

Turnout disappointing at MPHEC hearing

The recent hearing by the MPHEC's Committee on the Study of Financial Aid for Maritime Students was in many ways a blessing and yet still a great disappointment. The blessing was the fact that so many people across the country are raising their voices in support of the student, government will have to take some form of action soon to help struggling students. The disappointment comes because it seems that the people least interest in the whole thing is the student themselves.

Of the 12 briefs presented yesterday, only two were from the student organizations in the province. The remaining briefs were presented by either administrative groups or local community groups concerned with secondary education in the province. The main problem with this was some of the groups made statements about the state of student affairs that were just not true or not researched well enough.

Although the director of the group said he was pleased with the turnout, one of the group members said later the turn out of students had been poor in all the places the group had visited. How are committee members to believe there are some students concerned about education when so few make an effort to air their concerns.

One can only beat a dead horse so long but if students are going to do something to save the quality of education in this country they had better start as soon as possible. This includes students who put themselves through university, those that do it with their parents help and finally those that are struggling to get help of any kind. All of these groups will be affected by the recommendations of this committee. Students will have to start supporting student organizations soon or education will become the realm of the wealthy few that can afford it. And that is not an idle remark.

One final note about the hearings. The presentation made by Dr. Hicks had to be one of the poorest demonstration of knowledge ever witnessed by any committee on student matters. Dr. Hick's presentation was elitist and showed that he really didn't understand the problem bothering students these days. Dr. Hicks should remember that the right to education in this province belongs to all the students not just a 'bright few'. Dr. Hicks should also do a little more research into the way students feel about concerns before he makes off-hand statements about them.

Even though Hicks is retiring at the end of this year he should really be more careful with his remarks. They could be with us for years.

Letters to Gazette

To the Gazette:

This letter is being written in response to Ross Ainsworth's comments (112(8)) on how and why students should unite to oppose educational cutbacks.

Personally, I think that the letter was written as a Public Relations message for his political interests and affiliation. At the same time, he condemned a prospective provincial student organization, and a recognized national student organization.

When one argues that there are two lines found within a student movement, it is an incorrect judgement. There may be different lines pertaining to the numbers of political parties, because of the diversified interests and philosophies, but there is only one student movement—that one whose basic philosophies include student's rights, a quality and accessible education, and an accessible student

"aid" (not "loan") program.

As for collaborating with the government, any student organization likes to have allies within the structure of the government and its advisory bodies as the job sometimes becomes easier (resources, latest developments, etc.) BUT when dealing on a person-to-person basis, student's positions should never be compromised. They don't promote collaboration with the government. Rather, they promote collaboration with community groups who suffer the same plight as the students do, i.e. teachers, labor, day-care, women etc. Our educational system is far from perfect. The provincial and federal governments have yet to define their role in the funding for post-secondary education, and they have yet to supply an accessible student aid program; the universities have not as yet defined their philosophy on what an accessible education is; the

unemployment situation regarding students is atrocious in the Atlantic, and there has not been any measure implemented that would insure employment for those who wanted to work; and last but not least, students have yet to come to grips with the critical situation that they are presently in.

In the future, rather than disregard your elected representatives, go to them with your doubts about certain groups. They are waiting for your view point.

When one comes right down to it, one realizes that it is every student who is responsible for the situation that we are in at present. It is up to "us" to make the most of what we have and to support those who would support us when the day comes that we'll need their voice when negotiating.

Sincerely yours,
Ms. Janet Mrenica

Staff Meeting Thursday at 7:00 Gazette Offices 3rd Floor, SUB

the Dalhousie Gazette

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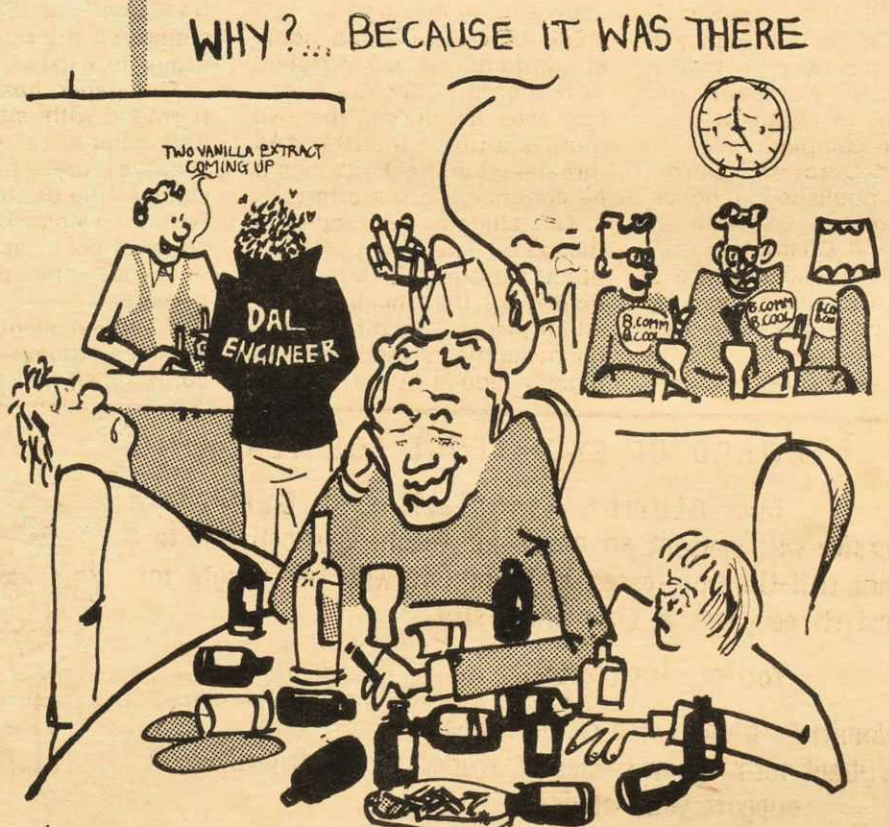
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P.S.
to the engineers
I enjoyed your posters
- Keep up the good work you are appreciated

WITHERS