

# Student affairs— who cares?

by Loretta Mullen

Councillors and student politicians are betraying the students of Nova Scotia. Having attained their illustrious positions on a student council, they are relaxing in the obscurity of their ineffectiveness. They have the student-given responsibility of representation, but it's doubtful whether many know or care what that responsibility entails. The average councillor goes to council meetings—maybe. Rarely do you find someone committed enough to read the material beforehand in an effort to become informed. One could hardly expect a mere councillor to be able to absorb the complexities of student affairs, much less impart this information to the students he 'represents'! When faced with a decision on how to vote on a particular issue, is it any wonder councillors become confused? They have only limited resources to rely upon, unless of course, they succumb to the superior influence of the 'wise' executive.

When questioned about student input into council

decisions, student politicians are wont to tell you that the average student doesn't care. Do you care about something you know nothing about? Are students to be considered lacking the intelligence to have even opinions?

It's not as if there are no issues that students would have opinions about. The

The Students' Union of Nova Scotia is attempting to represent students in some of these provincial matters. S.U.N.S. lobbies the provincial government on issues directly affecting students. Yet, not enough work is being done on the local level for an organization like S.U.N.S. To be truly representative,

inform you about the issues S.U.N.S. is presently working on for you? Did you know that each member institution of S.U.N.S.

The catch is that councillors are too apathetic a lot to even have initiative. When was the last time a councillor did you any good? Have you noticed any efforts on campus to inform you about the issues S.U.N.S. is presently working on for you? Did you know that each member institution of S.U.N.S. is supposed to have a campus committee to take care of that, yet Dalhousie council cannot even manage such a simple task? Even a small institution like King's has a campus committee!

Students, whether council like it or not, are people, and occasionally people take an interest in the world they live in. Sometimes they even wish to participate! It's time

students started thinking about who is "representing" them.

Is your council telling you what they're doing? Do they ask your opinion? Do they give you information; open your minds to new perspectives; count you as a responsible citizen of the student community?

Now, there are some people who take student representation seriously—like the Students' Union of Nova Scotia—but until individual councils become responsible, the efforts of a few people won't make much difference.

In the face of council apathy, which they so hypocritically accuse students of, it would appear that the next step is left to the individual student.

(Loretta Mullen is the chairperson of the Student Union of Nova Scotia)

## COMMENTARY

issues that affect students are not even brought to their attention. How many students at Dalhousie wouldn't like to have someone tackle the problems they have with the Nova Scotia student aid program? How many students don't care whether or not Dalhousie is receiving adequate funding from the provincial government? How many students feel they aren't affected by poor resources of the library, or the limited academic program offered?

The problem is that students aren't being asked what they think. They aren't being asked to support efforts to improve these situations.

S.U.N.S. desperately needs support at the local level to be a viable organization. Believe it or not, this search for student input is the responsibility of student councillors.

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## In defense of engineers . . .

by Patrick J. McManus

The Engineers, the only on-campus group that show apparent signs of life, have been a popular punching bag of the student media and alike. Stereotyped as black jacketed, beer guzzling Neanderthals, they have been the central targets of snide editorials, oafish caricatures, and the occasional fiery "Letter to the Editor" from an enraged Roman Catholic priest or jilted nurse. All this animosity for one society.

Extra heaping of abuse is triggered each year by the **Engineers Stamp**. This is the annual defacing of the Gazette's front page while plugging some free advertisement for the upcoming Engineers Ball. What sent little wiffs of steam flying out of Paul Clark's typewriter was the slashing out of an article that proclaimed the Gazette's victory over the *Engineer's on the ice. Beating the macho at their own game then being denied the opportunity to spread the word.*

It is unlikely you'll catch the Engineers crying in their beer over the defeat in Hockey or the Gazette's belligerent name-calling. What should induce shame though is their lack of ingenuity. Unlike the exploits of their brothers in other universities they failed to be original, to

spark the imagination of victim and on-looker alike. One can reflect on the technological expertise of the University of British Columbia's Engineering Society in planting a Volkswagen high on top of a clock tower or stealing a cannon from Historical Stanley Park. The gumption of the University of Toronto Engineers to enter their "Lady Godiva Memorial Marching Band" in the CFL Parade.

True, there is little that can be done with a traditional stamping. The removal of the article came close. Had it been left there it would have likely been ignored. Instead the read-

ers attention was drawn to the cut out corner of the front page leaving them to ponder over what they were missing. But none of the Engineers exploits in the past few years have been of marked or notable brilliance. Stamping the Gazette or storming Kings female dormitory (getting at Godfrey's goat) wears thin after several showings.

Little can be done to improve the Engineers image so they should attempt to enhance it. Surely they can scrape together from their technical orientated ranks enough talent to conceive an original scheme. Planting Paul Withers on top of a clock tower maybe.

## Who J.R. shot...

by Chris Hart

Well Kristin shot J.R., eh. I bet ole Bing's spinning in his grave. Personally, I thought John Buchanan did, and I'm still not persuaded that I'm wrong.

But, really, what is Dallas doing pre-empting the national news? I thought only the national religion, Hockey, could do that. Next week maybe they'll replace the news with "Mork and Mindy" to improve their ratings' picture. What do the people need to know about what's going on in the world for anyway? They can always read the middle of a newspaper; edi-

tors frequently have to put the news in there as fillers or their customers might think their money's being wasted. The front page is of course reserved for such "big items" as J.R. GETS DIARRHEA—suspected of spiking his lunch with x-lax.

I need the National, it tells me about the important things like George Brett has hemorrhoids and can't hit or the latest Joe Clark joke. Don't take it away. Maybe we can compromise! How about we show Dallas and run the news along the bottom of the screen like they do the lyrics on Hymn Sing?

## Letters to the Editor

### Where has Scott been?

Dear Sir:

What is it with this society, anyhow? Reagan gets elected and they start crawling out of the woodwork. I'm referring to volleyball coach Al Scott and his decision to keep someone off the team solely on the basis of the length of their hair. This decision has to be called arbitrary and discriminatory, since hair length has nothing whatever to do with performance. If the hair gets in the way or threatens to touch the net, then you tie it back or put something over it as the player in question was perfectly willing to do.

"What about discipline?", you ask. The misguided notion that the discipline of the sport must pervade every aspect of the athlete's life was discarded years ago. Where've you been, Al? Professional athletes do it; doctors, lawyers, and in some places the army does it. It doesn't seem to affect their performance. What's so special about your team?

Let's call a spade a spade. Coach Scott doesn't like long hair, and if he is going to be allowed to solely "determine the operation of the team" as Bellemare seems spinelessly willing to do, then we might as well let him keep blacks and

East Indians off the team too: 'Sorry boys, your colour is bad for morale.' Oh well. To quote Bellemare, "There are some things that you just have to give up to be on the team."

Sincerely,  
Jim Bruce

### 20th Century ostriches

Dear Editor,

Few universities house such a high level of apathy as does the student body here at Dalhousie. Students are plagued by richness and comfort, and lack the intestinal fortitude to break free from this spell. Somehow they seem to feel that the "ostrich" approach will solve all problems. I would like to remind them, that as the 20th Century slowly draws to an end, the world is held in balance by a very fine thread and is constantly being eroded by the threat of nuclear war and poor leadership. If these very students aspire to become the leaders of tomorrow, I am afraid that their apathy today will leave them with no tomorrow to lead.

Daniel Matte