

Don't like us, leave

To the editors,

My letter is in response to the letter by Ms. Joan Sullivan on the "Swell Guys". First of all, we are hired by the Entertainment Committee. Secondly, we are not student musicians, but are professional, unionized musicians and we all have been for a number of years.

I would ask Ms. Sullivan to stay at home if she does not like the music. Her extremely modest cranial endowment could not possibly comprehend or appreciate the music that reflects our real "musical abilities". The songs that we play are obviously not musical masterpieces, but instead, are tunes that get people to tap their toes, relax, laugh, have a beer and generally get their minds off their schoolwork for a few hours. In this situation, we try to present ourselves as fun-loving entertainers rather than serious, stoneface, self-indulgent musicians. If you want to check out our true "musical abilities", come see us perform in one of the many other real musical settings we are all involved in.

I defend the record of the popularity of the "Swell Guys" at the Grawood, Peddlar's Pub, Alexander's, The Split Crow, The Lower Deck, Wee Willie's, The LBR, as well as many other places around the city.

As for our abilities and credentials;

Alex Vaughan:

—graduate of Berklee School of Music (Boston)—B. Mus.

—graduate of Dalhousie—B. Ed.

—winner of the C.B.C. Maritime Songwriting Contest (1984)

Ken MacKay:

—graduate of Humber College (Toronto)

—graduate of the N.S. Teacher's College

—Teacher in the Truro Schools Music Program

Bruce Phillips:

—graduate of Dalhousie—B. Music Ed.

—has taught privately and in the Dartmouth Schools Music Dept.

My dear Joan, we are simply filling a need by doing our job; playing what the management and the people want us to play. I think that you'll find that the people with views similar to yours are a small fraction of the Friday afternoon crowd at the Grawood. If our music offends you, leave! Nobody (especially us) is asking you to stay.

Signed

Bruce Phillips

(one of the Swell Guys)

Offended by Swell Guys

To the editors,

On two occasions I was at the Grawood Lounge on Friday afternoons when the band playing was Ken and Alex. I was offended by their language during their perfor-

mances. They changed the lyrics of a few songs, interjecting profanity, obscenity, and cursing. At this time I don't remember the titles of the songs or I would state them. Their behavior was of such a nature as to offend any decent and normal person with a modicum of moral sensitivity. Finally I was so repelled by their language and conduct that I felt obliged to leave.

My point is this; the Grawood Lounge exists as a place to which any student may resort for relaxation and entertainment. But if the entertainment is to be of such a nature, a great number of students, who will necessarily be made uncomfortable will be deprived of the facilities.

Joyce Robart

A Dal student

Be realistic

To the editors,

I feel I must write and respond to the most recent column by Rick Janson cryptically titled, "Working Around the Lemming Factor."

While I agree with Rick that the Students' Union of Nova Scotia and the Canadian Federation of Students have a number of problems, I feel his solutions for resolving them are facile and ill-conceived.

About the only concrete suggestion Rick makes is that SUNS should do away with a permanent staff position and instead pay an elected chairperson a salary. To begin with, the very problem of transience in the student movement which Mr. Janson points to would be seriously exacerbated by doing away with a permanent staff person. Further, since SUNS is only

able to afford approximately \$9,000 on salary we would be limiting the chair's position to students in Halifax—it would be unreasonable to expect students from elsewhere in the province to relocate and abandon their studies for a year on this basis.

Perhaps I should point out that the idea of paying honoraria to executive members has been discussed repeatedly by SUNS but since our resources are limited it has been felt that the need for continuity took priority. While the idea of having full-time executives is a good one, it should be clear that professional staff people are extremely important. Rick Janson should avoid the kind of careless "put a student in" comments that we would be more likely to expect from a John Bosnitch.

Mr. Janson also makes the suggestion that the chairperson of SUNS should be elected at large on campuses across the province. Let me get this straight. Candidates would travel the province campaigning for the approximately two and one-half months that student elections are currently spread over?

Do you have any idea how much this would cost? How can you argue that this would be democratic and participatory while at the same time questioning the legitimacy of existing student leaders because only 20 per cent of the population votes and issues are not debated? Would these problems suddenly disappear? Are you also proposing that CFS elect its chair nationally, piggybacked on elections which take place across the country from November to April

every year? What better way to turn student politics into the preserve of people who can afford the costs, who are permanent bureaucrats or who have no interest in actually being students.

Let us be serious. Neither SUNS nor CFS is perfect, but each of these organizations is doing everything they can to serve students. The student leaders or staff people who are most involved make the best decisions they can and they do their best to represent student views. They are always grappling with the problem of too little student involvement in the process. The *Gazette* should certainly be drawing to the attention of student leaders any incident where broader participation is ignored or discouraged.

In the meantime, any student who wants input or has a suggestion is always welcome in the Student Union Office (Room 222, Student Union Building, 424-2146), in the SUNS Office (Room 324, Student Union Building, 422-5032), or in the CFS Office in Ottawa (126 York Street, 232-7394).

Caroline Zayid
Vice-President (External)

To the editors,

I read with interest the article entitled "Dalplex Deficit Surprises Budget Office" in the Nov. 1, 1984 edition of the *Gazette*. I feel a reaction is necessary.

In particular, I wish to address the comments attributed to Dr. Sinclair-Faulkner—he questioned the rationale for building Dalplex when the university knew there would be ongoing costs and the library was already underfunded. This seems to typify the attitude across campus—that is, that Dalplex serves only the recreational needs of the campus and surrounding community.

This understanding is completely wrong. In the first instance Calplex was built to provide an academic facility for the School of Recreation, Physical and Health Education. As such it provides research facilities, classroom space, activity instructional space and office space necessary for the conduct of its three undergraduate degree programs and its M.Sc. program.

It is unfortunate that the university community continues to view Dalplex as a facility for recreation only and one that should be generating the total funds necessary for its operation. As a facility which supports the academic activities of our School, that facility should not be expected to generate any more income than only other academic facility on this campus. It is, in fact encouraging to think that the administrators of Dalplex generate as much income as they do.

The School of Recreation, Physical and Health Education existed for years in facilities which were inadequate. The opening of Dalplex finally provided adequate research space for faculty. It is not coincidental that since then we have made significant progress in the area of research and have enhanced the programs of instruction we offer to graduate and undergraduate students. In that sense the build-

continued on page 7

How to keep your principles and succeed

More than 100 of Canada's student journalists will barely have time to digest their Christmas turkey before boarding flights to Halifax Dec. 26. Despite being yanked away from their loved ones during the festive season, few will complain.

Their destination is the 47th national conference of Canadian University Press, hosted in Nova Scotia this year by the *Gazette*, the *SMU Journal* and the *MSVU Picaro*.

For eight days delegates will be inundated with new ideas; have their commitment to social and political change challenged; make a plethora of decisions on a cooperative that involves four regions, three companies, about a dozen employees, and a budget of more than \$250,000; and make a good number of friends from Victoria to St. John's as an added bonus.

Having survived 47 years to claim the title of Canada's oldest national student organization, members have been making rumbling noises in recent years about also being Canada's real national student movement. For anyone who sets foot at a national conference it is not hard to understand why.

For eight days the conference works frantically around the clock. Delegates can be found in seminars, in committees, putting out the daily morning newsletter, in workshops, in resource rooms and in both regional and national plenary

sessions. Others linger in hotel rooms and corridors plotting strategy and discussing ideas. Everywhere the talk is politically charged—even sessions that are supposed to be technical in nature have a slice of politics thrown in.

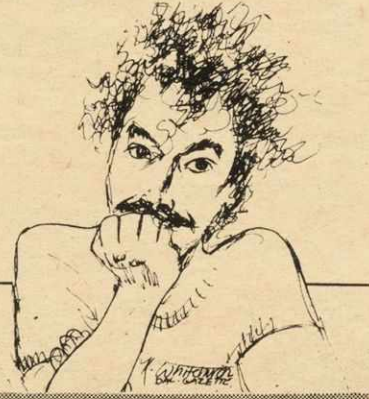
Much of the debate revolves around the organization's statement of principles which asserts that stu-

dent newspapers play a role as agents of social change. To some the statement has been an irritant—to others it has been a focus for the direction of their newspapers and CUP.

The challenges often come in the form of applying a social change philosophy to the newspaper environment and the people within it.

For example, a number of years ago it became no longer acceptable for the usual group of male student reporters to sit in a room and voice concern over the inequality of women in society. Through discussions, resource papers, and creative steps taken within CUP's structure, the male dominated student press has started to involve more women. Last year about 40 per cent of the delegates to CUP 46 were women. This year the majority of CUP staff positions are filled by women—the first time ever this has happened.

More recently gay and lesbian



RICK JANSON

issues have come into greater focus, and many newspapers are now putting out special supplements exploring the politics of sexual preference.

To suggest that CUP is the ideal student organization would be to do so with a blind eye to many of the problems still unresolved. There is still much to be done in involving women in the student press, CUP staff are overworked and underpaid, and many major Ontario newspapers are still outside the organization—just to name a few. But CUP has proved to be a dynamic organization and change is inevitable given the current directions it is headed.

It is phenomenal that so many of the changes that have occurred within the organization have done so without disenfranchising large sections of its membership. Although it has gone through many rocky years, CUP has managed to hang together without the

kind of convulsions and upheavals that have plagued its political counterparts—the Canadian Federation of Students and its predecessors.

Having started out as a loose collection of student newspapers exchanging news and ideas, the organization has grown—mostly through the '70s and '80s—to include a weekly news, features and graphics service, a national advertising company, a print shop, regional bureaux and fieldworkers. All this has been facilitated through a series of regional and national conferences. Decisions were made by the members themselves after debate and discussion at various levels.

Although CUP's growth has been rapid in the last decade, it has done so with its principles intact. If CFS suffers from a preoccupation with its own bureaucracy, CUP has succeeded with a preoccupation with its own principles.

This year those principles will be once again put to the test as increasingly conservative papers meet increasingly radical papers on the plenary floor. These conservative times have created the polarization through the major shift in the status quo and the reaction to it. It will take strength and conviction to stay the course and maintain the direction of the organization. But not to worry—in the end the progressives always have the better arguments.