

Antithesis

by Dave Langille
APATHY

If there was one word which I would most like to hear dropped from the vocabulary of Dalhousie students it is apathy. Unfortunately the fact of its existence cannot be done away with as easily. Our socio-economic-political-educational system is geared towards the status quo. This equilibrium-oriented system thrives on apathy and indifference. Activism and change are inimical to its continued existence. Would it be going too far to say that apathy is the biggest tool in the hands of those seeking to exploit us?

GAZETTE

This is where the Dalhousie Gazette comes in. Over the last few years the paper has been accused of being negative and cynical. The "critical without being constructive" approach can best be summed up in the epithet "All shit and no action." But it must be realized that constantly knocking down the existing structures breeds in us a spirit of cynicism which can easily lead to apathy. Gazette, therefore must share some of the blame for the apathy with which we are faced at Dalhousie. Breaking through this apathy is one of the major stumbling blocks on the road to our ultimate goal — a change in the system.

Therefore Gazette must be applauded for its efforts to raise the political consciousness of Dalhousie students. Likewise it should continue to criticize the failings of Student Council and other Dalhousie institutions.

In fact Gazette is one of the few effective checks on the power of the unrepresentative and often elitist group that comprise our Council.

But the role of an opposition goes beyond the mere criticism of the existing structure. Gazette has a duty to present better alternatives, to press for important changes and to point out the possibilities inherent in a union of 6,200 students.

It is not enough to blast the present administration and call for the impeachment of Council or some such similar step that would bring the system to its knees. If students are to win support for their cause and inspire the Union to work for change then we will have to come up with more viable alternatives.

STUDENT INPUT

This is where you come in.

This paper is really the expression of the student interest and remains open to student input.

The Gazette is run as a collective and is not an elitist group dominated by a clique of authoritarian demagogues. All contributions from the student body are given fair attention.

It must be realized that the Gazette staff are limited in terms of their numbers and the time they have available. Only two, the editor and business manager, receive salaries in the formal sense. The tangible rewards derived from membership in the Gazette Collective are no way in keeping with the work involved.

COURSE CREDITS FOR GAZETTE WORK

Recognizing the fact that a larger newspaper staff would be better able to serve the interest of the student union, Council should work on trying to get an experimental course set up so that the time spent by students on researching and writing articles could earn them university credits. Perhaps the English Department would sponsor a course in Journalism, or Sociology or Political Science give credit for "Influence and Control via the Media," Mass Media and Modern Man" or simply "Media and Politics."

IN THE INTERIM

Meanwhile the call is out for members of the student body to submit their work or ideas for publication by Gazette.

There is a lot of good research being done by Dal students that is of interest to the community as a whole. Issues of student, local, or federal government, news from the Third World, progress being made in the

health professions, innovations in education, social research in the community, ad infinitum. I'm sure many students would be interested in hearing an inside account of the work of the institute of Public Affairs, the M.B.A. and M.P.A. programs and the Center for Foreign Policy Studies.

Bringing more students into the newspaper on a contributing basis would raise the quality of the paper's coverage. The regular staff is often tied up with day-to-day news such that they lack the time for indepth research and analysis of problems relevant to the student interest.

On the other hand the possibility of having one's work published, encourages the trend towards meaningful and useful research. More field experience not only gives the student a feeling of purpose and accomplishment but helps tear down the ivory tower image of the university. It would be in the interests of both a good education and community involvement for the university to get its students into the street.

Let's break through the conservative apathetic sloth facing us at every hand and start actively contributing towards the building of a better environment. Drop in to the Gazette office with your ideas or articles. Discuss them with the staff. See if we can help you in your research by connecting you with local sources, by the use of our files or contacts, etc. Present your work however you see fit — an edited version of a longer report, a letter to the editor, or whatever.

COUNCIL FORMS MORE COMMITTEES
Council has appointed various

sub-committees to cover the different chapters of the Task Force Report. These sub-committees on Communications, Leisure and Recreation, Services for Students, Administrative Process, and Academic Process are all open to student participation.

Their purpose is to evaluate and clarify the recommendations of the Task Force, then work for their im-

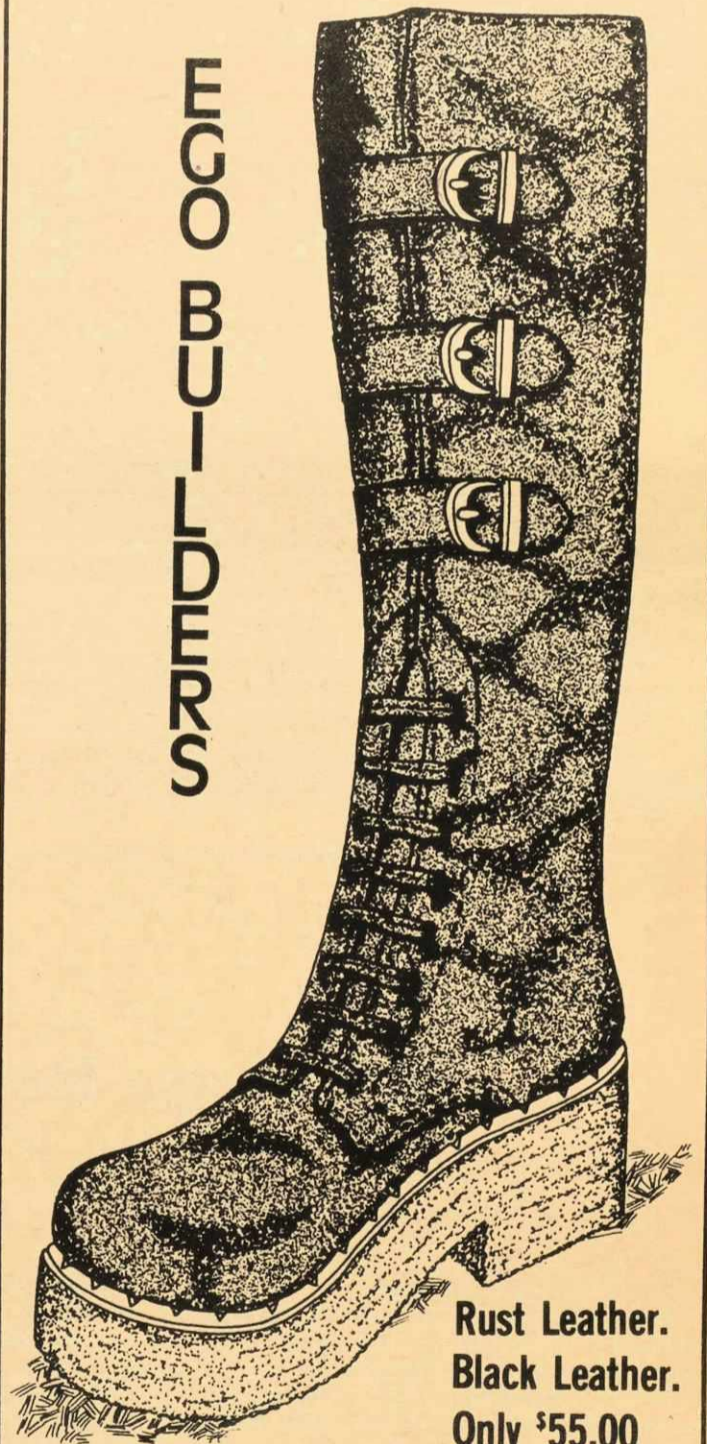
plementation via motions to Council or whatever means appropriate. Evidently, the Committee on Alternative Student Government is awaiting the reports of the various sub-committees before it calls its first meeting. It should be mentioned that anyone interested in reading the Task Force Report or helping on any sub-committees should drop into the Council office. Since Council won't give it out as it should, then we should go and ask for it.

Antithesis



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