

Why the march

On Thursday next, more than a thousand students from the Halifax-Dartmouth area, plus token delegations from St. Anne's College and St. Francis Xavier University will march on the provincial building to demand a better deal for education in the province of Nova Scotia. This march, sponsored by the newly-formed N.S.U.S., will seek to bring to the attention of the public many of the inadequacies of the university's relationship with the provincial government. Most of the problems manifest themselves in the financial sphere; therefore, the students will demonstrate during the meeting of the Provincial Grants Board, whose decisions have a direct bearing on such things as how much tuition you will pay next year, how much your residence fees will be, and what type of facilities will be provided for you.

The areas of conflict are many, but the march will be emphasizing a few which most directly effect the life of all students. It is a known fact that there will be a substantial increase, undoubtedly of more than one hundred dollars, in residence fees next academic term. This will make it harder for the present student to return to university, but, more dangerously, it will reinforce the present exclusion of the large proportion of the rural and lower-class urban student. It is this student which the university needs now perhaps more than any other, in order to make it relevant to society and capable of dealing with society's problems. Any increase in residence fees will be a direct result of the decisions of the Grants Board.

The N.S.U.S. will also propose the bursary scheme which the Dalhousie student council suggested to the province earlier in the academic year. It is probable that Dal's plan for a \$300 extra bursary for each first-year student in Nova Scotia will be more favorably received if it has the backing of the 7,000 member union. This plan, which will cost the government a mere \$600,000 per year, would undoubtedly bring more high school students within the university community than have been previously.

The N.S.U.S. will ask the province to place more money at the disposal of high schools, especially to deal with low teacher salaries, which place them amongst the worst paid teachers in the nation. Only after this vital step will the province be able to catch up to the rest.

The general goal of the march will be the improvement of education in the province of Nova Scotia. The timing is right. The specific issues raised need immediate attention by the provincial government. A successful march, supported by all those who are in favor of these necessary steps, will help to ensure a better education for the students at all levels in Nova Scotia.

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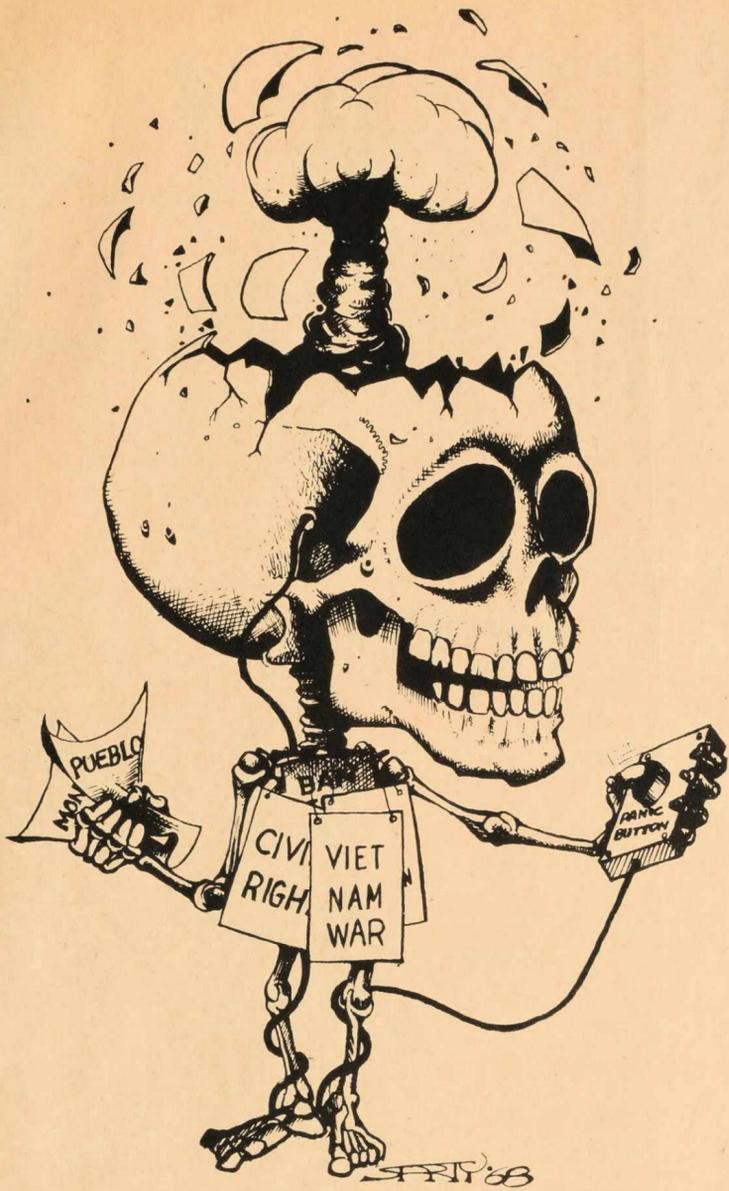
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CORRECTION

The CUSO address for Dalhousie students is:
CUSO local committee,
Dalhousie University,
c/o Alan Ruffman,
Howe Hall
Dalhousie
or phone 423-5183

It is not Memorial University as appeared in last week's GAZETTE. Our apologies for the mistake.



The Representivity Game

by Wayne Hankey

A new stage is being reached in the relation of the students to the university. Formerly, students would oppose the organization of the university and the decisions made by its government simply because they had no part in that organization, no power in making those decisions. Now, however, students are increasingly represented at almost every level of university government. The structures are consequently legitimized. For many students as well as faculty, administrators and the rest of society, the students have achieved as much as they can rightly ask for. Further demands are made only by an extremist minority; the 'student activists', the seekers of 'student power'.

Those who accept this view reveal that they were playing the Mickey Mouse 'game' which the anarchist new left warned about but didn't have an adequate analysis to solve. This is the game of co-optation: a few student officials are invited into the councils of the mighty to play the old game by the old rules. These students are to 'represent student opinion'. How do they represent it? By being students. To be a student here has no real content. These people are students in the same sense that anyone chosen at random is a member of the human race. The human race is an abstraction; it has no organization, consciousness or power. The people or world opinion, having no definite mode of expression, become whatever those in power wish it to be. If the 'representative' represents real student needs and demands it is only by chance and he has no way of proving that he does. If he does not, those who protest are considered either outlaws or children who want the government to follow their whim, even though they are 'represented', even though the government is 'legitimate'. Moreover the 'representative's opinion' is merely subjective. It has not been arrived at through the confrontation of various divisions and interests. It has acquired no universality, no depth or concreteness and the student thinking has not developed. There has been no endeavour to reach a common expression. People have not been led to a consciousness of their condition, of what they are and can be through seeing what they are not. Rather, an isolated and powerless atom has squealed a potentially meaningless whim.

'Representatives' must first then be 'responsible'. They must be accountable for their actions to the Student Union. The Student Union is the defined and organized process through which students make objective their needs and wishes. This does not mean that the 'representatives' simply state Union policy and cast x votes for the Union. Where the Union has a policy, the agreement of representatives with this policy should be of primary concern; other factors must be considered in that these representatives have the creation role of securing the adoption by the university of student policy, but, it should be clear that viable structures and an ongoing movement are not going to be built by Tallyrands. Moreover the representatives have an absolute duty to represent the policy and the reasons for it, i.e. Mugeridge was right to resign. We must recognize, however that it may appear through discussion that another position is more consistent with the good. Some propose that the representatives should have the new position approved by their constituents before they can vote for it; this seems too cumbersome and is credible only to those well grounded in conspiracy theory. Rather the student representatives should be accountable to the Union for the decisions they make; they will be expected to justify their position to the union and the Union may recall representatives whose actions they consider unjustified. Representatives are also accountable for policy they work out in areas in which there is no defined policy. A representative should not be forced to vote for policy with which he cannot agree.

Responsible representatives have the advantage of being more legitimate than the faculty 'representatives'. Given the state of many faculty organizations,

faculty representatives have no way of showing that they represent only an oligarchy within the faculty or no one at all. The faculty is unused to the notions of representivity and responsibility since they have ordinarily sat on homogeneous bodies and/or bodies on which all faculty within a given division were entitled to sit. Students should make every endeavour to show the strength conferred by these relations and their necessity if members are really going to get a grasp on their community and if student power is not simply going to result in further fragmentation of the university's governmental process. The strong position of the administration may require a joint student-faculty effort to overcome. What the student position will do is to help create faculty self-awareness and faculty unions. These are necessary if university reform is to be accomplished.

The other dimension of this new stage is the relation of the student government to the other powers within the university. Students find that their current position not only does not advance their aims but actually hinders them. For example: the Varsity Jan. 10, 1968 reports:

No action will be taken on the MacPherson report until at least the next academic year, says JH Sword, the acting president of the university.

He told a Dec. 8 meeting of the Senate that studies of the implications for cost, space and staff are under way. Students are participating in these discussions.

This phenomenon is a justification of the status quo through reference to student representation. The Dalhousie Gazette reported last term that the President of Student Union of Memorial University had complained about the essentially powerless student representatives who were being used by the administration. The administration took measures to defeat student requests through its newly acquired capacity to anticipate student action.

The students on the University of Toronto Placement Service Advisory Committee report that while they would appear to have a fairly powerful position on the committee (5 of 13 members), in fact, because the rules under which the committee works are imposed by the general government of the university, the administration, over which they have no control, they are unable to operate effectively. (a) The administration insists on consensus decision-making; a majority would never be enough to produce change, and (b) the administration also refuses to allow the committee to open its meetings. But, as long as the committee sits, further student action appears wrong.

One of the colleges at the University of Toronto recently conducted a survey about what students thought on a number of matters. Members of the college were informed that no knowledge of the circumstances or alternative was needed, but simply what they felt. This attitude arises from the notion that we do not have to do what we will (it may even be impossible to do what we wish) but we simply represent our opinions and leave the decisions: the moral, political, concrete, real work of deciding priorities to others (the faculty and administration). This position arises from the current description of the students' place in university government, making that place seem ridiculous and arbitrary, moreover it works against a development of the students' consciousness of his place in the university and in society. The students' opinion is treated as a mere unreasonable whim, a helpless whine. The university 'arbitrators' or broker politicians protest the impossibility of the student demands and follow their own whims. The irresponsible student remains unaware of the conditions and limits of his own will. His will is a mere subjective right having the least necessary relation to what is.

These are just a few of the many examples of the effect of accepting tokens instead of power; of accepting representation - the right to be heard - instead of responsibility, the power to effect policy, to do. Students are only responsible when they are responsible for what is done. Students who, we are told

Dear Sir:

I have been listening to and watching with great interest the recent controversy over teacher-training at Dalhousie and I cannot resist writing you to express a few personal opinions and to add a few scraps of personal experience to the debate.

I am a fairly recent graduate of the Dalhousie Department of Education and have now had two years' experience teaching in the public schools of Nova Scotia and therefore I believe I am qualified to express a point of view regarding teacher training at Dalhousie.

At the time when I took the Education course, it was apparently basically similar to that offered today and I found it most uninspiring. In fact, much of it was downright boring. True, we did study the history, philosophy and psychology of education and these were worthwhile courses, but they could, I am sure, have been presented in a much more compact form. For example, it surely isn't necessary to study each of the historically famous educators in detail in order to understand the basic principle of education on which he or she based his teaching.

The courses in methodology were certainly more interesting and more worthwhile (looking ahead to the education students' teaching needs in future years) than the purely academic courses, but they could have been of more value if they had dealt more specifically with methods rather than with subject materials. It seems to me that Dalhousie is offering teacher education rather than teacher training.

This brings me to the area of my greatest concern which is practice teaching. Here I speak with a bit of a chip on my shoulder because I was denied my Bachelor of Education Degree due to failing in practice teaching, although my marks in all the other subjects were quite good. I certainly must agree with the head of the department that I was not an especially good teacher at that time but I cannot believe that I was any poorer a teacher than a lot of the other student teachers who did not fail the course. I was unfortunate enough not to be born a good teacher, and also unfortunate in that I have always been somewhat introverted and therefore had to conquer an innate shyness in order to be able to fulfill my potentiality as a teacher. I must state here most emphatically that the practical course given at Dalhousie did very little to help me overcome my shyness. If anything I came away from Dal feeling decidedly more shy and inadequate than when I started.

During the college year, I had approximately twenty chances to teach in front of a class of youngsters, and ninety percent of those teaching sessions were supervised by a professor or by the regular classroom teacher. As any teacher will tell you, this is an artificial situation in which neither teacher nor pupils perform normally and therefore it is rather unfair to judge a beginning teacher on such a performance, although what other method of teacher evaluation might be used I am not prepared to say. The education students—should be allowed plenty of practice in classrooms where they are completely on

in tones of disapprobation, are immature or irresponsible (to quote Henry Hicks) 'have a hell of a lot to learn' can only become responsible through having power. I am responsible only for what I could have made otherwise. The task of student government is not to represent student opinion so that others can decide in the light of what ought to be done; the problem is not one of communication. The task of student government is to do what students see needs to be done: the problem is one of power. There is no responsibility without power.

The kind of membership which students are getting on boards, senates and committees is worse than useless. Not only does it hinder student aims, as we have shown, but it actually leads to a universality of violent non-communicating interest groups, which the defenders of the status quo assert they fear. When it becomes clear that the votes and the arguments are powerless, methods other than meeting and votes will be employed. Student governments cannot fail to note that student strikes, which are perfectly legitimate, have been effective more often than not. Illegal methods of obstruction have not as yet failed to produce the desired results.

I would urge that where there is a danger of the student body coming to accept the legitimacy of current structures, because of token non responsible representation, student governments refuse such representation. University of Toronto's SAC has just withdrawn from the Placement Service Advisory Committee and refused seats on the Senate; this was wise. Students are in danger of losing the effectiveness of every advance made to date unless they remain conscious that responsibility requires a positive organization through which a distinct, concrete and realistic student consciousness expresses itself and has sufficient power to change what has been done. How much power that is not clear yet, but I close with this quotation from Steven Langson's report on the Student Placement Service Advisory Committee: "Its structure (that of the administration) is bureaucratic rather than democratic and by its very nature prevents any accountability to an electorate. It is this fact more than any other which leads me to suggest that the administration should be involved in committees especially advisory committees, only on an ex officio basis." I take it that by ex officio, Mr. Langson means that it should have no vote.

In any case the group from which the administrative representatives will be chosen should be defined for the administrators hold their power on decision making bodies not because they represent general constituency but because those who have the responsibility for carrying out policy have a right to have their needs considered.

World strike planned

CHICAGO (CUP - CPS) -- More than 900 student activists from the United States and Latin America have called for a world-wide student strike "against the war in Vietnam and racism."

The students announced plans for the strike during a conference here last weekend sponsored by the Student Mobilization Committee, a New York-based organization which helped plan large-scale demonstrations in New York and California last April 15 and the massive demonstration at the Pentagon last October 21.

The strike will be held Friday, April 26, in the midst of 10 days of concentrated anti-war activity scheduled from April 20 to April 30.

The 10-day period coincides with the "Ten days to Shake the Empire" program announced at a national meeting of Students for a Democratic Society last December.

Education Department: "serious problems exist"

their own before they are judged by anyone. Very few of us are able to step into a classroom and do a good teaching job the first, second, or even third time they try. But, gradually, with experience, one learns how to teach, and how to cope with classroom situations. I repeat, it is accomplished with experience, experience, and more experience. Therefore, I suggest that there is not nearly enough opportunity for practice teaching given by the Dalhousie Education Department.

As for myself, I was given a P.C. III license to teach, and was told that I would be eligible for the Bachelor of Education degree (and the P.C. II license which goes with it) upon the completion of one year's successful teaching in the public schools of Nova Scotia. The judge of my "successful teaching" would be my supervising principal. A year ago last September I began to teach and who should appear in my classroom in November (the third month of my probationary year) but a practice teacher from Dalhousie—to watch and, presumably, learn from me! I wasn't good enough to be granted my degree but I was good enough to teach (and I might add to evaluate) one of Dalhousie's students! Can you top that? It wasn't as though I hadn't made any real effort to get my degree while I was a student at Dal,—I had hired a housekeeper to look after my two children and had travelled fifty miles a day to and from classes for the full seven months of the university year—that was what the degree meant to me. So, you may well imagine what grief I felt when I didn't graduate with my fellow students. But can you possibly imagine my feeling of utter incredulity when Dalhousie sent a student teacher to me???

But, you have not yet heard the next chapter of my story. My supervising principal did recommend me for my degree and I wrote to the Dalhousie Education Department in early March of last year and asked if I would be considered eligible for my degree at the spring convocation. When I did not receive any reply by early May, I wrote the head of the department once more and reminded him of my inquiry, and then anxiously watched the mails for his reply, keeping in mind that convocation would be coming up very soon. At last a reply came which stated in one terse phrase that my name had been forwarded to the registrar. Soon the newspaper printed the list of graduates for 1967 and I scanned it eagerly and found a name which resembled mine but was spelled slightly differently and which showed Halifax as the address. I took this to be a reference to me and noted that convocation was to be held on Thursday, May 18th. The next day I asked for and received permission to be absent from my teaching duties on the 18th and again watched the mails for some literature from Dal regarding the time and place convocation and of the social functions connected with it. Finally Wednesday, May 17th arrived and I had still heard nothing from either the Education Department or the Registrar's office so, after school, I phoned the registrar to find out if the Jean L. Hubley mentioned in the newspaper was in fact myself. She said that it was, but that the convocation had been held that very day and was now a fait accompli! I had been granted my degree in absentia! (The newspaper had printed the date of the convocation incorrectly and it had been held on the 17th, not the 18th.) If I felt grief at being denied the degree in the first place, I was completely shattered to realize that the Dalhousie Education Department had beaten and degraded me again. You see I had planned for my two children to see me graduate, thinking the experience would be one of permanent value by way of inspiration to them when they reach the stage of advanced education. However, it was not to be so. I lodged a formal complaint with the President of Dalhousie and received from him a most sincere apology on behalf of the University and particularly the Dept. of Education. The fact remains, however, that to date nothing has been done to eliminate incompetency from that department and to replace old, out-moded, European oriented professors with young, modern, Canadian oriented ones. I feel this must be done, and soon, if experiences such as mine are not to be repeated. My principal, the school inspector, and others who have seen me teaching in my own classroom have told me that I am a good teacher, and I think most of my pupils feel the same way. I too believe I am a good teacher but it is not because Dalhousie trained me well; I learned how to teach in the school of experience and Dalhousie's only contribution was to very nearly drive me from the profession and thereby deprive Nova Scotia of my teaching abilities. In these days of teacher shortages, can this be tolerated?

Before bringing this letter to a close I will mention only one more incident relating to my experiences at Dalhousie. In the early spring of my teacher-training year I sensed that my practice teaching mark was not going to be good and I went to the head of the department and asked if my notion was correct and, if so, if there was any advice he could give me. He checked my records and then looked me boldly in the face and told me that I had not a thing to worry about, and that I should write the examinations and then go out to teach and really show what I could do! Now I ask you, was this or was it not a bare-faced lie? He most certainly knew then I was not going to get my degree and yet he did not give me an honest answer to my straight forward question. Recently, on a television program, the same gentleman stated that the Dalhousie Education Department definitely treats its students as graduate students. If find it impossible to concur with him in that regard. He did not treat me as a graduate, nor did he treat me as a responsible adult, the mother of two school-aged children, who might, just might, be capable of hearing the truth and then making my own decision as to whether or not to write the examinations. His excuse when I later confronted him with his lies was that he said it so that I would write the examinations. In retrospect I admit that it was wise for me to have written the examinations but I probably would have done so regardless in view of the many sacrifices which I had made in order to complete the academic year. However, the fact remains that an honest question deserves an honest answer and I find it appalling to discover deceitfulness in a person for whom one should feel respect. I also find it disgusting to be treated as a child when one expects recognition of and respect for one's status as a graduate student.

I don't know what the answers are for all the problems in the Dalhousie Education Department, but I assure you that serious problems do exist and they deserve all the publicity your paper and other communication media can give them.

Yours sincerely,
Jeanne L. Hubley (Mrs.)

Seabright,
Hfx. Co., N.S.

NOMINATION

Nominations for Student Council elections will close tomorrow (Friday, February 9) at 5 p.m.

Elections of Council members will be held next Friday (February 16).