

# COMMENTARY

## Worrisome directions for Dal Student Union

by Edmund the Activist

With Sunday's upcoming farce in the form of our next council meeting, I hope this will be read with more than passing interest. Perhaps it will interest the less lethargic of our great union to come to the meeting where our meagre fees and aspirations will be attacked by the insects in office. I hope that it will not result in an Owenrama Championship, as young Walton's article did a Logarama.

The election results of last month came as a shock to many involved with and concerned for, the student movement at Dalhousie University. Whether or not one agrees with them, a student must realize how it was that these results came to pass. The election of a joke candidate, and the NO vote on funding of a service for which there seemed so much support last year, are consequences of a feeling that has grown for at least five years.

The year 1974 was an important one for the student union. That year saw the opening of the Grawood, the Dal Radio change its name to CKDU and go carrier-current. Plans were made for other services, including an F.M. station. That year also found the union financially over-extended, much as it is today, and on the brink of a severe

political decline. A referendum was held in the fall of 1974 that resulted in a \$10.00 (25%) fee increase, to maintain and expand on union services, including provision for an F.M. station. As anyone who has been around for the last seven years knows, student services, as supplied by the union, haven't expanded a whole lot, although CKDU and the *Gazette* have improved a great deal, and the capacity of the Grawood was increased. Since then, there hasn't been any substantial increase in union activity, power or disirability.

In 1979, Dick Matthews took office on a campaign of action and development of the union. He remained very active for a year, torpedoing all movements advocating union political activity, or alteration of existing union structures, on the general grounds that council (union was a dirty word) lacked the information or know how to accomplish any task. Apparently, he didn't feel very confident in himself either, since he made no effort to lead the council to

general enlightenment. If this seems to be picking on a poor unfortunate ex-President, there are at least three previous ones who were little different, and Matthews set the stage for the great imposters, Owen and Champion.

Between O'Connor in 74-75 and Owen in 80, Presidents have acted as though they believed students incapable and impotent. Owen and Champion modified that basis by excluding themselves, and spent the year dreaming of all the great deeds they were to accomplish the very next day.

Then happened this year's election. We had Owen and Lamont advocating continued Owen dreaming. There were also Graham and Gilkinson

lead and reversed their last year's stand by deciding not to fund an F.M. station.

That happened because students have ceased to believe that the union can either provide an effective leadership for us, or collectively form an effective, desirable service for ourselves. The average union member believes himself impotent to change things, and has no greater confidence in the ability of his next door neigh-

could have done a good job, Logan and Logan wouldn't have got their deposit back, much less won.

The Logans are in, like it or not (I don't). Unless they, and council, and the union organizations can show the dynamic nature of the world, there will continue to grow stronger movements of secession within such groups as DAGS and

in such groups as DAGS and the Law school. This would end in the destruction of the union, and the silencing of what voice students have on the University and in the outside political arena. Let us not sit back and watch, as my brother does. I see the business. Let me, if not by birth, have lands by wit: All with me's meet that I can fashion fit. Let's become active and make Logan and Logan, and the council, and ourselves

the council, and ourselves strong, so that our interests may be better served. Perhaps we might even convince some people that \$13.50 can buy something worthwhile in these inflationary times, or that students can have a strong political voice. Maybe not.

*Edmund the Activist is a pseudonym for Neil Erskine, a former Science student at Dalhousie, currently sitting on Students' Council as Senate representative.*



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running on Owen's old platform, and the idealistic "change the union power structure" platform of Kelly and Dunn. Of course, there were the Logan brothers advocating and promising in all seriousness, nothing. Of these four teams, the one sounding the least promising got in. In the other big campaign, the students followed Matthew's

bor, or of the union as a whole, to accomplish anything beyond preservation of the sta-

yond preservation of the status quo. If we thought that Graham and Gilkinson would have been able to live up to their promises, or that Kelly and Dunn would have been able to shatter the SUB bureaucracy, or that the other losing team

## Congratulations directed to Logans

Dear Editor:

As an observer of the Dalhousie Students' Union from out in the boonies (Antigonish), I would like to pass along some comments in regards to the recent Union elections at Dal.

First, I congratulate the Logan Team on their victory. Although their platform was outrageously entertaining, it is evident that students do indeed wish their student leaders to be less bureaucratic than humorous. I sincerely

hope that the Logan team will use their gift of humor in maintaining a beneficial and open dialogue with their constituents at Dal and moreover across the province.

By its sheer size, the Dalhousie Students' Union has been, and will continue to be, the life blood of the provincial student movement. Through the quality of Dal's student leadership in the immediate, and also not so distant, past, real gains have been made in presenting post-secondary education as a major concern, not just to government, but to the public in general.

In particular, I would like to thank outgoing President Gord Owen, not only for his dedication to his own Union, but more importantly for his real and beneficial contribution to the Students' Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS) and the work he did in maintaining the 'Atlantic Voice' to the National Union. Gord and Jeff Champion are to be commended in this regard. I came to know both individuals through various meetings and conferences over the past year, and I can assure Dal students that their

interests, and the interests of all university students, was well represented both with sincerity and dedication.

I take the liberty of wishing both of these individuals all the best on behalf of the students at 'X'. In conclusion,

I look forward with enthusiasm to continued Dal involvement and leadership in post-secondary concerns.

**Hail and health,  
Jim Healy  
President  
St. F.X. Students' Union**

## Rush moves

Dear Editor:

After reviewing the second review of Rush's new album **Moving Pictures** I felt that the reviewer should be locked in a room with nothing but the B-52's to listen to. In his own words he didn't expect to like the album and he must of decided not to.

My first complaint is his statement that Rush's lyrics have no wit, creativity, or humor. Maybe I'm wrong but I haven't heard any other group sound like Rush and as for wit, who else can work a message into a likeable song?

To fully appreciate Rush one must also listen for the meaning behind the song. For example, from **Hemispheres** "Let the truth of love be lighted... Let the love of truth

shine clear". Can any better advice be given? From **Moving Pictures** I will give only one example, from "Witchhunt": "Ignorance and prejudice and fear walk hand in hand."

I would like also to say that if more people would listen to songs by Rush, Styx and Supertramp and look for the meanings this world might become a better place to live.

Finally I would like to state that I am definitely NOT a young adolescent with no interest in sex and I'm sure that most of the others who enjoy music by the "Art rock" groups (where the hell did the author come up with that term???) are the same.

Thank-you  
Rich Johnson  
Howe Hall

## CKDU is important to the community

Dear Gazette:

Any call to close down your campus radio station reveals a basic misunderstanding of modern society.

Removing such a valuable resource would weaken the scope of related disciplines, diminish extra-curricular life and sadly tarnish the reputation of Dalhousie University as a forward-looking institution. Even in an age of restraint, it's hard to imagine the proposal as serious. The benefits simply overwhelm the cost.

Not only does CKDU allow the schools of Journalism, Theatre, etc., to provide comprehensive programmes, but individual students use the

facility to develop technical and written communications skills. The station is a proven training ground for professional broadcasters and offers to all involved a working knowledge of the media — an indispensable asset for university graduates in all fields.

As the ability to assess and use information becomes the greatest artibrator of wealth and power among individuals (as among nations), the elimination of Dalhousie's 'laboratory of electronic journalism' would be a giant step backward.

Eric Hustvedt  
Free-lance journalist  
and broadcaster