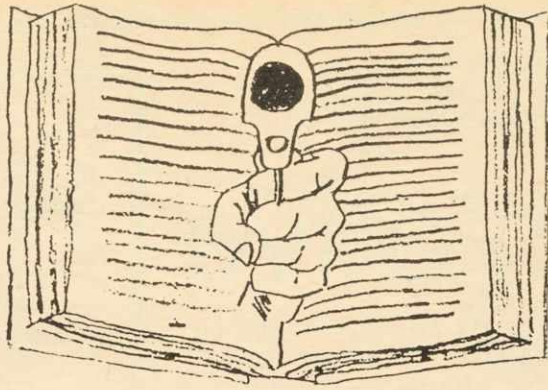


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OP/ED

Strike would hurt students

When the fall term begins and students swarm on to campus, it is usually taken for granted that classes will run smoothly and efficiently. We are here at this institution to be educated and the possible threat of a faculty strike is unnerving.

For students who experienced the strike two years ago, the possibility of another is a nuisance. The problems of having to catch up on missed lectures and readings left most students in a difficult situation and nobody got the full value for their educational dollar.

It is understandable that any contract must, occasionally, be renegotiated, and that this process may take a significant length of time. However, the Dalhousie Faculty Association and the Dalhousie Administration have been discussing this contract since the middle of April. It is now September and bargaining has been reduced to conciliation. The two sides have met a total of twenty-four times in these last months, and yet there is still no agreement.

Students should be angry at the uncertainty of the situation.

If the university exists for the sake of its "clients", then without us there would be no administration or faculty. Our education, therefore, should be one of the primary concerns for both sides at the bargaining table. Four to five months of negotiations seems ample time to renegotiate this contract. Yet, ridiculously, the decisions have been brought into the fall term again, only two years after the last contract was signed. Students should wonder if this was perhaps intentional.

Two years ago the DFA agreed to a two year contract that did meet all their demands. Now students are facing the possibility of another strike situation. Hopefully the next contract will avoid these long and drawn out discussions that are not settled before the beginning of classes.

Let us hope that those of us who have the most to lose - the students - do not get caught in a crossfire once again. Let us hope that our needs are taken into consideration. Let us hope that both faculty and administration recognize who is really paying.

Allison Johnston

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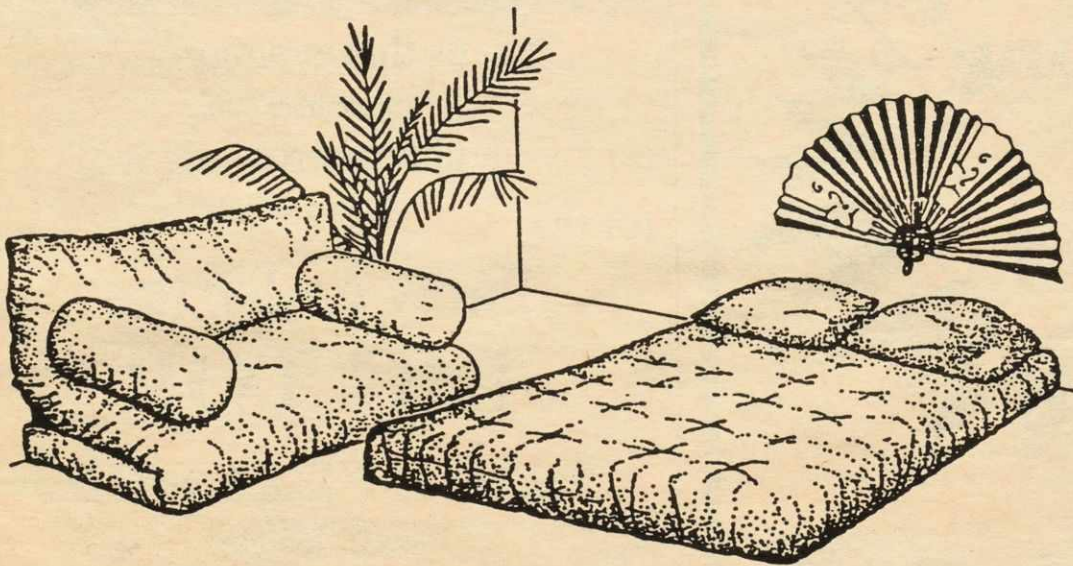
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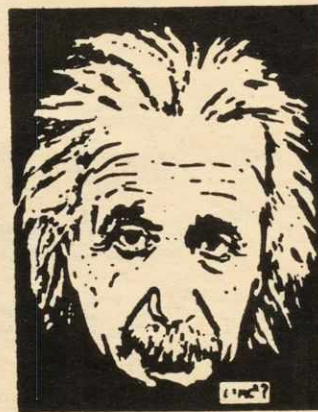


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