

# Trying Instead Of

# Crying . . .

Last week we commented on the unsuitability of two members of the Student Union Executive going on an entertainment junket to Cincinnati. Last Thursday, February 15, Student Council took action and the two members, Brian Smith and Stu Barry, did not go.

The final choice of who was to go to the conference should have been made by Council and the Union Executive — instead, the original choice was made by John Graham, General Manager of the Student Union, an employee of the students.

The handling of this relatively minor incident points to a much larger problem — the apparent unwillingness of students to control their own affairs.

Students, then, have no one but themselves to blame for the inability of the Union to function. That Student Council even voted against sending Barry and Smith to the conference is perhaps an indication that students are finally beginning to become aware of their power in the Union.

There are other areas in which the Union must begin exercising its power as well. Academics and housing are two examples that immediately come to mind.

There is also an important third area, that being the reunification of the student body, and providing the students with a sense of community.

In the past we have heard complaints from medicine and dentistry students about the feelings of isolation. Law students have continually threatened to withdraw from the Union, and grads, too, do not have a sense of belonging. Howe Hall and Shirreff Hall have their own sense of community, and do not feel a part of the Union.

Yet — the Med Rep to Council is in by acclamation, as is the Law Rep. No one has shown from dentistry or nursing. The three Science Reps were the only ones to apply, and only one graduate student has expressed an interest in council.

It has become apparent, then, that the only thing that students are prepared to do is sit on the side lines and bitch a lot. Participation is a dirty word.

As further examples, only thirty students cared enough to attend the Student Union meeting on Monday, February 19.

At the All-Candidates Meeting on Tuesday, only about 300 people showed up to hear the candidates speak. Those present heard some very lively debate. The forum was an extremely interesting one.

This group of 300 was larger than the number of people who attended last year's forum, but we still do not feel that it was enough. It is symptomatic of an awakening in the student body that attendance did increase, but this awakening can only be enhanced if students are prepared to go beyond listening, and start participating.

Getting qualified reps on council is one way of starting. Participating in committee work is another. Going beyond this and showing local residents that we are a part of their community, is a third method.

The GAZETTE is going to attempt to improve on this feeling of community. We invite our new President and Vice-President to show they are interested by contributing, at least once a month, an article to this paper outlining their course of actions during their period of office. We offer the same invitation to the Reps. Further, any club, society, or organization that wishes to make their activities known is invited to contribute.

The point is this: students must begin playing an active part in their community. Participation must cease to be a four letter word.

## The Dalhousie Gazette

### Canada's Oldest College Newspaper

The Dalhousie GAZETTE is the weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student Union. The views expressed in the paper are not necessarily those of the Student Union, the university administration, the editor, or all other members of the staff. We reserve the right to edit or delete copy for space or legal reasons. Deadline date is the Friday preceding publication.

**Editor:**

Ken MacDougall 424-2507

**Advertising and Business Manager:**

Frank Baker 424-2507

General Calls: 424-2350

Room 334 — Student Union Building

Subscription Rates: \$5.00 per year (24 issues)

## Gazette Needs Staff

"Gazette Needs Staff" is a very familiar phrase — and one that's always true.

We need people who are interested in writing in their fields of interest, and staff to do general reporting. We need technical staff as well, to assist in typing and layout.

But the most important of all is the fact that we need ideas, suggestion, complaints — and fresh faces.

We urge anyone that is interested to come and participate. We will explain operations — hopefully, we will learn from you as well. You can be in on our self-examination, and have a voice in where the Gazette goes from here.

The session will be this Monday, February 26, from 12:30 on in the Gazette office. Whether you've experience to offer, or an interest in learning, you'll be more than welcome.