective bargaining in existence.

Teachers must stay in this government's face with every weapon at their disposal, regardless of public inconvenience.

I'll help any way I can.

Richard Hodgins
Milton

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