

Avoid stalemates

There has been some significant debate on the computer systems between different groups with respect to the student strike. Personally, I am quite puzzled by the aims of the strike, since I think it is a reasonably misguided effort. If people are unhappy about the potential increases, I believe there are more intelligent solutions to deal with this.

First of all, a strike is generally a strategy whereby your employer suffers due to lost workers (which translates into lost revenue for both sides). As students, we are not paid employees, nor does Dal suffer. If one feels that there are problems with the new university cuts, a solution should be chosen that effectively answers the dilemma. Otherwise, you're simply using a hammer to peel an orange.

In my humble opinion, there is a strong need for ratification of the current educational structure. Regardless of whether you agree with the new financial outline for university or not, I would be surprised if one person here at Dal did not see any opportunity for trimming the fat off of the current system. The problem is, wherever there are cuts made, people will complain (the Savage dilemma).

Students are arguing that the cuts

are going to be detrimental to our futures financially and scholastically, and I'm not sure I agree. Consider this — I've been surrounded by a large number of students while I've attended Dal. Some serious, some not so serious. It's the not-so-serious students who have to pull their pants up, because they're costing society so much, but not treating that responsibility with respect.

Many students argue that university undergrad is a time for fun and frolic — well, that only goes so far before students have to be reminded of the \$8,000 price tag that comes with the fun and frolic. Perhaps when more money is riding on a student's education they'll take it more seriously, and perhaps even have a higher take-home pay 10 years down the road as a result.

I think that we all know that there are financial problems — trying to stalemate every solution that is presented to us (super-universities, cutting programs, fighting tuition hikes, etc) will eventually remove us from the bargaining process.

Filibustering only works on occasion — resisting every effort made will eventually take the credibility out of the student masses — especially when our solution doesn't seem

even remotely suited to the problem (e.g. student strike).

The wisest thing I was ever told was that "if you don't like something, come up with two alternatives before you say anything."

From a personal point of view, sure — tuition hikes are a bad scene. But, from a practical perspective, I know that cuts have to be made. We fought the cuts, so now the extra financial burden is being placed in our laps.

I also know that any solution to help ease the heightened tuition will be fought. Perhaps the fighting should come to an end, and we should direct our energy into alternatives instead.

To put it bluntly, the government is a business, and when a business is losing money — cuts are made. Like all well-managed businesses, the morale of the 'shareholders' is important. However, this is one business where each shareholder cannot only consider their own situation — they must consider every perspective when they make choices. If we can help the decision process with respect to these cuts, then we all win.

It's called compromise, and it is far more effective than a stalemate.

Steve Franklin

Ask Jo & Joe

Some newly-evolved vegetarians have asked us to give them the low-down on the availability of non-meat foods within the Dalhousie campus area. So here is our view on the scene and our opinion on what is the best.

Starting with the lower campus, there is a cafeteria in both the Tupper and the Dentistry building, both of which have what could be loosely termed, a vegetarian selection. If you like egg-salad, this place is kinda ok. If you're really daring, you could try a wilted scary looking salad. We think we'll just pass on the salad, thank you.

Moving up to the top of campus, the Life Sciences Centre is interesting if you like eating in the dark. Major Foods has a selection of egg salad sandwiches as good as anyone's. Sometimes they have soup that is meatless and they have fries. At Mr. SUB, you can get a vegetarian sub.

In the central campus area, there is the Student Union Building. Here, Beaver Foods offers probably the largest selection available in the Dalhousie area. From fries to subs, salads to soups, they've got it, and it's fresh and pretty good. If you like, you can get eggs in the morning, and toast, of course, muffins and cookies too. And, if you don't mind the fact that it's cooked on the same grill as the beef stir-fry, you can get an all vegetable stir-fry which is pretty tasty.

Now, if you're a die-hard veggie that goes in for the attitude set, the Grad House is your Mecca. Here they have all the usual stuff of soups and veggie sandwiches, but they also have meatless cold-cuts, you know, tofu stuff. And, don't you forget about those much-in-demand samosas. Quite the treat with tons of plum sauce. We like em!

As a last note, we checked with Beaver Foods, and they do offer a full vegetarian selection on their meal plans, so if you live on campus, or you were thinking about chowin' down at Howe or Shirreff, they will cater to your needs.

For the next few weeks, we'll be doin' the man or woman on the street bit, trying to find out what's up with you and the rest of the average joe's. So if you see us, tell us what you think and what you want to know.

Remember that if you have any questions, nothing's too crude, rude or dumb. Just ask Jo & Joe.

You can reach Jo & Joe by emailing: Tratnik@is.dal.ca

Corporate agendas not a good choice

The students of western business schools have dominated business for the last quarter-century. This corresponds exactly with a severe economic crisis in North America, which includes runaway inflation, endemic unemployment, almost no real growth, record levels of bankruptcy and a collapse in industrial production. Manufacturing, the sector which they have been trained to manage, has suffered more than any other.

This raises two questions:

1. Is there indication — practical, statistical, philosophical or financial, that training future business leaders in specialized management schools has benefited business or the economy?

2. Has this new elite — approximately a quarter of the university population — been able to communicate to society any convincing program for ending the crisis?

In 1993 the Harvard Business School reacted to growing criticism of its methods by announcing a new curriculum. In the future students would "focus less on specific disciplines and more on combining skills to solve problems". But it is precisely their obsession with problem-solving that is the heart of the problem. To organize the training of business leaders from the point of view of the corporate executive is rather like training athletes to compete from the point of view of the team's office manager.

Present day Business Schools could be compared to acting schools which train experts in abstract management methods to pretend they are capitalists. Capitalism itself contains no ethical values. Those who use it decide by their actions whether it is a force of good or evil. That is probably why Capitalism is happiest in a non-democratic society. Enriching oneself in today's society may be criminally immoral, although permitted by the law.

Corporatism has found the government and government has bought into it. Historically corporatism has been the persistent rival school of representative government. The surface argument of corporatism has always been that democracy is inefficient, ineffective, corrupting subjects to whims and emotions. Corporatism, on the other hand, presents itself as professional and responsible. It promises to deliver prosperity by helping those who know how to do their jobs properly.

The Second World War was about many things, but at its heart was a battle between two concepts of civilization the one based on individuals and democracy and the other corporatist authoritarianism that was very much part of the nazi mandate. Yet since 1945 corporatism has advanced with even greater strength and now has real hold on day to day power. Somehow we seem to have lost World War II after all. The old corporatist idea has re-emerged with sparkling new sophistication. It had learned from the heavy handed attempt of the 1930s not to attack the function and the inefficiency of the system. A clear example is the change in the legal status of corporation. This policy has given corporations the status of individuals. Once it has been decided in a society structured around the law, that corporations are people, then mere individuals are at such a disadvantage that they have little choice but to become corporations. A clear example of this is illustrated by the death of individual involvement in the process of public policy formulation and implementation. The danger was quite apparent when the conservatives, who were firm believers in the ideas of corporatism, were wiped out politically for the sole reason that the public feels disenfranchised from the process so they took advantage of their democratic right to vote them out of office.

Perhaps the purest example of a corporatist political success is the Robert Communication monopoly of public owned airways. He has captured newspapers, television stations and publishing houses. The question must be asked, what are the dangers of such power, and will public values be protected.

It is quite conceivable that he could create a political party made up in good part of his employees and use his various interest to run a highly

successful political campaign, or he could support an existing party. It seems that we are becoming what we set out to destroy — a ruling elite that controls every part of our lives to carry one mandate: profit.

In conclusion, we could learn much from the Swiss system of proportional representation that is maintaining a balance between public accountability and efficiency.

The Swiss have learned that if democracy is to be meaningful it has

to be a bottom-up system. They have determined that in order to arrest the tendency of government to adopt a corporate system of efficiency, that powers must be pushed down as close to the people as possible. By act of will, stakeholder have a vested interest to work for the system, that seeks their input in order that it can function efficiently.

Ron Sampson

Lloyd needs pizza

Well this may not be 1969 and peaceful demonstrations and boycotts are probably just as innocuous as threatening the finance minister to beat yourself rigorously with a ball-peen hammer unless he lowers tuition but that doesn't mean resistance is dead. There are still methods and resources at our disposal that are in the realm of passive resistance.

Pranks. Yes, pranks. It may sound puerile and as a matter of fact it is but therein lies its effectiveness. A friend of mine who was taking a course in semiotics at U of T first turned me onto the idea and how they can temporarily alter and expose established ways of thinking. Say for instance you call your parents in the middle of the night, sounding very erratic, "Dad I'm in jail, I'm in jail and I really really like it."

It would be stupid and cruel but it does open a new possibility, something that is outside of what is expected. Carrying a placard or banner and yelling a lot is not a very effective method of getting your point across because that is exactly what is expected, you're just doing what you usually do and they in turn have a rehearsed response... "Big fuckin' deal."

Resistance must be shocking and innovative if it's going to elicit a reaction. In light of the 'New Revolution' here is a short list of possible pranks that I have compiled:

1. We are living in the information age, services no bureaucratic office can live without. Organize a week long barrage of telephone calls, faxes, e-mail and mail asking inane questions and requesting useless information. It jams up the systems and has them sifting through garbage for days.

2. To anyone with a cat or dog, send a small parcel of pooh to the finance minister (I don't think that's illegal, but check first) make sure you mark it personal.

3. Send digitally altered photos to the *Weekly World News*, revealing Lloyd Axworthy in a conjugal embrace with Newt Gingrich.

4. Now this is a biggy and you would have to be in Ottawa. Take an empty oil barrel and fill it with water and dishwashing liquid, slap a toxic waste sticker on it and roll it onto the Parliament green. Puncture for a small leak. This should be good for a bit of mayhem. Call after they figure out what it is and claim responsibility in the name of pissed-off stu-

dents.

5. Order pizzas every hour on the hour to Lloyd's office.

6. Those with student loans can wear your underwear every day for a week without bathing (eat a lot of burritos) and send the product to Lloyd as partial payment on your loans.

7. This is a last resort. Have Connie Chung visit Lloyd Axworthy's mom.

These are just a few examples but the point is to be annoying and persistent. There are books out there on the subject if you need help. A.K. Press has put one out called *Sabotage in the American Workplace*, describing the hijinx of disgruntled employees. Re-Search publications has an entire volume appropriately entitled *Pranks*. And *Get Even: The Complete Book of Dirty Tricks* is put out by Paladin Press.

This is the information age, if you want to get something done you need to send a message. Rambling and grunting like neanderthals on a lawn isn't going to say a hell of a lot. Dissent must become more innovative if it's going to have an effect.

Morley Devine