

A VERY LONG LETTER

The Editor, Dalhousie Gazette.

Dear Sir:

The Gazette of January 15 is the straw that broke the camel's back: the Student Council's action was about as foolish as could be expected and deserved the rather puerile treatment it received at your hands (even FEC's sophomoric 'satire' could be said to have met them on their own level); but, somehow, in all the sound and fury, it seems to me that the point has been missed. It was surely missed by Council, but that is probably to be expected. The question of censoring you is not at stake here; Council can say whatever they please, but you are definitely free (or should be) to write and say whatever you think, so long as you are Editor. We may not like this, but it is proper if we are to accept the idea of freedom of the press. Thus, in what follows, I am not suggesting that you HAVE to change; I am merely offering my idea of what it means to have the very special responsibility that you have been charged with. Nor are you alone on this campus in failing to live up to what I (vain creature) believe is your duty, and I will comment further on this aspect of campus organizations as I go along.

I stated earlier that the point had been missed in all this argument between Council and the Gazette. The point, as I see it, revolves about this: what is your function as a university newspaper (organization)? I do not mean function as: 'What do we do?', but as, 'What should we be doing?' It seems to me that nobody in your organization (nor in certain other organizations, DGDS stands out) has ever really thought about this. I base such an accusation on what I have seen in your paper this year. Now, I am sure that my point of view will be defended by few, but I feel that it should be stated, for, if nothing else, it may at least start some minds working, and that can never be harmful.

What then is the function of a university newspaper? Surely not to provide us with world news; we can get that from the mass media. Ah, there I've said something! The mass media: which you are not, and which you should not try to be. Our country honours the ideals of free speech, and freedom of the press, but, because this is a democratic and capitalistic country, economic and other pressures obtain

in the mass media, as why shouldn't they?, causing them to conform to certain standards and ideals which should not be yours, sir. Those things which cannot be written about in the dailies, those ideas, or attitudes towards ideas, which will not see the light of day in the dailies; these are not denied you. Not that you should go out of your way to seek subject; if no one wants to speak outrageously, then you are not committed to do so. But the campus newspaper, as I see it, is one of the few places, in our society, where one should be able to find opinion and thought that, without necessarily being shocking (though that, too, is allowed if necessary), is at least provocative and indicative of an intelligence somewhat above that of the average four year old child. So, to provoke, to outrage, if necessary, to provide your leadership with something they can get their teeth into, whether or not the mass of them will thank you for this at first; this is what a campus paper should attempt to do (and need I add, that three times every week you can take a gander at a paper which tries to do this, albeit with some failures. The Varsity?)

Somewhere in this letter I mentioned the DGDS in a disrespectful manner, and I don't judge the organization, as it now stands, as very worthy of respect. Once again the question of 'function' or 'purpose' if of importance. The initials, if I am correct, stand for the Dalhousie Glee and Dramatic Society, and yet, in my two years on this campus there has been no drama, although one might allow a little 'glee' in last year's musical (I am not at all sure about this year's production). This group seems to believe its purpose is to make money, like all those people out on Broadway, and with the same jejeune entertainment. If I recall correctly, DGDS was granted nearly \$10,000.00 this year to produce a musical, with which money they went and chose a musical which they (not I) think will reimburse them when it is produced; and that seems to have been the limit of their thinking.

Again the question of values (which applies to my strictures about the paper, too) arises, and the concomitant question of the duty of a university dramatic organization to all of society, but especially the university community. Those organizations in society, which are geared to make money, the various kinds of mass media (and that includes even our Neptune Theatre, for it must



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QUEBEC AND DALHOUSIE

Most of us here on the Dal that is founded many of the great countries of the world and could our school work and our social not be denied. It would serve us activity. Occasionally some of us well to recognize that the separ- venture outside this sphere and at- ist movement of Quebec is as- become involved with the prob- suming the guise of a liberation lems facing Dalhousie student front. Slogans are saying "Throw government. Then a few plunge off the shackles of the oppres- forth into the difficulties of the sors, save our way of life." The Maritme provinces. Then a very atmosphere of the province is few seek knowledge and discus- filled with thoughts of independ- sion on National and International ence and freedom. What started fronts. The time has come for a as a movement to prevent chaotic change in the emphasis French-Canadian culture from of our thoughts. We at Dalhousie disappearing had developed into a must start placing the ideas we monster of terrorism, separat- have on National problems to the ism, and socialism. fore-front of our activities. It is We, the English speaking ma- certainly true that many of us as jority are certainly responsible individuals hold forth on all world for part of that monster. Through issues but Dalhousie does not our treatment of the French- speak with one voice. Indeed Dal- Canadian as a sort of second- housie seldom speaks at all. class citizen, our complete dis- Our country is facing a serious regard of the special problems internal problem, Confederation of Quebec, and our inability to could crumble and even a war of communicate with this large seg- secession could begin. The young ment of our population, we have intellectuals in the province of fathered a child that could destroy Quebec are consumed with the our union. But the child has a idea of separation. They are will- mother and she has nursed, cod- ing to suffer the economic con- dled and perverted the mind of her dequences of the formation of the infant. "Republic of Quebec". It is this The mother is the radical on burning flame of independence the French-Canadian scene. They

have taken the problems of French Canada, twisted them to suit the purpose of their move- ment of separation and made a war out of issues that should have been settled through intelli- gent discussion from both sides. Fortunately there has arisen con- comitant with the liberation front a true Canadian movement very much concerned with the widening chasm in our country. These Canadians live in Quebec and it is essential that Canadians outside the province deal with their fellow countrymen. The radical separatist movement which has ignored the French- Canadian element outside Quebec must be smashed.

We at Dalhousie must lend our voice to the problem. We have an agent, the Canadian Univer- sity organization, our national student body that is anxiously searching for our ideas to pre- sent to the various government bodies dealing with the situation. If you have some thoughts on the problem, write them, and they will constitute part of a brief we urge our student council to pre- sent on our behalf to CUS.

survive in our society, and must therefore compete) can and will give us 'pure' or impure enter- tainment, often aimed at anypart of our anatomies but our heads. They will give us Brigadoon or any other sentimental drivel which we shall be pleased to pay for, and which will offend no- body, nor cause anyone to think. The university dramatic group's function should be something else, should be consecrated to a higher ideal. Once again the word 'provocative' springs to mind, also 'different' (and that, we know, is a very frightening term). Plays that we can be sure we would get nowhere else; plays that might lose money (but no ten thousand smackeroos;)

but that, by the mere fact of their being presented, would argue a certain aliveness in our already too (I fear) moribund society, and an intellectual awareness of our rather sad con- dition in the world today in the minds of those whom, we are told, shall be tomorrow's leaders. Not necessarily experimentalism, though that, too, but a healthy approach (and believe me I can see nothing healthy in the vision of a bunch of university students for crying out loud, producing such a feeble jejeune master- piece of sickening sentimentality as Brigadoon) to ideas dramati- cally expressed, and an awaren- ness of what is strong and stimu- lating in the theatre; these are

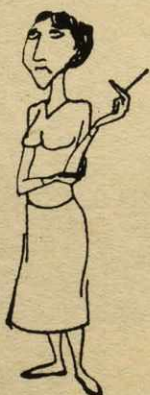
the qualities I would like to see in our young drama friends, but I do not. Originality, and in- dividuality. Both these qualities would be greatly appreciated in the drama and newspaper of this campus.

Yours sincerely, Douglas Barbour MA2.

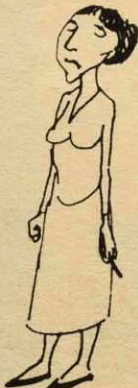
WINTER CARNIVAL MONDAY

FEIFFER

BY THE TIME GEORGE TOLD ME HE WAS LEAVING ON A BUSINESS TRIP FOR A MONTH I HAD LOST ALL FEELING FOR HIM.



EACH DINNER WHEN HED COME HOME ID TRY TO REKINDLE THE FLAME BUT ALL I COULD THINK OF AS HE GOBBLED UP MY CHICKEN WAS: "ALL I AM IS A SERVANT TO YOU, GEORGE."



SO WHEN HE ANNOUNCED HE HAD TO GO AWAY I WAS DELIGHTED. WHILE GEORGE WAS AWAY I COULD FIND MYSELF AGAIN! I COULD MAKE PLANS!



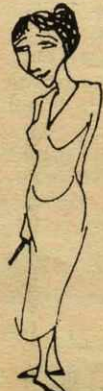
THE FIRST WEEK GEORGE WAS AWAY I WENT OUT SEVEN TIMES. THE TELEPHONE NEVER STOPPED RINGING. I HAD A MARVELOUS TIME!



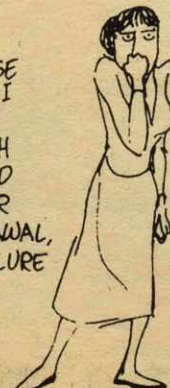
THE SECOND WEEK GEORGE WAS AWAY I GOT TIRED OF THE SAME OLD FACES, SAME OLD LINES. I REMEMBERED WHAT DROVE ME TO MARRY GEORGE IN THE FIRST PLACE.



THE THIRD WEEK GEORGE WAS AWAY I FELT CLOSER TO HIM THAN I HAD IN YEARS. I STAYED HOME, READ JANE AUSTEN AND SLEPT ON GEORGE'S SIDE OF THE BED.



THE FOURTH WEEK GEORGE WAS AWAY I FELL MADLY IN LOVE WITH HIM. I HATED MYSELF FOR MY WITHDRAWAL, FOR MY FAILURE OF HIM.



THE FIFTH WEEK GEORGE CAME HOME. THE MINUTE HE WALKED IN AND SAID, "IM BACK, DARLING!" I WITHDREW.



I CAN HARDLY WAIT FOR HIS NEXT BUSI- NESS TRIP SO I CAN LOVE GEORGE AGAIN.

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