

## Students must decide

# CP confusion

Last week's GAZETTE carried an editorial about the campus police and some problems they are facing. Since then we have been accused of slander, inconsistencies, misrepresentation and providing false information.

Our search for the "truths" about the situation only turned up conflicting "facts", thus confusing the issue. But these discrepancies point to one thing. Since the problem is so complex, hardly anyone knows what is really going on.

Since the force is hierarchically structured, only those at the top appear to have some total idea of what they are doing, and why. The ordinary CP's are unaware of all the mechanics of the force's operations, but they do know they are restricted from certain things. They feel the problems — the complexity of their function — at a gut level. After all, they are students too, often doing the job only because they need money.

Last year, the Senate of this university produced a paper on the roles and duties of police on the Dal campus. This report could provide a good starting point from which to collect some accurate information, but it was not made public. It must be released to students immediately before any concrete ideas and plans about the campus police force can be discussed.

Hopefully, the Senate Enquiry into the campus police will do this, if they have the document. The committee, chaired by student senator, Peter Harvison, will need it if it is to fulfill its task — investigating the roles, restrictions and necessity of a student police force.

The problem of the campus police and what they should be doing, etc., must be discussed by starting with the basic question — are CP's necessary? If so, within what context?

## must be

## cleared

## up

Students must have the loudest voice in this discussion and subsequent decisions. If Dal students think CP's are necessary, they must also help determine the force's role and guidelines. This is now being done, it appears, by administrators in the various buildings policed by the campus cops, with help from the Athletic Department.

In the Student Union Building, in particular, students come face to face with CP's daily. Since this building is supposed to be run by and for students, special care must be taken to ensure that Dal students determine (if necessary) the force's role there.

The most important premise is that campus cops must serve their fellow students in the SUB. Once this idea is accepted and established, guidelines and administration of the force can be ironed out.

At present the guidelines placed on the CP's in SUB and elsewhere on campus irk many of them. Their powers, they say, are greatly limited by these restrictions, which, they claim, hinders their ability to act as a deterrent or protecting force. Again, they should listen to their fellow students who should and must have a say in this matter.

The guidelines should ensure such things as not using the force against students at the request of some administration. This unwritten policy has worked in the past, but unwritten rules are sometimes broken. We would prefer especially to see this one down in black and white.

Training and selection of CP's is another area of concern. The various administrations using the force only complicate the problem. Yes, the CP chiefs do interview applicants, but it appears this is not done in a uniform basis. For example, a 16-year-old with no experience was hired over an 18-year-old with some experience. (This was later corrected.)

After a systematic and uniform screening of applicants is carried out, the force must be trained to cope with the roles assigned them. While this and the selection are taking place, the force's guidelines should also be used as a measure of a campus policeman or woman's capabilities.

None of these problems will be fairly and satisfactorily solved until students participate in the decision-making process. The Senate enquiry was set up for this reason. If you are concerned, let them know what you think at one of the upcoming "open" sessions.

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