

LETTERS CONTINUED

DSU should support faculty's side

To the editor,

I am writing with regards to the strike, and the DSU's position. I am very upset that the DSU is not supporting the teachers in this important issue.

They concentrate on what effects the strike will have on the student body, which is important and fair, but they should also concentrate on the effects the lack of supporting the faculty will have on the students.

The fact is that we have the third highest tuition in Canada. The fact is that with comparable universities, we rank 10th place in salaries for the faculty. Where is the money going? To pay DSU salaries? (Which I hear are \$16,000 and they want to increase to \$17 or \$18,000).

One of my professors said that he used to work at Queen's 20 or 30 years ago, and that if he were still there he would be making \$20,000 a year more

than he makes at Dalhousie, and that throughout his time at Dalhousie, the administration has not wanted to deal with, or agree, with the faculty requests. They always blew it off and "didn't have the funds" to increase salary.

After Chris Adams came to talk to one of my classes, the teacher said that Chris gave misleading information.

He explained the situation to us. He said that the current pay at Dalhousie is not good incentive for new professors to come, nor for new ones to stay.

The DSU keeps focusing on the short term losses of a strike, but never mentions the long term effects of these negotiations. These include the fact that if Dalhousie does not pay sufficiently, the quality will decrease. The quality of education will also decrease if the full-time faculty are not replaced, as well as if current

trends of hiring part-time (underpaid) teachers continue.

My reasoning is that part-time faculty do not spend as much time in school (they already spend enough time preparing lectures for which they don't get paid enough...about one third of a DSU salary) which not only decreases the amount of teachers available for the students, but puts a greater burden and pressure on teachers (faculty) who must fill in for them.

Part-time employers also do not have "roots" set in, and do not know the system or the way things are run, and they do not have the time to learn it because they are not in school very much. This makes them less adequate than full-time faculty, and as mentioned before, adds pressure on the present faculty. Part-time employees should be used only occasionally, or as

substitutes or "trials" before a full-time position is given, but not as a replacement for full-time faculty.

What I have said does not come from "nowhere", but from speaking with faculty, and having worked as a co-op student at SMU in the Chemistry department — where there is a great trend to hire part-time instructors, rather than full-time instructors. And I have seen and felt the effects as an employee.

The DSU focuses on the loss of summer jobs or post-graduation jobs if a strike occurs. But if we do not support our faculty in this fight the quality of education will be affected, and my Dalhousie diploma will not be worth very much. Others will look at it and snicker, thinking of the low quality education.

The fact is, governments are cutting everywhere, and we get

out with our degrees, with no jobs to look forward to. And if we do find a job, we will most likely get a contract job, with no benefits, because that is the current trend.

We must support our teachers in their fight for good working conditions, pay and support, because it sets up standards for ourselves when we get to the working world.

If we only look at short term gains and benefits and losses, such as the DSU's position to not support the DFA, we are following the destructive trends of our society. We must look at the long term, for the benefit of our school, our teachers, and most importantly, ourselves.

P.S. I am not alone in these opinions.

BARBARA MULLER

Charest catch 22

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the Tories lose support, or he stays and they lose support.

If he does run, the plan would work out great for Charest. Not only would he be heralded as the man who renewed the federalist spirit in Quebec, but his party will have an excuse to join with the Reform party in the "unite the right" movement that the more conservative-minded have been pressuring them to do.

Charest's long-time rivalry with the Prime Minister will also give him the reputation that made Bouchard so popular — standing up to Ottawa rather than trying to play along with them. Negotiating with the federal government gave us a sucker deal with the BST. All you would-be premiers take note: start standing up for your province if you want popularity with your voters.

Last year I had the opportunity

to see Jean Charest at the Weldon Law Building. He was doing local campaigning for the PC candidates from the Maritimes and giving a lecture to a handful of law students. What impressed me the most was his candour about national affairs.

As the premier of Quebec, he might be well suited to fulfil the job requirements. Bouchard is obligated to hold an election by next year, and I know Charest can take that province. Mind you, his becoming premier may not be a panacea for the separatist movement, but Charest can help bridge the gap between French and English Canada.

For the nation's sake, I hope he does it. Good luck, Jean.

ALAN LEBLANC

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