

'Half-serious movement' sparks controversy

by Margaret Little

The hallowed halls of Dalhousie Law School are buzzing. Exams are around the bend and with them come the normal pre-exam jitters.

But this December, the excitement has reached a higher key than normal. The reason—the growing popularity of a nationally-known organization, Men and the Law Society.

What began as a quiet little group of male law students more than a year ago, has blossomed into the most controversial subject at the law school—next to exams.

The "fun" began on November 4, when 24 men and one woman (the secretary) drew up a formal constitution and organized a male-sponsored bake sale.

The bake sale raised \$200 for charity and gave the society national attention.

Both CBC Radio and the Globe and Mail newspaper noted the rise of a half-serious anti-feminist movement.

Men and the Law Society (MALS) is "to help the man of today cope with the basic inadequacies of the New Woman", reads the constitution.

The 'New Woman' is a female who has balked her subservient role to man and is characterized by "short hair, suits and ties, briefcases, drinking beer, swearing and even daring to think of careers before kitchens," states a recent article in the law school newspaper, written by MALS members.

"Our aim is not to belittle womens' rights but to satirize human relations," said MALS chairman Winston Cole during an interview at the law school, Saturday.

MALS is "so male sexist that it has to be looked at in a humorous vein," he told Globe and Mail reporter Barbara Yaffe earlier last week.

But as Thelma Costello, second year law student, pointed out, not all the 295 males and 146 females at the law school are laughing at the MALS' joke.

MALS should have realized that womens' issues are a very sensitive area to attack. "Although their intention was a joke, the effect wasn't humorous," said Costello.

"It is an attack on women and the women's movement and the men involved are quite aware of the effect its caus-

ing," said Claire Beckton, one of three female professors at the law school.

The society's activities prove that "male law students are a conservative bunch and are in the dark ages about women's issues," said Costello.

In particular, MALS has attacked its six-year-old counterpart, Women and the Law Society.

"Women and the Law Society is an obvious target. If they had Dogs and the Law sooner or later Cats and the Law would be created," said Bill Riley, a third year law student.

Some female students, however, murmur that there is some justification in the MALS' attack of the Women and the Law Society.

"The women's organization is discouraged. They have not tried to reach the female students at the law school. I tried to join them at the beginning of the year but gave up after they kept cancelling their meetings and social get-togethers," said one female law student.

Cole said Women and the Law Society has not protected womens' rights. "The womens' movement in Canada has been reactionary rather than positive," he said.

"Some of the core people in

women's movements are trying to be men. Men are turned off by the militancy of these groups," he said.

"We intend to protect women's rights in a more positive manner," said Cole.

MALS plans to organize a canvass of the legislatures, a nation-wide media campaign in January, both to voice, women's rights. Also, MALS is organizing a golf tournament in the snow. The women will be invited to be caddies.

When asked how the golf tournament and a female secretary exemplifies Men and Law Societies' aim to protect women's rights, Cole said "we wanted to show them what chauvinism is."

Cole's preception of the ideal woman is one who is "able to interrelate with the other sex—professionally as an equal and socially as man and women in the traditional sense."

MALS also hopes to "get rid of the animosity and hospitality that such groups as Women and the Law Society have created between the sexes."

Second year law student Hiliary Whiteney, however, believes that Men and the Law Society has created the animosity, themselves.

"There may have been a few individuals, but generally

there was no antagonism against the men in the Women and the Law Society," she said.

"I too thought the Women and the Law Society radical when I began my law degree but I found out that they are sensible women who are very involved in their cause," she said.

The law school's Women and the Law Society is one of 18 similar chapters across Canada.

The local Women and the Law Society is active outside the law school as a project oriented group. "It does not pretend to be a social group inside the law school," said Costello.

Local Women and the Law Society members are completing the final draft of a legal handbook for women which should be out by early 1981. The local chapter is also coordinating a bi-ennial conference of the National Women and Law Association, to be held in Halifax, February 20 to 23.

Collectively Women and Law Society members decided not to comment on the Men and the Law Society's activities.

"If we start taking them seriously, then there's something we have to defend," said Gretchen Pohlkamp, year law student.

Costello believes Men and the Law Society is a reaction of the mens' feelings of inadequacy.

"It's a pity they (the men, feel threatened by the influx of females at the law school) but that's their problem, not ours," she added.

Whether Men and the Law Society should be taken seriously or not, stands to be debated. "In any case, it certainly gives the school something to talk about," said Bill Riley.

Administration denies union charges

by P.J. McManus

"The ball is in the union's court," says administration negotiator Al Neilson. "We have given them a fair offer to consider."

After several months of negotiations, the Dalhousie Administration and the Union of Operating Engineers, which represents more than sixty maintenance workers presently employed at the university, have been making sluggish progress. The workers have been without a contract since February.

After a unanimous vote taken in October the union now has a mandate to strike if efforts are not sped up to reach a final settlement.

Remaining rather closed-mouthed, the university is reluctant to discuss any details of the negotiations. A response was made to the accusation that Dalhousie is attempting to force the union off the campus.

Dismissing the claim as untrue, Neilson stated, "Nothing could be further from our minds."

The union claims that management has been using intimidation tactics against the workers. Cases were cited of workers being harassed and in some instances fired. One

major grievance was the hiring of outside contractors to do work.

Neilson says that the hiring of outside contractors is a common practice and is standard to allow flexibility in on-campus operations. "If you didn't have outside contractors from time to time, we'd swell our work force and lay off people." Neilson added that hiring the contractors "have in no way displaced any people who are regular employees of Dalhousie.

Neilson refused to comment on the three over-riding issues that are still outstanding. They are the vacation clause, the Holiday clause, and a Dental Plan.

The union says it is not being unreasonable in asking for the same considerations that are given to other labour groups at Dalhousie. Chief administration negotiator Eric Durnford is a lawyer with the Halifax law firm of McInnes, Cooper and Robertson. He was hired by the university in October when negotiations had broken. He could not be reached for comment.

Neilson, stated that he is optimistic that the union will agree to the new offer. "I believe that we can avoid a strike and have things settled before the New Year."

Testing unethical

MONTREAL (CUP)—A psychological test has been unethically administered at Champlain College over the past three years according to a representative of the Quebec corporation of psychologists.

Pierre Gendreau said that the test, which was included as part of Champlain's official English testing program, violated the code of ethics of the corporation.

The test was given without the consent of the students

involved and without informing them of the right to refuse to write the test.

Students were asked to choose appropriate adjectives to describe the way they are and the way they would like to be.

The corporation now has legislation pending before the Quebec national assembly which according to Gendreau "is quite clear in its rules regarding the administration of these tests."

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