

# Aldermen's debate a soliloquy for Epstein

by Sharon Chisvin

Howard Epstein, a candidate for Halifax Ward 2 alderman, had the floor to himself Thursday October 7 when rival candidate, incumbent Ron Cromwell, failed to attend a scheduled debate at Dalhousie University.

Epstein was introduced by a stu-

dent council representative as "the candidate who wants to talk with students". It was suggested that Cromwell could not be bothered to attend the debate.

When Cromwell's headquarters was contacted later that day a spokesperson explained Mr. Cromwell had all his time booked long before

Dalhousie approached him about the debate. In a telephone conversation Friday Cromwell said, "there was just no way I could give up a noon hour for a debate."

Epstein, a 32-year-old labour lawyer and Dalhousie Law School graduate, took little advantage of his unchallenged podium. In a brief

speech to an audience numbering about 15, Epstein explained why he thinks students should be interested in civic politics.

He discussed in detail a few municipal issues which directly affect university students. These included: voter eligibility and the "discriminatory" Municipal Elections Act which disqualifies many students from voting, wasteful allotment of funds that should be used for job creation, public transportation, and housing.

With regard to housing, Epstein said, "The city has control of tax rates, and if taxes go up, rent goes up too." Epstein stated he would push for immediate invocation of a rent review act for the Halifax-Dartmouth area passed in 1959, but never enforced. He said the quality and availability of housing would improve if the city were to assume direct control of rents through this act.

Commenting on the city's two years of turbulent labour relations, Epstein said he supports "labour's side exclusively". He said the firemen's strike illustrates just how bad labour relations are in Halifax, and

accused the city government of "deliberately" manoeuvring the firemen into a strike position by refusing to consider binding arbitration. Settlements have to be reached through negotiations, he added.

Epstein said if he was elected he would propose the Coburg bus be rerouted to University Avenue at night for the convenience of students. This would eliminate the need to walk to distant bus stops after dark.

When asked how he intended to make this alteration in the bus schedule, Epstein replied he hoped if he yelled at council members enough they would consider the proposition.

In concluding, Epstein said he favoured making the job of city councillor a full time job. He said, "One of the reasons there is a power vacuum into which our politicians keep stepping is that most council members have other jobs and can't concentrate on council affairs."

Epstein's remarks were received with polite applause.

# Student runs for mayor

by Valerie Edwards

Mayoral candidate Charles Phillips, local musician and part-time Dalhousie University music student, describes himself as "an ordinary citizen who just happens to be running for mayor".

A Halifax native who calls the city his "home base", Phillips has lived as a musician and songwriter in Nashville, travelled across Canada as a folksinger, played his guitar in the streets and subways of Athens and London, and has worked as a grainhandler, baggage clerk and a telephone salesman.

Phillips' decision to run for mayor of Halifax resulted from his unhappiness with the other three candidates. He wanted to give those who felt as he did an option on voting day. Phillips added, the way to change society on a large scale is to start at the municipal level, since municipal decisions affect citizens personally and both mayor and alderman are accessible to the people.

Phillips described himself as "the conscience of the election" and the "watchdog", ensuring the candi-

dates talk in specifics rather than "generalities typical of other elections".

"I suspect that if I hadn't run, a lot of things would not have been brought into the open due to political expediency," Phillips said.

In a press release Phillips stated civic employees should receive an annual cost-of-living increase to avoid yearly confrontations, and suggested the solution to the fire fighters' strike is binding arbitration. Phillips also added Halifax and the province should help fund the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra because it benefits the city artistically, financially and educationally.

Phillips stressed long-term planning regarding the offshore industry and job creation planning are also needed to avoid the skyrocketing costs of housing and rental units in the event of a business boom. Oil companies will be held responsible for any ecological disturbances.

Halifax's port has not been operating at its fullest capacity

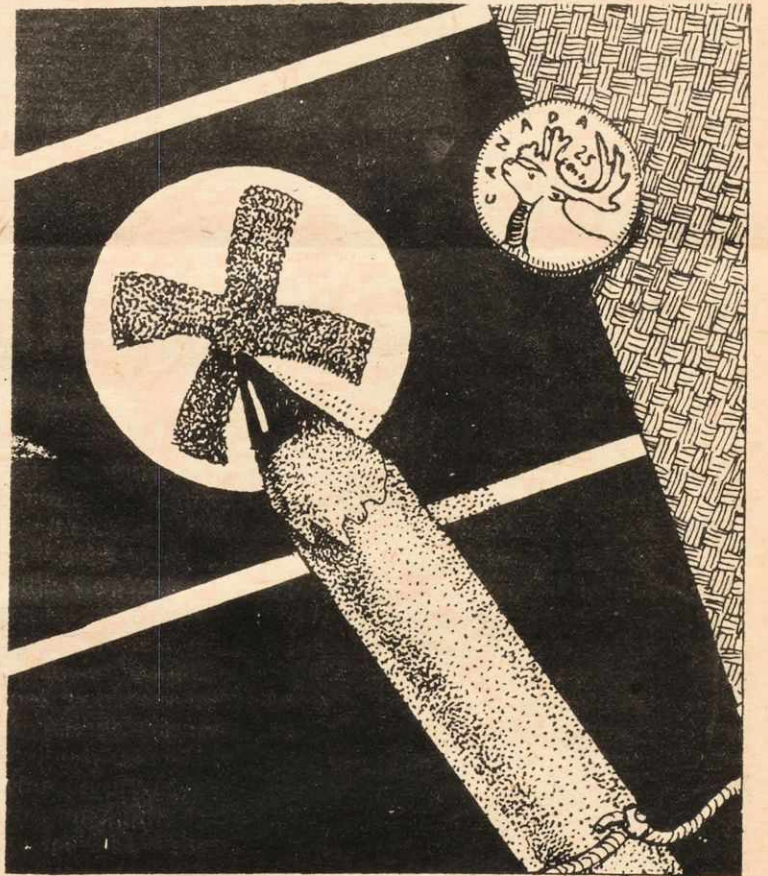
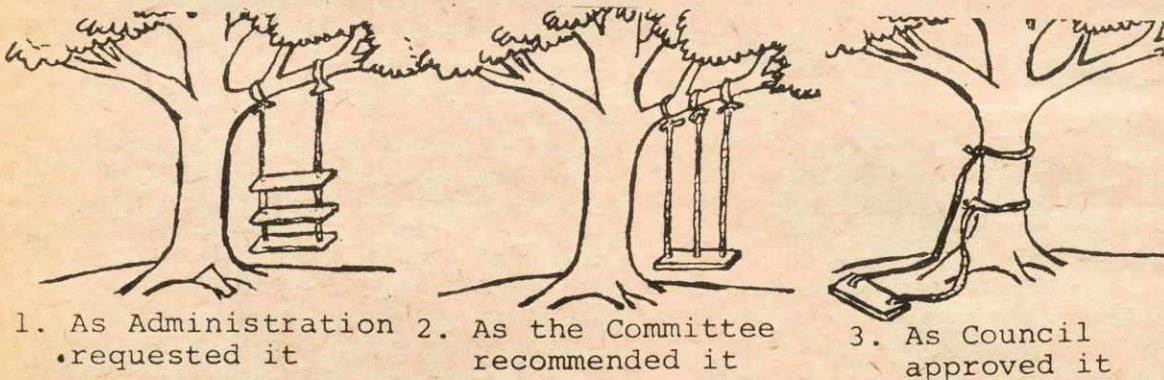
since Confederation. Phillips said he wants it to be revitalized, for besides being a non-pollutant industry that would create jobs, the port is in harmony with the history and tradition of Halifax.

Phillips wants Halifax citizens to feel they "have a say in what goes on". He plans to foster new groups to get the community involved and hold plebiscites on the nuclear and other controversial issues.

Last week Phillips demanded a public apology from local station CHNS because he said they may d his chances as a serious candidate. Phillips explained the station invited the other three candidates for a radio show Tuesday night but neglected to invite him as they did not want someone "frivolous" with "no apparent chance of winning".

"The fact that I was ignored is detrimental to my campaign," said Phillips.

He added he is very serious about the issues he raised and hopes to win in this week's election. With "honesty and time" he can help the people of Halifax.



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