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Grad Society demands autonomy

by M. Greenfield

Calling for more money and a de-centralization of the Student Union the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students has refused to accept a grant of \$1000 and threatens to take strong action if the Student Union does not give DAGS increased funds and autonomy by mid-November. This is what John Cheyne indicated to the GAZETTE just recently.

In a letter to the Grants Committee, Mr. Cheyne voices disapproval at the "...cavalier way in which DAGS' arguments in support of our application (for a grant) were treated..."

The proposal put forward by Mr. Cheyne to the Student Union is to set aside \$10 of the Graduate Students' fees for DAGS.

Due to the success of DAGS in the past few years many graduate students feel that their society should be more independent. The house, the special stipend and academic requirements of the graduate student, and the strong

organization that DAGS seems to have evolved over the past few years are reasons favoring the plan.

However, many people in the Student Union are against de-centralization and more importantly feel that DAGS has not proven its case strongly. It seems that the Graduate students' desire for independence has created problems in communication between the Student Union and DAGS rather than the other way around. One example pointed to is the opposition to the few increase where perhaps DAGS did not try as it should to work through the Student Union.

No matter what the real situation, it is clear that there is some ignorance as to what the actual cases are. There has been "Student Union Society Support Committee" set up. So far it has only met twice, but societies' have recently submitted briefs and there should be some action taken.

This could perhaps be a critical time for the structure of the Student Union. Will it be able to change



Grad students plotting to revolt? M. Walsh / Dal Photo

smoothly for the better? or will it perhaps be able to weather an ill wind?

In the weeks to come the

GAZETTE will be looking at the situation and hopefully present students with a clearer picture of the situation.

Canadian workers inferior to whom?

by Ron Norman

Jack Scott, a guest lecturer brought to Dalhousie by the Community Affairs people, presented a talk and a question session to some sixty to seventy listeners last Thursday evening on the topic of nationalism in Canadian trade unions.

Mr. Scott is a longtime union organizer and worker as well as the author of a couple of books pertaining to union activities in Canada. Having lived the past twenty years of his life in B.C., Mr. Scott is most familiar with the workings of the west-coast union organizations; however, he did provide a number of interesting comments on the Canadian independent trade union movement as a whole.

He began his speech by pointing out the major misconceptions relating to the independence movement, especially in the areas of development and history. Firstly,

he said, American maltreatment of Canadian unions is not a modern phenomenon. In 1867 five Canadian local molders unions joined the U.S. national union and thus became an international union. The purpose of the association was to make it simpler to cross the border under trade union conditions and trade union wages; in 1886 a massive lobby was initiated by the international unions to institute the alien workers exclusion act - an act aimed directly at Canadian workers in the international unions. It was obvious that the more important concern was with the largest constituency - those workers in the U.S.

Mr. Scott made it quite apparent that it is just as easy to find modern examples. Recently the International Plumbers' Union (George Meany's old team - the man quoted as saying "I've never walked on a picket line!") made a presentation to the U.S. government in Washington on how oil should be transported from Alaska to mainland United States. The hearings were of special interest to the plumbers because of the proposed MacKenzie Valley pipeline which would of course provide numerous jobs. The International Plumbers Union, in their brief, objected to the oil being moved through Canada because it was a foreign country. They implied, as Mr. Scott said, "That Canadian members of the union are foreigners, not to be trusted, and not to given jobs. "Here, then, is a supposedly international union composed of both American and Canadian workers, both of whom are supposed to have equal rights. The union's actions in effect testify to the inferior position of the Canadian workers.

The international unions, then, are simply American unions with

affiliates in Canada. In fact, it was once true that in order to be an international union one had to hold a charter from the AFL (American Federation of Labour). The AFL, over all its years has loyally upheld the U.S. foreign policy - from the Spanish-American war to the Vietnam war.

"I am no great nationalist per se," said Mr. Scott ... "My complaint is that they interfere in the affairs of the Canadian workers." Canadian workers must first break the chains that bind them to the American movement, and

then become internationalist, said Mr. Scott.

As it is, said Mr. Scott, Canadian workers represent at best 10% of the international unions and only about 2% of the total at the international conferences. Until quite recently approximately 71% of the trade unions in Canada had their headquarters in the U.S. Very recently there has been a break-away movement in Canada, especially on the west coast - B.C. - so that Mr. Scott estimated the percentage now would probably be

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Faculty Union cops out

by Sara Gordon

The St. Mary's Faculty Union has stopped its work to rule campaign to consider new university proposals. For the next two weeks the union will consider the proposals submitted by the university administration on Tuesday October 28. After the two week period a referendum will be taken to determine whether the union members should accept or reject the new proposals.

At a forum on Monday October 20, between Dr. D.O. Carrigan, President of St. Mary's, and Dr. Shripad Pendse, President of the Faculty Union, the student body expressed considerable support for the Faculty, and especially for the concept of binding arbitration.

However, later Monday night, three of four student Governors voted against binding arbitration, and the fourth abstained because, in his words, "Communication between the two sides was poor, and we wanted to give them a chance to resume negotiations. Binding arbitration is supposed to

be a last resort."

Also, there seemed to be a widespread misunderstanding of the University Solicitor's Report on the matter to the Board.

The student members of the Board of Governors are now being pressured to resign by a petition of the student body, because they allegedly ignored student response to the issue.

Negotiations between the Administration and the Faculty Union have been resumed since the Board of Governors meeting, and the strike vote will be held in abeyance if the Administration agrees to binding arbitration or if the dispute is settled at the bargaining table.

Some students hope to speed settlement of the dispute by means of a poll held this week to test students opinion of the necessity for binding arbitration. Although Student Council President Greg McHugh has agreed to honour the decision of the students as long as there is a 66% turnout at the polls.

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Jack Scott in McInnes Rm. Tom Mooney / Dal Photo