

These boots were made for walkin'

One of my ex-roommates has a poster on her bathroom wall that says "I cried because I had no shoes until I met a man who had no class."

The Minister of State for Youth has no problems in the shoe department: he probably wears size eleven.

It takes a person with big feet to come to Atlantic Canada and tell young people that youth unemployment is down. Jean Charest is not afraid to step in piles of snow and doggie doo with his \$200 booties to tell Atlantic Canadians to put their faith in the private sector and make it partners in job creation, when this region's private sector is far from healthy.

It takes a minister with big feet to tell student politicians he's just not going to answer their questions about cutbacks in education funding because he's heard that

one before, and besides, he was tired, and his feet probably hurt.

It also takes a man who has no class to tell me after his speech that he "just heard about the problem of black and native youth unemployment rates in Atlantic Canada. I'm being briefed on that now."

Brass he's got. He can shout, thump the table, wear red ties and talk bullshit right up there with the rest of the Tory cabinet ministers. But what is the 28 year old youth minister going to do when he grows up? His feet probably won't get any bigger. Maybe he should invest in a pair of steel-toed work boots if he's determined to continue his trampling treatment of youth concerns.

The problems that young people in Atlantic Canada face when they try to find work aren't helped at all by a youth minister who doesn't understand one thing

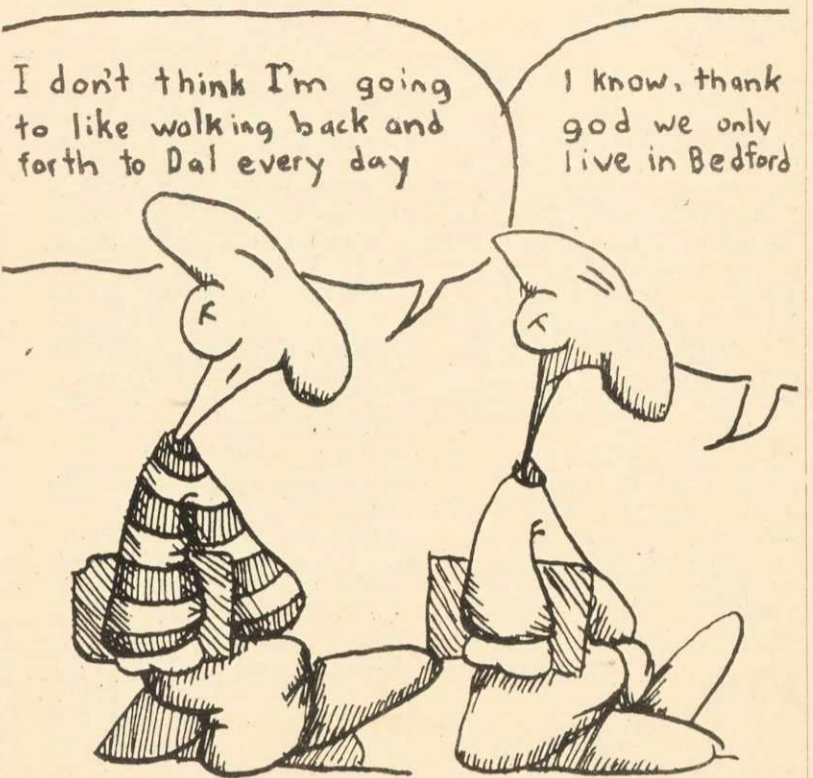
about poverty in this region. He doesn't understand how our economy works, and he pretends that the solutions he offers Ontario will work as effectively here, if we have the faith.

The one honest thing Mr. GoodyShoes told his P.C. Youth audience last week at Dalhousie is that the Tory Jobs Strategy Program is designed to get his party re-elected.

With 30 per cent of youth unemployed in Newfoundland and close to 24 per cent of youth in the other three Atlantic provinces desperately trying to find work, his faith in good old job strategy and re-election just might not work. If he wants to keep his job and be able to pay for his next pair of designer rubber boots, he better change his tune.

But it's already too late for unemployed young people here.

Lois Corbett



Groundhogs & vacuous virtues

It's the time of year when ground hogs and other living things retreat into their homes to dream of better weather and seasons when the sun shines more brightly.

It's also the time of year when students start to embellish their resumes with more forte and imagination to explore job possibilities of the summer.

Judging by recent announcement, many students will also have all summer to dream of better job prospects. The federal government has cut funding for its summer jobs program and the Nova Scotia government shows no signs of increasing its spending — which contributed to a 22.6 per cent unemployment rate

among returning students.

Instead, the government is stressing the advantages of positive thinking. Optimism can be a quality in the dreariest of times, but without action the virtue is vacuous.

The federal and provincial Tory governments are not taking any great actions to reduce youth unemployment. The minister responsible is still being briefed on black and native unemployment and admitted to the *Gazette* one of the goals of his job strategy is to get the Tories re-elected.

Responsibility for action is being left to the students themselves. One of the most effective forms of action we can take is political action — lobbying the

Buchanan government to increase its funding for summer employment by joining the Students' Union of Nova Scotia's campaign and signing their petition.

Some jobs can be a real drag. But, even then, they provide more than just food on the table. The experience, whether good or bad, provides students with a chance to apply some of the skills they have acquired and a chance to learn new ones. Without this opportunity, many skills and much that is learnt goes to waste.

It is embarrassing our government doesn't realize this but it's up to you to teach them.

Toby Sanger

Arthur Russell
Metro Transit
Chief Negotiator

Dear Mr. Russell:

As a Dalhousie University student, I rely on the Metro Transit bus service for transportation to and from my classes. I urge you to agree to the bus drivers' request to go binding arbitration to settle the contract dispute.

Sincerely,

Clip and send to Arthur Russell, Metro Transit, 200 Isley Avenue, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

The memory of money

This Friday, February 6, Dalhousie students and faculty enjoy a day off classes to celebrate Munro Day — a time for remembrance for one of the university's greatest benefactors.

Born in Pictou County in 1825, George Munro went on to become a successful New York publisher specializing in inexpensive editions of great works of literature. He started donating gifts to Dalhousie in 1879 when the "college by the sea" was in severe financial straits.

Students were quick to recognize his generosity and petitioned the board of governors for an annual campus holiday in recognition of Munro, which was approved in 1881.

Once again, the university is in severe financial distress.

Perhaps the university administrators could take advantage of this day of rest to reflect on the

significance of the occasion and possible solutions it might offer to the university's troubles.

Why not declare a separate holiday for each of the major benefactors of the institution?

Not only would this encourage donations from people who consider honorary degrees too solemn a memorial; it would also save enormous amounts by closing the university down for a day.

But why limit it only to pecuniary benefactors?

How about an annual "Ritchie Day" for students to monitor the efficiency of faculty and staff and submit wacky cost-saving suggestions at an annual "save-in" in the president's jacuzzi? Dress would be Californian or kiwi beach wear; drinks on the house.

In the search for fiscal responsibility, our monetary guardians should leave no stones unturned.

Toby Sanger

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Toby Sanger

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THE GAZETTE

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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.

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