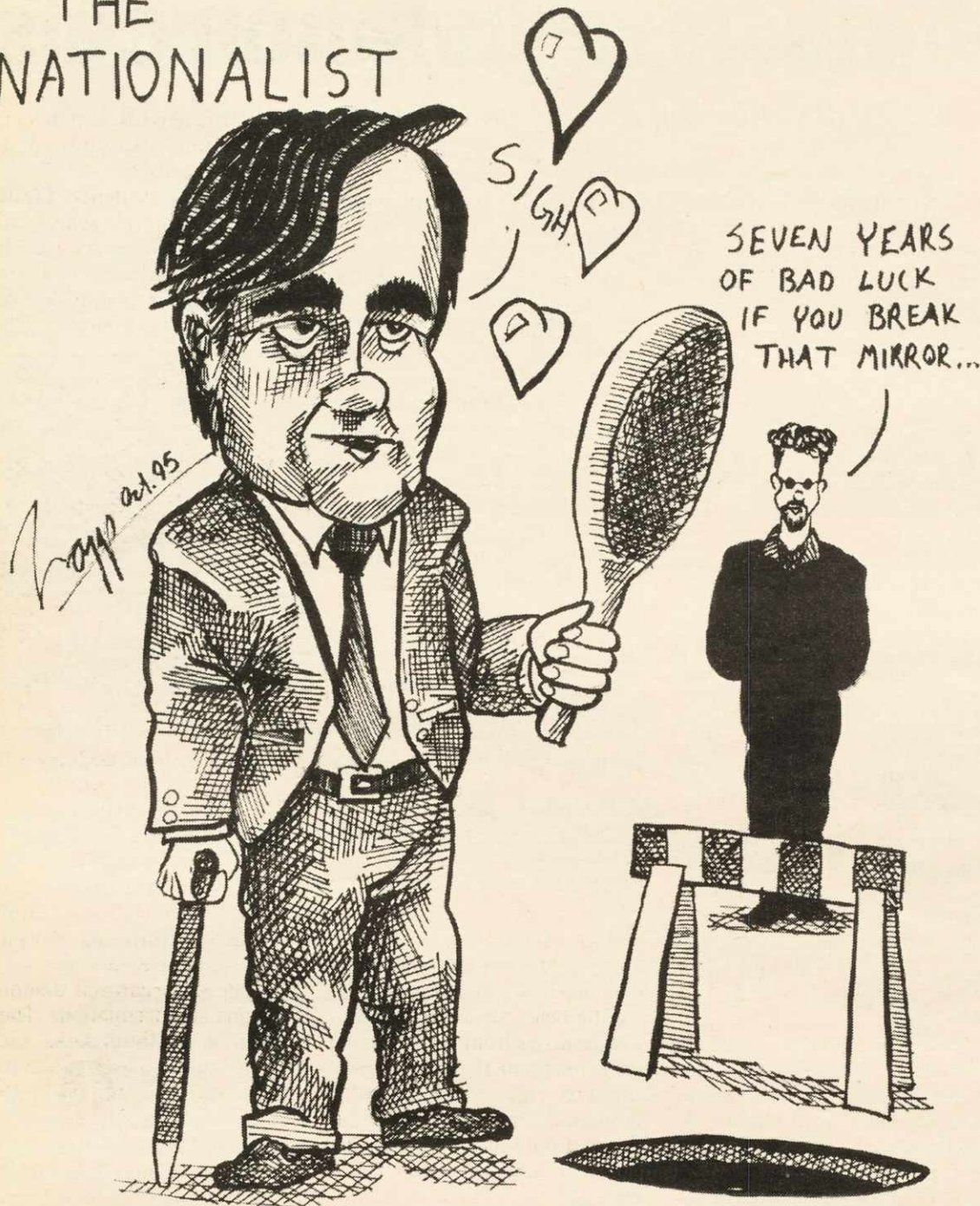


THE NATIONALIST



LETTERS

NDP not dead

RE: Richard Lim's "Has the NDP jumped right off the edge."

While it's nice to see people discussing the only left-of-centre option remaining in Canadian politics, it is frustrating to see proselytizing from those who clearly don't understand the party and its history.

First of all, the 1993 election was by all accounts an aberration. Put together an overwhelming desire to get rid of the Tory government with a Liberal party misrepresenting itself to sound like the NDP, and a terribly run New Democratic campaign and you end up with the kind of result we saw two years ago. Alexa McDonough will be able to lead the party with a sense of direction we were never able to find under Audrey McLaughlin and as such, we will likely be able to do better in those areas of traditional strength such as British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Northern Ontario. I am also confident that once she runs against as weak and ineffectual an MP as Mary Clancy in Halifax, she will, as Parker Brass Donham said, "win and win handily." One needs only to look at the results across Halifax from the last provincial election to see the strength of the party in the city.

Alexa does not want to run for a seat this time because it is far more imperative to get out across the country and build from the grassroots (after all, it worked for Preston Manning!). That is no failing, it is an ability to recognize what's important and to understand a sense of timing.

Finally, having worked with people from across the country, I can tell you that while Alexa is not yet a household name in the west, she is far better known than Ray Martin is here (and for the record, Martin achieved a degree of political success winning 16 seats and the official opposition in Alberta twice, not the "little electoral success" Lim notes). And more importantly, in her travels over the next two years, she will make herself known to westerners and will impress them as she did for 14 years against the odds in a part of the country that has been historically unable to recognize the fact that there are political alternatives out there. In places where the NDP is an alternative, Alexa will no doubt make serious waves.

I am feeling rather confident about a McDonough-led party right now. The country has never more needed an alternative to the three right wing parties that have been

setting the agenda the past two years. To that end, I thank Richard Lim for sharing his opinions and I urge him to look closely at what will transpire over the next couple of years. The country may just end up the better in the end.

Charles Crosby,
Communications Director, New Democratic Youth of Canada

Socialists in touch with reality

To the editor:

I'm writing to comment on a cartoon pictured in last week's Gazette. As I understand it, the cartoon implies that the International Socialists (IS) is a group thoroughly out of touch with reality.

It is impossible to know why the cartoonist ("Zrapp?") has formed such a bad opinion of us, as s/he relied solely on a sort of perverse Freudianism to make the point.

It's also not clear how citing a famous sex study by two American authors is relevant, but the cartoonist should at least learn how to spell their names. In any case, the intent is obviously to discredit us.

The IS is a small revolutionary organization in Canada with branches in 12 cities across the country. We also have sister organizations in 17 countries around the world, including England, Greece, South Africa, Poland, Australia, the USA, and South Korea.

Political leaders the world over and the mainstream media all claim that socialism is dead. Why do we still look to socialism as a goal worth achieving?

Socialism is about a radically democratic society run by working people. The majority should be in charge, not the tiny capitalist class. Then the priority of society would be meeting people's needs, not making profits. Socialism can't be handed down by an elite. Working people must transform society themselves. That's the kind of change the IS is fighting for.

For a better idea of who we are, what we stand for and what we do, pick up a copy of our newspaper, *Socialist Worker*. It's sold regularly at Red Herring Books, Paper Chase, and The Daily Grind, as well as by IS members on Tuesdays from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in front of the Public Library on Spring Garden Rd., and on Thursdays from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. in front of the Dal Student Union Building.

Paula Cornwall,
International Socialists Halifax

Me like football

It's no secret as to why Dalhousie's "Homecoming" weekend is so lame.

We need a football team.
Bad.

I know, I know — it's too expensive. How can we justify such a costly sport when classes are under the knife? How can we shell out big bucks for such barbaric ballet when that money could be going towards new computers, more profs, building renovations, etc.? How can we even dare ask for such an extravagant toy with the evil spectre of rationalization hanging over our heads?

The answer to all of these questions is that, quite simply, Dalhousie Homecoming sucks.

Let's face facts here. People don't walk around this campus salivating at the thought of Dal Homecoming. They've already made plans to go to Acadia for the weekend, or, worse yet, to SMU. And if the students here don't give a damn about homecoming, what's the big draw for alumni? If there's no crowd of raucous fans at Saturday's game, why would they want to come? To sit around and think, "Yeah, Homecoming blew went I went here too. I think I'll send the kids to Mount Allison. It might be small and in the middle of nowhere, but hell, they got a football team."

The Gazette accepts opinion pieces of up to 800 words. Speak to the opinions editor, Joe Tratnik. SUB room 312

EDITORIAL

It might not happen exactly like that, but see the point. It doesn't matter if you're a fan or not. I mean, it's football. It's easy to know when to cheer. Just wait for the cue from the drunk, painted, shirtless guys.

Think about it. It's the middle of October, it's cool, it's crisp, you're outside. The sun's shining, there's a hint of a breeze, the stands are packed. Maybe you've had a couple pops with your friends. Whatever the case, seeing your university football team in action is about a lot more than just taking in a game. All of Dalhousie, past and present, is out there sharing something. You're all rooting for the same thing. It's events like this that bring a university together.

I suppose the 90s term for it is bonding. Whatever. It's a good time for students, alumni, and the university as a whole. And, judging from our hockey team, monetary support from the alumni is out there if you know how to get it.

Take this year for example. The effort was definitely there, moreso than in any other year that I've seen in my prolonged stay at Dal. There was a barbeque. There was a beer tent, and not only did it have beer, it had live, singalong, maritime music. And all of these attractions overlooked the field. And there were fans in the stands.

Nobody in the beer tent (and I mean nobody) or grabbing a hot dog, but some people were in the stands. So what it was, was a regular old game with a couple of tents set up that nobody used.

Throw football into that mix and Homecoming would actually mean something to the Dalhousie community. It's a simple solution to a simple problem.

SAM MCCAIG

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