

DSA & University settled

by GEOFF STONE

Dalhousie Staff Association conciliators and Dalhousie conciliators have come to an agreement over a contract between the DSA and Dalhousie.

The staff has been without a contract since July, and this was the fourth and final round of talks.

The contract was a compromise between the wage increases proposed by both sides. The DSA had originally asked for a six per cent increase in wages. The University asked for a three per cent/two per cent increase.

The final decision could mean an end to negotiations if the contract is accepted by the DSA membership. The vote should be taken this month.

Included in the DSA's concerns were the Ritchie and Associates recommendations to the Dalhousie administration. The recommendations called for major changes in staff numbers, and less service to students.

The agreement comes just after the Nova Scotia government promised a 6.5 per cent increase in University funding. There are no indications whether the announcement affected the results of the talks.

The DSA conciliators will be meeting with Brian Mason this Wednesday to continue bargaining.

The DSA includes members of Dalhousie staff from the secretarial, clerical, and janitorial sections. There are presently 750 members of the staff.

Kicking Aas

By ERIN GOODMAN

"Everything we found out in the 70s has really gone to pieces," says Norwegian social psychologist Berit Aas, who worked as a researcher during the height of the women's movement. The associate professor is visiting Halifax to co-write a book with a professor at St. Mary's University.

After completing an eight-year study program on women within the educational system during the 1970s, Aas discovered that male academia was not interested in including her findings in its curriculum. So she took an initiative that shook the rigid foundations of the academic world, and created the first feminist university.

"Kvinneuniversitetet" (women's university), founded in 1983, was opened in 1985 in Loten, a small community located north of Oslo, the Norwegian capital. "Since women don't know very much about what determines their own lives, they can be given illusions that everything is alright — that equality has been reached," explains Aas, who find that the results of women's research are usually ignored by male politicians and academics alike. "Research is not brought back to women in programs that will help them."

The concern that the university system is inaccessible to women with small children and little money was another factor behind the creation of the women's university. "Continuing education works mostly for women who already have a series of resources," says Aas, who teaches at the University of Oslo. Despite a large female representation in government, Norway continues to offer the shortest maternity leave in Europe, suffers from a severe daycare shortage, and has no legislation for equal pay for work of equal value.

Berit Aas was previously a socialist-left party member in the

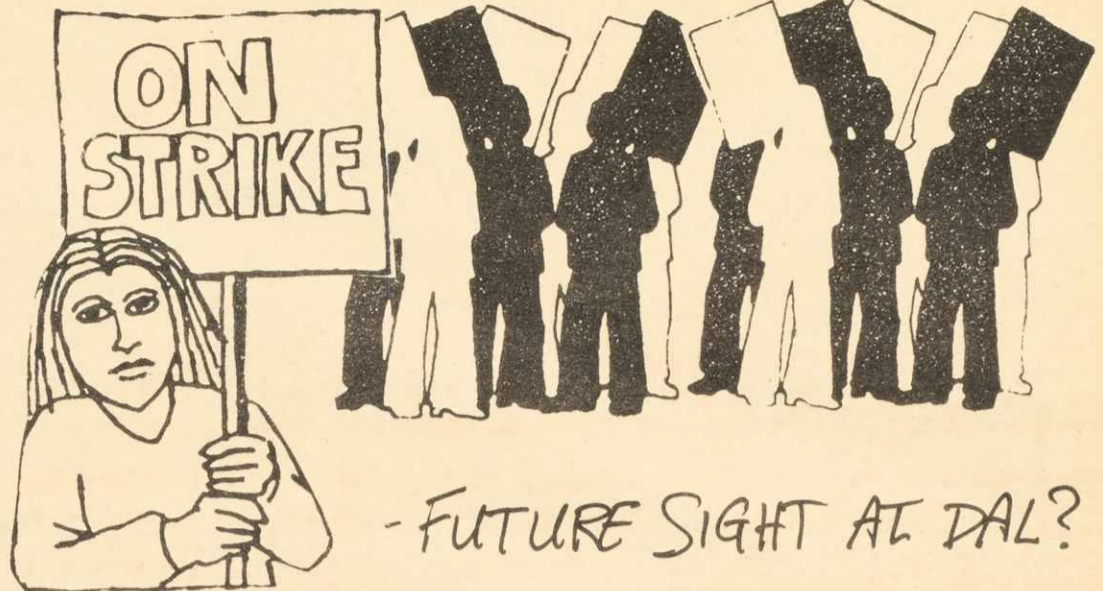
Norwegian parliament, an assembly that is 40 per cent women. Yet her experience in the assembly convinced her of the need for an institution to serve the needs of all women.

Kvinneuniversitetet offers such diverse courses as carpentry, women in trade unions, feminist ethics, and technology. "It is meant to raise women's consciousness about their own conditions," says Aas. Although the university accepts male students, there are no men allowed on faculty. Visits to Mount Saint Vincent University in 1979, and again in 1983 convinced Aas of the need to create an all-female faculty and administration at the Norwegian university.

"In universities, women are sexually annihilated; they're harassed if they're good," Aas explains. "If she's clever she has to be a man, or she has to be ugly." The psychologist finds that when universities like Mount Saint Vincent become co-educational they become quickly dominated by a more aggressive male minority.

She recalls that in 1979, the five per cent male student population at the Mount offered three candidates for Student Council President. Returning in 1983, she discovered that the student newspaper *The Picaro* had become male-dominated.

Although Kvinneuniversitetet does not yet have the status to offer official degrees, it has state support and funding, and Aas expects the institution to be fully established within the next ten years. She hopes that the women's university, and others like it being established around the world will encourage more women to go into women's studies, a field that currently offers little career stability. "Women's studies concern over half the world's population," says Aas. "That majority is like an unopened land."



... and Equality for all

by HEATHER HUESTON

Feminism has made some inroads on how law is taught and written up in the books, but women in law see it as a mixed bag of gains and losses.

Dal law professor Christine Boyle divides the changes she has seen during her six years at Weldon into three levels. The first level is superficial reforms in avoiding masculine pronouns in favour of gender-neutral words as well as talk in the faculty reflecting the existence of women and men. The second is in terms of what topics are covered by a feminist perspective. The Orientation to Law lecture series begun last year includes a lecture on women's concerns. There are also topics such as property law which have been historically different for women. The third level, how the law is taught by feminists, is a grey area. Some feminists feel that women teach in a less conflict-oriented way than traditional male lawyering. Boyle says it's hard to generalize. She says the problem is how to be authoritative in terms of knowledge rather than in terms of an I'm-more-important-than-you hierarchy.

Boyle hasn't seen a lot of feminist students at Weldon but she says it may be self-censorship. Women may be afraid of being labelled or they may just be indif-

ferent to women's concerns while they're young ("age radicalizes women").

Boyle feels the system tends to produce lawyers who'll reproduce the system. Without part-time study and childcare, the program will attract men or women who can be like men in not challenging the system by asking for maternity leave. She believes Dal has a strong commitment to hiring women but "it would be naive to be complacent. It's difficult to be the kind of feminist I'd like to be," says Boyle.

Law student Lori Stoltz also finds many male and female students indifferent to feminism because of the conformism acute in professional schools. She finds some faculty treat women's concerns seriously but most are indifferent, and some overtly trivialize the issue in the way they choose examples in class. In general, the practicing lawyers are less concerned with gender bias than the academic professors. Stoltz works with the student group Women and Law, which aims to sensitize law students because of the influential role lawyers have in drafting legislations and choosing what interests they'll get represented.

Dean of Law Innis Christie says employment equity is taken seriously at Weldon and there is considerable sympathy for the insights that feminist critique

can provide — "law is social engineering, after all." Although total female faculty is 16 per cent (compared to a female student enrolment of 42 per cent), Christie points out that the last five appointments went to women. A part-time law degree is "actively being considered" to allow low-income students and women with children greater access. There has been no negative feedback from faculty. Currently the LL.B. degree is only available on a full-time study basis.

Joan Gordon, chair of the Status of Women Committee of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, says the problem of getting more women hired is common to all faculties. Based on Stats Canada surveys, CAUT estimated the percentage of female faculty in Nova Scotia has risen from 16 per cent to 20 per cent over the last seven years. "Women are being hired, but for traditional women's areas such as nursing and education," says Gordon.

Women in male-dominated professions are affected differently by the norms of professional behaviour. Expectations to work long hours are a different matter for a woman with children, and policies that induce full-time students to finish their degrees in a specified time aren't so good for students with different study patterns — women.

Sham-summit protest

By TOM MCNEILL

On Sunday, April 5th, and Monday, April 6th, President Ronald Reagan meets Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in Ottawa.

On Saturday, April 4th at 1:00 pm, local groups gather at the Grand Parade to respond to Reagan's visit.

Sections of the population represented at the event include students, women, labour, ecology activists, peace activists, people in solidarity with Latin America, left wing organizations and socialist groups.

The adhoc Halifax Summit Response Committee, together

with like-minded individuals, includes people who belong to groups such as Voice of Women, Ecology Action Centre, and Tools for Peace.

The pre-summit rally will feature information booths set up by various groups and five speakers who will talk about their area of special interest. Fred Lutley, from the Halifax-Dartmouth District Labour Council will speak on labour, an environmentalist will talk about acid rain, Dalhousie professor John Kirk will inform people about Central America, a Coalition against Apartheid member will discuss South Africa and someone in the peace movement will discuss arms control.

The Halifax protest will occur one day before similar events take place in the rest of the country and should be seen in conjunction with these other actions. The participants will be sending a message to Reagan and Mulroney on a wide range of issues, from free trade to defence. Those involved would like to see Mulroney be more forceful and address the issues.

The idea for the rally came about during informal talks at the recent international conference on Central America held in Halifax. The concept gradually evolved to the point where it included not just people involved

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