

Press freedom endangered

On December 31 the RCMP seized a film from CJCH-TV Halifax. Their purpose was to examine the film in order to identify demonstrators at a protest in Shelburne at the Continental Sea Foods plant.

After the seizure of the film, charges were laid against four persons for damaging Continental property. Additional charges may result after further examination of the film.

In Vancouver earlier this week federal investigators raided the offices of the two daily newspapers, the Sun and The Province in an attempt to find evidence which could be used to prosecute members of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union.

To us these incidents represent more than simply the identification and prosecution of individuals.

Of far greater significance are the serious implications for free and independent media. These raids indicate a shameful lack of respect for the FREEDOM of the PRESS on the part of police and government officials in this country.

In actual fact these are only two examples of a growing phenomenon. Throughout North America police and the courts are pressuring the press and electronic media to cooperate with them. In the past year dozens of journalists were fined and/or jailed because they protected their files or sources.

If the media are to maintain the confidence of the people then they must remain independent from the police function of investigation resulting in prosecution. It is not the duty of the media to do police work.

We are not trying to minimize the seriousness of the events which have caused the police and government action. But a serious situation does not warrant infringement on media freedoms.

Actions of this sort will necessarily affect the quality of journalism. Journalists afraid of compromising sources may pass up a good story because police actions could destroy their credibility. The effect of police pressure may result in a few convictions but the long term result will be a decrease in the quality of reporting, a mistrust of the media - already somewhat deserved - and a strengthening of police powers.

by Harvey MacKinnon



Letters To the Gazette must be typed if over 100 words. Letters must be less than 600 words. They will not be edited for brevity, coherency, or other reasons. Letters will be published as soon as possible.

Persons submitting letters must provide their name and a telephone number or some other method of reaching them, should there be some question about their identity. Anonymous letters and those with false signatures will not be printed. The use of pseudonyms will be considered in some cases. Deadline for letters is Monday noon.

Letters

Gazette 'hypocrisy'

To the Gazette

While reading The Gazette the other day (ed. 6 Jan. 77), I came upon an hypocrisy too disgusting to leave alone. On page 5, the editor writes: "We at the Dalhousie Gazette and the Dalhousie Student Union believe ... each person has the right to be treated in a manner equal to that of others. To deny this is to deny the right to equality." If you people really believe you are the bastion of justice and the foe of discrimination, then why do I find on page 7 an ad for two Sub dances highlighted by the words "Licensed Events"?

Admit it. These are only golden words for: "Freshmen Get Lost! We're serving (pushing) booze (even though we have the Graywood), and you non-status teenyboppers (we don't care how many of

you there are) are all under age (so go to the Pic or Cousin Bruce's or some place). You people should be studying on Friday and Saturday nights anyways -- what do you mean you're a thousand miles from home and have nowhere else to go? Who cares if you've paid you're \$50.00 feudal taxes! We're concerned with profits, profits and more profits (excuse us, we got a little carried away there), so shut up you young peasants- What do you mean we discriminate! We stood up for the gays, didn't we! And no, we don't recognize The Freshman Liberation Alliance! Besides, you Freshmen are lousy dancers anyways." Andrew "Foxtrot" Lynk B.Sc. 1

Thanks

To the Gazette: A THANK YOU

This is a short letter to express my thanks to a person, whose name I do not know, for sending me my Christmas transcript.

The registrar's office, who normally does this, saw fit to mail my marks to this person instead of myself. When I inquired after my marks, I was told that as the computer said I had received my marks, I must have them. Anyway, they arrived with a letter which was, unfortunately unsigned. I thank you, whoever you are, and I guess better late than never.

Sheilagh Beal

Gazette staff meetings Fridays at 2:00 p.m.

Dalhousie Gazette office, room 334, SUB

Everyone welcome!

The Dalhousie Gazette is the weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student Union. The views expressed in the paper are not necessarily those of the Student Union, the editors, or staff. We reserve the right to edit material submitted for space or legal reasons.

The deadline for copy and advertising is the Monday noon preceding publication. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity, if necessary, will be granted. The Dalhousie Gazette, Canada's Oldest College Newspaper, is a founding member of Canadian University Press. Our office is Room 334 of the Student Union Building. Our mailing address is The Dalhousie Gazette, Dalhousie University, Halifax, N.S. B3H 4J2. Telephone 424-2507. The subscription price is \$7 per year (28 issues). ISSN 0011-5819.

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Newspaper Workshops

--with Susan Johnson, Atlantic Region fieldworker for Canadian University Press

Sunday, January 16
1-4 p.m.--newsriting and feature writing

Saturday, January 15
2-5 p.m.--organization and production

4-5 p.m.--philosophy of working on student papers