

# Barlow speaks on NAFTA

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Canadians to maintain their high work standards against this sort of competition?

There are many ways that NAFTA affects human rights, ranging from the right to a non-toxic environment to the right to proper medicine. It is a policy about which every student should become very aware.

Under NAFTA Annex 1210, Article 1201, Article 1502, standards of education are placed into the hands of a multi-nation Trade Commission which views education as just another business, and it is defined as just another service (ignoring its social objectives.) Not to mention the "intellectual property rights" which are also part of NAFTA. Barlow describes these as the new corporate debate over, "Who owns knowledge?" As a Professor at Simon Fraser University says, these laws "treat knowledge as a commodity which is the property of those who first get their lawyers to the patent office. It

enables those who 'own' it — and we are talking almost exclusively about large multi-national companies — to extract a financial benefit for allowing others the privilege of using it."

Barlow sees the "corporate agenda on education" already being ushered in here at Dalhousie University. "The fight that is happening here at Dal. [The arts cuts] are this fight. It is the

*"The fight is happening here at Dal."*

struggle between those who see education as something that helps prepare young people for a full and divergent future... people with questioning minds... and the concept of the short term and sending out people who, without question, are able to know more and more, but in fewer and fewer areas.

People who will be the good sort of corporate automatons."

She continues, "They [implementors of NAFTA/multi-national corporations] are saying, 'If we are going to shift people over to a new form of social Darwinism we have to be teaching younger people not to question it.' I think what is happening at Dal is happening against this backdrop... I challenge you to challenge very strongly the value, the ethical decision being made here... What you are fighting here is a microcosm of the kind of decisions we are going to have to make about our society."

It is important that students become aware of the implications of NAFTA. Our new-founded Liberal majority government certainly leaves little room for comfort. They largely ignored NAFTA in their election campaign, loosely promising to "renegotiate." It seems we have little to fall back on in government. This points toward groups outside of the political parties, such as the Council of Canadians.

# Dal debaters talk it up

by Adam Newman

Anxiety was high as thirty-two nervous people converged at Dalhousie October 8 for a weekend of novice debating.

Some had debated in high school, but for many the experience was new. The tournament was hosted by the debating club Sodales. Participants came from Dalhousie, King's, Mt. Allison, UCCB, the Coast Guard College (in Cape Breton), St. Thomas University (in Fredericton), and Memorial University.

Working in pairs, each team debated at least six times. The debates were all impromptu — preparation is frowned upon in most university debates. Students spend enough time in the library as is.

Each team is assigned the position of government or opposition, and both are read a resolution. The government is given fifteen minutes to prepare a case, and the opposition starts talking as soon as the government sits down. The teams are judged both on logical coherence and presentation.

The thirty-four minute debate is modelled on the Canadian parliamentary system, and it is reasonably formal. The rules are archaic. For example, if a speaker waves a pencil in front of his/her adversary, the opposition may rise on a Point of Order and say, "Mr./Mme. Speaker, my colleague is threatening me with a weapon." The Speaker would then say, "Point well taken," and the speaker who waved the pencil would have lost time from his/her speech.

Such rules are rarely invoked, but they pervade the atmosphere of collegiate debate, which continues to treat its participants as though they were living in medieval England.

The arguments presented at Dalhousie's fifth annual novice tournament ranged from the serious to the downright silly. Debates raged on such disparate topics as whether or not Canada should emulate Japanese management techniques, and whether or not the middle is the best part of the Oreo cookie.

When the scores were tabulated the final round began in the provincial legislature Sunday afternoon. The debaters were instructed not to play with the microphones and not to open

the desks — then they were allowed into the House. Nobody chose to occupy the seat of the Premier, Dr. John Savage.

The final pitted the government of two Dal Law students against the opposition of a King's student and one from Coast Guard College.

Fed the resolution, "From nothing nothing is produced," Prime Minister Scott Rollwagh used a time-place set (a sort of cheap time travel) to place the debate in the midst of the FLQ crisis in October 1970. He argued that the government should invoke the War Measures Act to preserve the peace of the nation. Inaction (doing nothing) would produce nothing, he warned.

Rollwagh was followed by Hugh Robichaud of Coast Guard College, who identified himself as the leader of the FLQ. "We are not terrorists," he maintained.

Robichaud was in turn followed by Dal Law's Stephane Beaulac, a Quebecois student who identified himself as Jean Chretien. Speaking in English with an exaggerated French accent, Beaulac won laughter and approval from the crowd. "We are the government. We are good," he said.

He was followed by Chris Scott of King's, who spoke passionately about the right of each nation to self-determination, as guaranteed by the UN. Scott warned that if the War Measures Act were invoked, a dangerous precedent would be set.

At this point Madame Speaker called for speeches from the floor. Of the three that were presented, two favoured the opposition.

The Prime Minister then concluded that the nation is in a crisis and that action must be taken immediately. The debate was won by the government, and Dalhousie recaptured the novice title (it was won by King's last year).

New members are always welcome and training seminars are ongoing, says club president Jennifer Harnum. Sodales will be attending the Atlantic Canadian championships at UPEI Halloween weekend. Meetings are Tuesday nights at 6:00 in the DSU Council Chambers, SUB.



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