

# NORML active in Halifax

by Andrew Gillis

Despite the fact that the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) is gaining support across the country, Tuesday night's meeting in Halifax was not well attended.

Local NORML chapter leaders ascribed the low turnout at the Odin's Eye Cafe to the poor weather, but an unclear petition and lack of recognition by the national NORML body may also have something to do with it.

You may have seen the green mimeographed NORML petitions around the university campus. The petitions have been circulating for a month or so, each one bearing the NORML Canada logo, although the Halifax chapter only sent in its required ten \$15 memberships last week. That \$150 gets the chapter its official status, and the right to use NORML Canada logos on t-shirts, stationery, petitions and the like.

Also, you may have signed the petition. If so, get a copy and read again:

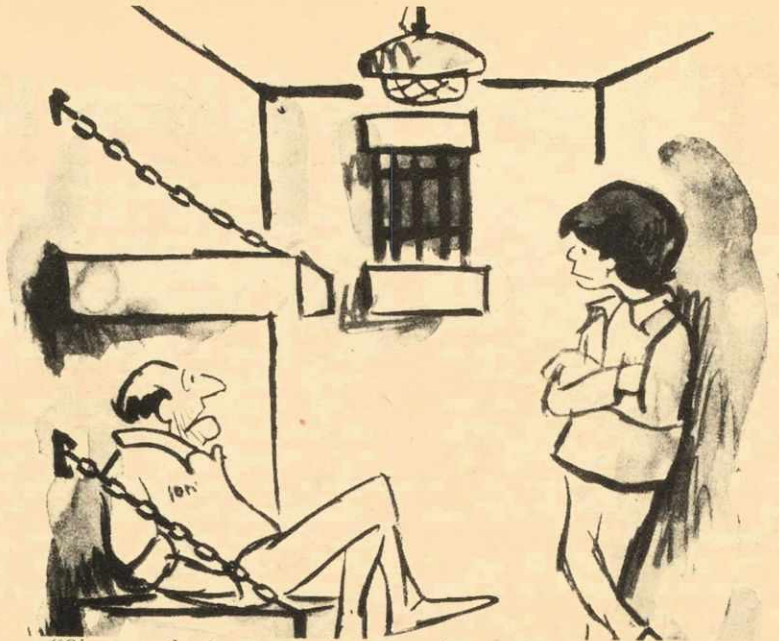
"We, the undersigned, support the position of NORML Canada for the Decriminalization of MARIJUANA." The next sentence, however, reveals that NORML Canada advocates the removal of all criminal and civil penalties for the possession of marijuana for personal use. That sentence of course means NORML advocates what is commonly known as the legalization of marijuana. The Halifax NORML

organizers admitted this Tuesday.

The phrase does not implicate you, the undersigned, however, because it comes after the full stop. Most signers of the petition — more than 700 have signed in the metro area — probably think they have signed to support only the decriminalization of marijuana. Strictly speaking, they have. Yet they have put their signatures to a document which unrecognized local organizers have lifted "for the most part verbatim" from the national body's publicity pamphlet.

The local NORML people are no doubt acting in good faith. They are hoping for more media coverage in Halifax. With national NORML recognition, the Halifax chapter should get this coverage. Members and signers of the petition were encouraged at the Tuesday night meeting to write their MP's and voice their support for either decriminalization or full legalization. (The member of parliament for Halifax is Robert L. Stanfield, a well-schooled economist and legislative expert, whose conscience may approve of decriminalization, if not legalization.)

Recent media discussion in the Ottawa Citizen and other Canadian dailies has been approving of decriminalization, although legalization has been called a step that would add to the list of already-legal and dangerous intoxicants, such as alcohol and barbituates.



"Six months for possession of a cigarette? I got thirty days for possession of a deadly weapon."

# Debating club begins season

by Mike Power

Sodales, Dalhousie's Debating Society, will hold its initial meeting of the year at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 20 in Room 316 of the SUB.

As in previous years, the first meeting will be to welcome new members, discuss new business and plan future debates. Having respectfully finished behind such debating "heavies" as Harvard, Yale, Toronto, Oxford, Cambridge and Colgate at an international tournament in Montreal last January, Sodales can expect invitations to tournaments at Toronto, Montreal

and Princeton as well as regional tournaments in New Brunswick and Cape Breton during the upcoming year. Students with a desire to travel and an urge to debate take note!

Impromptu debates and our own tournament in January round out the debating year so if you think you are interested drop by. And if your image of debaters consists of stuffy, stiff-collared snobs we'll soon change that as we sometimes, after meetings, adjourn to the Grawood for refreshments and discussion . . . and refreshments.



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