

# Dialogue

by Ken MacDougall

It's very difficult not to become cynical whenever I read any of the local newspapers (daily or weekly) commenting on affairs at Dalhousie. For instance last week in **The 4th Estate** there was **Mary McGeer**, normally an intelligent and articulate columnist, droning on about the self-righteousness of City Council pursuing an appeal against Dalhousie to the Supreme Court of Canada. Commenting on the pious statements of such pro-development aldermen as Dennis Connolly, McGeer maintains:

"... with a little foresight the city could have rezoned all the land south of South Street from R2 to R1 long before Dalhousie was ready to move ahead with the sports complex."

All right, I suppose there's really nothing wrong with that statement, as far as it goes. The problem is that if we accept the fact that the city **should** have had the foresight to rezone the land south of South Street to accommodate a few residents in the South End, we could get away with doing this superficial analysis of the politics of the Sports Complex controversy, and avoid the Liberal Party politics that went on in the background.



Dal has owned land in the South End since the early 1960's, with little neighbourhood opposition. Council moving to rezone the land five years ago when there was only recreational land and no opposition to the university presence might have provoked a pro-Dal stand from the South End residents. This could have resulted in the zoning remaining R2. McGeer doesn't have to go back five years ago to see the universe unfolding for City Council, just to April of 1973 and this paper, **The Dalhousie GAZETTE**.

During March of 1973, then - GAZETTE reporter Michael Donovan had conducted a series of interviews with mayor Walter Fitzgerald regarding city planning. In these interviews Fitzgerald made known Dalhousie's intentions to build the sports complex south of South Street. Fitzgerald stated that he had told Dal president Henry Hicks he was against such a plan. This was five months before the fateful August 6th public meeting Dal called at Shirreff Hall to unveil plans for the complex - and five months before the sports complex hit any of the city papers.

Donovan reported Fitzgerald's comments in the April 13, 1973 issue of the GAZETTE. There was no reaction in the local papers, and only the sweet, budding sounds of spring disturbed the euphoria of the South End. Four months passed and not one public outcry was made by protector-of-the-people mayor and publicity-seeker Walter R. Fitzgerald to warn the South End residents of their impending fate. Four months of advance warning was all that the Council should have needed to act rationally and protect the South End residential flavour.

Now, a year later, City is planning to spend up to \$20,000 to appeal a decision against the City in favour of Dal, and Ward I alderman **Dennis Connolly**, the self-knighted protector of the public purse, is leading the way in helping to spend the money.

I wonder if Liberal party ties really had anything to do with the silence kept by Connolly, Fitzgerald and Hicks for those four months. I include Connolly in this grouping because a) Connolly gained most from the City's misadventure, and b) there is a personal friendship between Fitzgerald and Connolly. The ex-mayor and now Minister of Labour for the provincial government spent some time in this last civic election putting up posters and canvassing for Connolly. Fitzgerald was even observed in Fenwick Towers on October 16th (election day) at seven in the morning hanging "Today's the Day..." signs for Connolly on doorhandles in the building. I find it incredible that someone of Fitzgerald's political stature should be out on the hustings performing such menial tasks for an alderman who doesn't even live in his ward. And even if the favour Fitzgerald did for Connolly had nothing to do with Dal, there's still Fitzgerald's four months period of silence to explain.

**Notes in passing...**  
Anyone watching the judicial recounts in Wards VII and III should keep in mind the reason for the count. In Ward III, **Frank Fillmore**, who was originally declared elected on the 16th of October, only to find later in the evening that **Graham Downey** had won the seat, the most to gain. He only lost by about 21 votes and there were a large number of spoiled ballots in that ward. Personally, I hope that Fillmore wins in the recount. I have nothing against Downey as an alderman, but he said incredibly little on issues during the campaign. That, in itself says a lot, especially in a ward where the major protection that the residents have against the city and developers is a vocal alderman. Fillmore would certainly fill that bill.

As for Ward VIII, the request for a recount by Bob Stappells has to be viewed as a colossal joke being played on the voters of his area. Stappells has quoted the "wide-spread support" he has had in the area in calling for the recount. I wonder where it was on October 16th? I somehow suspect that Stappells' real motivations for the request have something to do with his entrepreneurial ambitions.



Letters

## Winter Wonderland ?

To the Gazette

This item is to call attention to the fact that with the approach of winter, we'll soon be faced with the inevitable problem of snow and ice conditions on campus as everywhere else.

The fact of the matter is that I, Maxine Tynes - a fourth year Dalhousie student in the Education Programme - am part of a growing minority of people on campus who, due to some degree of physical disability, have great difficulty walking around campus in winter because the walks simply are not taken care of to the extent they could be.

I am particularly disturbed about this; for myself, for the rest of us, and for anybody who finds danger on icy walks and stairs. In order to effect any kind of change in winter grounds conditions, I feel it's necessary to form a united group of concerned people to call attention to the problem and to press for action. Hence, I would like to call a meeting of all those interested in the issue of ice and snow. Please watch for a posting in the near future. My home number is 469-0438. Please feel free to call me if you are concerned about the issue, and you would like to help get this thing off the ground. It's very important.

And to all you people out there on canes and crutches or just slow feet like me, if you don't think winter at Dalhousie is going to be a big big hassle, you've got another thing coming. Believe me. I've been here for four years, and I know.

This, hopefully, is just a preliminary statement of the issue. In the next Gazette, I shall tell the whole story of Dalhousie - the Winter Palace.

united we stand,  
Maxtine Tynes, and  
Stanley, the cane

To the Gazette

On page 10 of the October 24th edition of the Gazette, the times were announced for free skating at the Dal Rink. As a student I am very concerned and upset over the amount of time and specific times allocated for the free skating of students. Monday thru Thursday from 8 a.m. until 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. until 3 p.m. Friday's time is even less by one and one-half hours. Meanwhile, faculty and staff receive skating on just as many days but noticeably, they are given Tuesday evenings from 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.

While respecting the generosity of the university in giving ice time to the Halifax School Board so they can carry on their High School Hockey Program, and the commitments to the university intramural hockey program, I do question the times allotted for student use. Certainly as evidenced by turnouts last year on Thursday evenings, there is a considerable interest in skating by Dal students. Keeping in mind the ratio of staff to students, and the problems of finding new times, I think that there should be time allotted on at least one evening per week for student skating. If no such time is available, then the Tuesday evening slot should be lengthened and open to both staff and students. But I do feel it is necessary to have student skating on at least one evening of the week.

Respectfully yours,  
Daryl Gray

## Cash Available

Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students Notice.

To the Gazette

Advantage is being taken of this space to announce the availability of grants to sub-groups of the graduate population. Any group of graduate students, departmental or otherwise, are eligible. The requisite application form can, for the time being, be obtained from the SUB enquiry desk. Grant applications should be addressed to the Treasurer of D.A.G.S. and deposited in the graduate box at the above desk.

The period of grant distribution falls into two parts:

1) November 1-January 31.

2) February 1 - April 30.

This procedure has been decided upon in order to afford equal opportunity to groups that do not establish themselves until later in the academic year.

Because of the small income of the Association the amount of money available is limited. With regard to this point it should be noted that at present the Student Union is the primary funding agency even for graduate students. However, despite such limitations, D.A.G.S., as constituted, can still play an active role in this area. It is intended that the new graduate facility, presently under construction, satisfy some of the recreational and social needs of graduates, therefore funds might better be put towards more intellectual cultural, and professionally oriented activities. As many are aware, Dalhousie as a reputed mainstream Canadian university is deficient in some of these areas vis-a-vis the concerns of the graduate. Groups endeavouring to overcome this deficiency, especially those sponsoring activities of wider value to the graduate body and university as a whole, might expect a higher grant.

Applications may be obtained from D.A.G.S. Treasurer Michael Tadros. Office hours are Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons in A A 337B.

Bob Flute

**The budget from Student Council** operates on a fiscal year running from May 1 to April 30 of the following year. In accordance with the By-Law IX of the Constitution, the Gazette will next week be featuring a detailed summary of the audited financial statements for the preceding financial year, and a detailed summary of the budget of the Council and the agencies under its jurisdiction for the current year.