

EDITORIAL

Still ain't satisfied

AND IT IS THE END OF THE decade.

Hundreds of women huddled, cross-legged, around is different sized circles, engaged in earnest conversations. Occasionally raised voices could be heard, or the trickling sound of laughter.

Billboards were covered with flyers and poster advertisements for workshops, appeals for solidarity or petitions for signatures. Many women entered the Peace Tent.

Lesbians, straight women; black, white, Asian women; old, middle-aged, young women; African, Malaysian, North American, Middle East, European and Caribbean women; third world, first world women. As different as they are similar.

It was the systematic exclusion, discrimination and denial of opportunities on the basis of sex that brought these 12,000 women from different social, cultural and political realities together for the Non-governmental Organization's End of the Decade Conference for Women together in Nairobi, Kenya last summer. The mainstream media virtually ignored the event, except for the odd story that focused on the political differences between the women.

Although much networking and consciousness-raising was going on, it became painfully obvious as tensions grew between women from industrialized and third world nations, that each group had different priorities, and that the agenda for social change was not homogenous.

Equality for all women cannot be separated from equality for all people, in a world where our riches are distributed equally. Third world women made first world women realize equality for them is a daily struggle to keep bread in their children's mouths.

As we privileged women work on this International Women's Week Supplement, we realize there are women struggling for equality in different ways. We worked on this edition in what we consider a healthy alternative to the regular routine of journalism: we chose to work as a collective and throw out the regular editorial hierarchy.

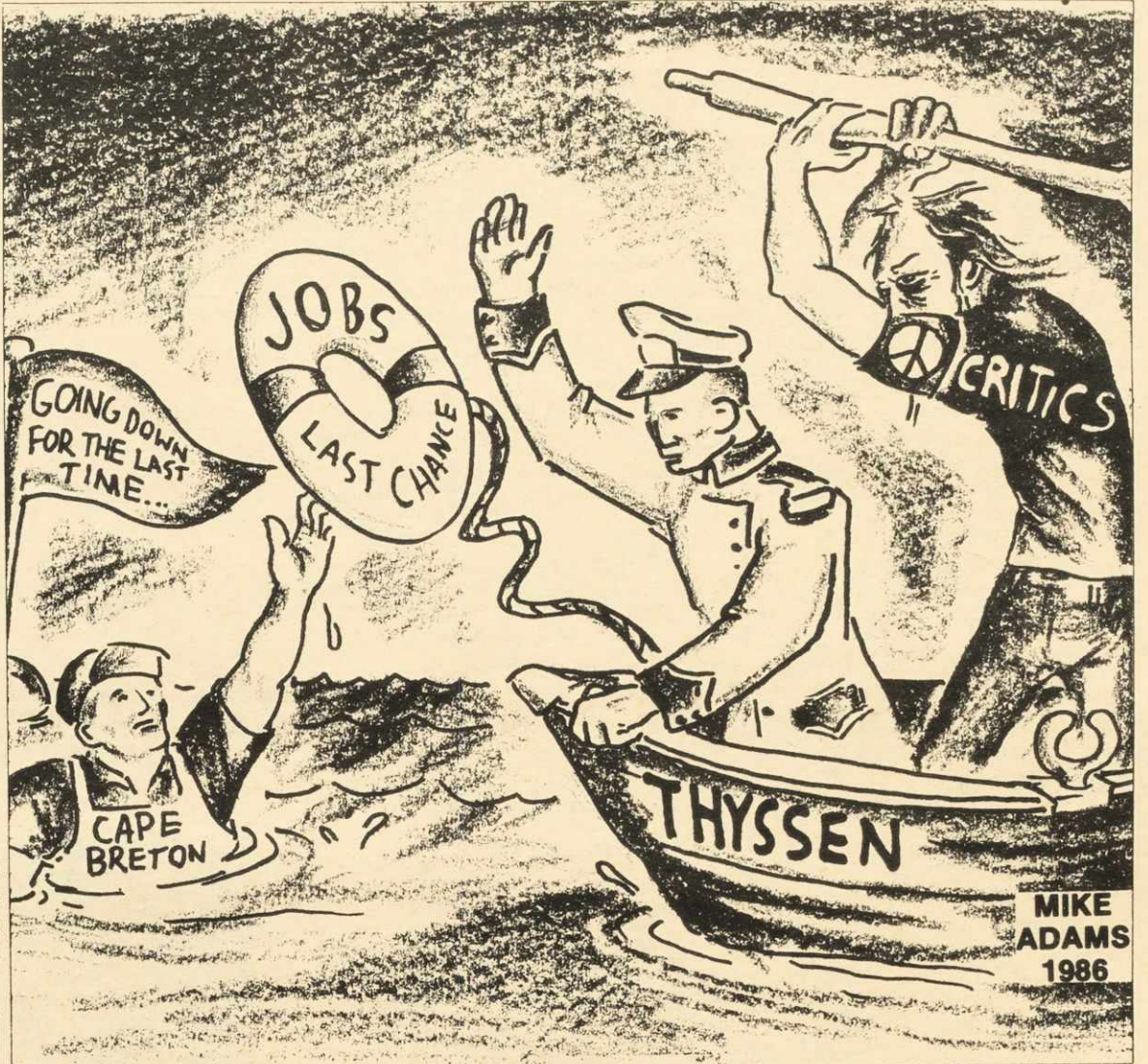
But we have heard the cries of our sisters with no homes, with no money, with no job and in poor health. Women need their stories told and remembered, and we hope this supplement is at least a beginning in the recording of women's experiences.

Women's art must be reclaimed and our music must be given the respect it deserves. Our mothers and children must be valued and our sexuality accepted freely.

We are not satisfied. And we haven't come a long way.

But we do not want to play the numbers game of equality. Achieving liberation for women means a re-structuring of our entire world, not a futile trip up a shaky ladder.

Women have been at Dalhousie for 100 years now, but we still



need that peace tent, those posters and that networking. And we have no predictions for the end of our next decade.

Rambling

To the editor

I feel that it is necessary for me to respond to the letter by Brewster Smith in your Feb. 12, 1986 issue. As a member of the Dalhousie University Community, Dalhousie Student Union Council, President of the John Read International Law Society, and student representative on the Board of Governors, I feel that Mr. Smith is wrong in many of his assertions.

To begin with, Mr. Smith asserts that the Board of Governors did not vote for humanitarian grounds but were motivated

out of fear of a wave of misinformation of protesting students. As the sponsor of the motion at the Board of Governors to have Dalhousie divest from South Africa and as one who worked extremely hard for them to do so, I find this argument to be quite simply wrong. The Board of Governors passed this motion unanimously and no doubt particular Board members had differing reasons for voting the way they did. After talking with most of them I am sure that the fear of protesting students wasn't foremost in their minds and likely not considered at all. I certainly voted on humanitarian grounds and am sure many others did too. There was a healthy turnout of concerned students that were very orderly and for the most part well informed. It is interesting to note that an ad hoc committee of students had met the week before the Board meeting and had ruled out "radical" protest and instead decided to draft a petition and to concentrate on circulating it. In less than a week, four school days, over 1500 names were collected. No doubt this had an effect on the Board of Governors as they do try to act for the good of the institution and have expressed several times that they want to act in accordance with the students' wishes.

Mr. Smith wonders why so much condemnation is directed towards the Government of South Africa when there are so many other repressive governments. It is quite true that we do not live in a perfect world and there are many wrongs committed throughout the world but the Republic of South Africa is at the pinnacle. South Africa is the only country in the world which has institutionalized racism into their constitution. Their political

and legal structures is designed to keep the 4.5 million whites in a dominant position over the rest of the 2.3 million people of other races. The practice of Apartheid has been declared a crime against humanity and I don't have the time now to discuss the evils of the system.

I cannot agree with Mr. Smith's stand against divestment. In one of his disjointed arguments, Mr. Smith links violent revolution with economic sanctions and says that he cannot support a violent revolution. It is my contention, and that of many others, that one of the best ways to avoid a bloodbath is for the Government of South Africa to change their policies. The Government has shown its resilience to outside internal political pressure and United Nations condemnations so the most effective pressure seems to be economic. Hopefully the Government will be forced to change if they want to continue to be an economically viable country.

It should be noted that the majority of the people in South Africa are suffering great poverty while the whites prosper from a strong economy. The real leaders of the South African people such as Bishop TuTu, Alan Boesak, Oliver Tambo and others have called for divestment. The people have expressed in polls that they are willing to do without in the short term for the hope of change. Even black trade unions whose members would be hurt significantly have called for divestment. Former South African Prime Minister Vorster stated that every new bank loan, every new economic tie is another brick in the wall for South Africa. Do we want to be another brick in that wall?

Stevan Ellis

To some, only The Best will do.



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