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The deadline for articles and letters-to-the-editor is noon on Monday. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity may be granted on request. Letters should not exceed 500 words and must be typed double-spaced. Advertising copy must be submitted by the Friday preceding publication.

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The Gazette's weekly staff meetings are now at 5:30 every Thursday.

## Editorial

### What went wrong?

Although I haven't spent a long time on the face of this planet, I still think it's safe to say I won't see many worse sights than the great non-march last Friday afternoon.

Only one year after 5,000 students filled the streets marching down to Halifax's Grand Parade, Halifax and Nova Scotia students are the proud owners of a first-class activist embarrassment. Three hundred and fifty people at the march. Twelve from SMU. Six from TUNS. A scattered amount from NSCAD and the Mount. And this happened after a month of planning, or what was supposed to be called planning.

For one, the Media coverage was NOT what they wanted it to be. The front-page article in the Chronicle-Herald places the march after (and in support of) Fed-bashing statements by Education Minister Terry Donahoe. **The point of the march was to protest against provincial policies, not federal** (that would be another march, another time).

Helping to take the focus away from Uncle Terry and his Cutbacks (sounds like a doo-wop group) was the presence of a group of Young Progressive Conservatives who managed to screw up the intent of the march and turn it away from a protest of policy and into a political football for them.

Carrying the largest, most prominent sign of the march ("Trudeau says fuddle duddle to students" with a big red finger) and attempting to get signatures on a petition for a Federal General Election, these earnest young nation-builders of Tomorrowland only served to negate any impact the March had. Of course they wouldn't take their sign down when it was pointed out that it had nothing to do with the aims of the march. And to think Peter Rans and others had been afraid of the M-L's attempting to take over the march... The Marxist-Leninists were there, by the way, but unlike the PC's didn't try to sleaze political mileage out of an important student event.

On the other hand, even if part of the idea had been to gain good media exposure, that hardly does any good if your own people have better things to do. While SUNS definitely has to lobby the media and ordinary citizens to gain sympathy, it's clear that half the battle (maybe most of it) will be convincing students of the need for action.

So what's wrong? Doesn't everybody know what's going on? Is a good, quality accessible education not that important to students? Is that secondary to providing tax shelters for flashy companies that don't put a cent into our province, World Trade Centres that'll sit idle, and road contracts to pay off political buddies?

The fault for the flop lies partly in the lack of a grass-roots approach. The job of selling these marches and events to the students has been botched up somewhat because it's - dare I say it - too darned intellectual.

The focus has been on explaining in detail the problems and their origins, not on activating any smoldering anger towards government policy. Last year, then-president to the Dal student union John Logan knew how to get thousands out to a march - appeal to the groin, not the head. As a result, thousands went, and thought it was fun (as well as politically important). By far the most well-received part of the march this year was the mock wedding ceremony at Province House, which served both a political and satirical point. Maybe that's what we need more of in the future - both political education and enjoyment.

