

Gazette editorial

It's two o'clock in the morning. Some of the last few members of the skeletal Gazette staff are dreaming up headlines to up on top of stories they probably haven't had time or patience to read for the fourth time.

One of the main reasons we do this is the satisfaction we get from working with other people on a group project. It IS enjoyable to produce something, to put something together from scratch in less than a week, especially when it combines the energies and talents of a group of diverse people.

What is particularly rewarding about our Gazette work is that we, as staff, decide how the paper is going to be run in as democratic a manner as we can manage while keeping to deadlines. It isn't always easy. The Gazette has had a painful, if sometimes colourful history of resignation, closures, romances, betrayals and impeachments, and internal conflicts.

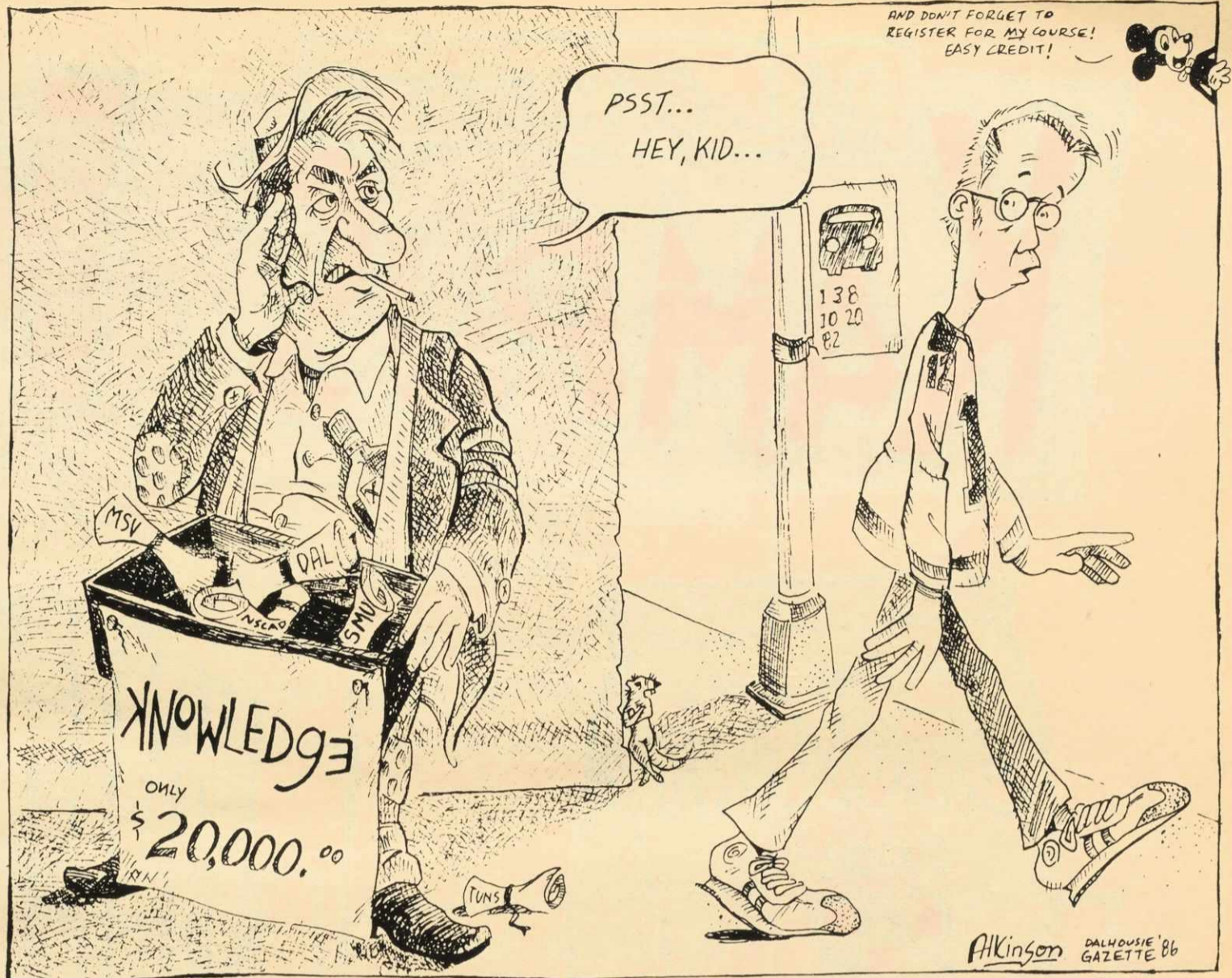
In perspective, a lot of it seems a bit silly, but in reality, we think it is a healthy sign. It shows that the organization of this paper is receptive to change; it also indicates that people who have worked on this paper care enough about it to change it when they think necessary. We hope the same attitude is evident in the pages of this newspaper.

We hope to provoke, stimulate, inform and entertain the people who read the paper. We try to uncover what we think are miscarriages of justice, present information and news as fairly as we can and learn a bit about what is happening around us in the process.

It's not an easy thing to do. There are restrictions on what works well in a story. There are restrictions on our perspectives and knowledge of what we write about. There are even stronger restrictions on what one can achieve through journalism. Not all of what we write about is good in terms of quality or end results. But we do have the luxury of not being completely dependent on our advertisers and share holders as many of our colleagues in commercial journalism are.

We try and be responsible and reponsible to you our readers. That means that we need you to write letters to us, write articles for us, help with layout, photos or graphics. We need you.

You don't have to be skilled in any particular area — the most important thing is that it is learning experience for all of us. You don't have to pledge your life or firstborn away — everybody here has got classes or other commitments which take up most of their time. And you don't have to stay until two in the morning. Just drop by. **Toby Sanger**



Open letter to Joe Clark

By Sonja Blank

I READ AN ARTICLE IN the Globe and Mail about a proposal by the Thyssen AG company to manufacture military equipment in Canada for sale to Saudi Arabia.

Thyssen AG is a giant company of the Federal Republic of Germany. I'm a citizen of the F.R. of Germany and I would like to inform you about my thoughts concerning the proposal.

First of all, it is a shame that Thyssen AG is still functioning as a company to manufacture military equipment, and it's a shame that so-called "democratic countries" are interested in buying from or supporting it.

The Thyssen AG was one of the main producers of military equipment during the second world war, and Adolph Hitler was its customer.

Thyssen AG exchanged weapons for slave labour during the war; Jews, Christians, socialists and other concentration camp prisoners were forced to work for Thyssen without pay.

There are still survivors of this holocaust in Germany, and in other parts of the world, perhaps even in Canada, who were never paid for the work and pain they had to give for the Thyssen AG during the war.

Working conditions for prisoners were more than disgusting; they were treated like rats, not like human beings, exactly as the propaganda of Hermann Goebbels (Hitler's propaganda minister) prescribed.

And now, over 40 years later, this same company is still using cheap workers to produce military equipment. Why did the Thyssen company choose the Cape Breton area in Nova Scotia, where the unemployment rate is around 40%, to propose their munitions plant?

I talked to a woman from Cape Breton who was visiting here, and asked her about the chance Thyssen AG has to settle in the area.

She said "Many people in my city haven't had work for a couple of years. What do you expect they'll do if someone promises

them 400 jobs? They won't ask what kind of a job they're doing. They're tired of not having a job."

This reminds me a lot of the situation of German society in 1933 when Hitler was elected chancellor of the Reich. about 2 million people were unemployed; Hitler promised to give them work (which he did) so they supported him.

In a situation like this it is easy to rule people because of their poor living standards. It's also easy for a company like the Thyssen AG to set lower wages than in a well-developed area, because people will accept lower wages rather than no wages. The Thyssen AG also produces military equipment in underdeveloped nations with low economic conditions. Most of these countries are controlled by military or fascist regimes. People in these countries (Chile, for example) are put down by their government. They have no freedoms of speech, religion, or politics.

Rainer Wollmann, Thyssen's representative in Ottawa said to the Globe and Mail "We would

want to keep open the possibility of exporting tanks in the future, perhaps to the United States or other markets."

This shows exactly the priorities of these companies; it's their markets, not people that they are concerned with.

What are these "other markets"? Chile? Saudi Arabia? Maybe even Israel? I won't wonder if sometime a country shoots at me with missiles produced by a German company.

But that's something Thyssen is not concerned with; it's profits they are concerned with. That was their motive in WWII, and it's their motive for exploiting poor economies today in third world countries. It is also their motive in Nova Scotia. Their basic concern is profits, not unemployment or human rights.

Human rights is one of the basic principles of democracy. As long as companies like the Thyssen AG are in power, and as long as countries don't work together to protect each other from giant corporations whose concerns are only profits and not human rights, we can't call this democracy.

The Gazette

Staff this issue:

Mike Adams
Geoff Stone
Lois Corbett
Toby Sanger
Karilee Bruff
DeeAnne Fitzpatrick

Rick Jansen
Beth Cummings
Robin Sarafinchan
Dwight Symst
Mark Alberstat
Craig Munroe
Richard Howard
Charles Spurr
Charles Spurr
Kathy Kennedy
Jamie Glazov

Stephen "orbit" Shay
Brian Atkinson

Typesetters:
Beth Cummings
Lois Corbett
Robert Matthews
Advertising
Craig Munroe
Distribution
Tiger Express



EDITORIAL

As a founding member of Canadian University Press, the Gazette adheres to the CUP statement of principles and reserves the right to refuse any material submitted of a libelous, sexist, racist or homophobic nature. Deadlines for commentary, letters to the editor and announcements is noon on Monday. Submissions may be left at the SUB enquiry desk c/o the Gazette.

Commentary should not exceed 700 words, letters should not exceed 300 words. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity may be granted on request.

Advertising copy deadline is noon, Monday before publication.

The Gazette offices are located on the 3rd floor SUB. Come up and have a coffee and tell us what's going on.

The views expressed in the Gazette are not necessarily those of the Student Union, the editor or the collective staff.

Subscription rates are \$25 per year (25 issues) and our ISSN number is 0011-5816. The Gazette's mailing address is 6136 University Avenue, Halifax, N.S. B3H 4J2, telephone (902) 424-2507.