

Fireworks

The fireworks at Sunday's council meeting involving CKDU's referendum proposal and the tangled aftermath of allegations, counter-allegations and invective which have followed are stirring a little life into the council scene for once. Finally, an issue!

More important, the controversy has given us a chance to peer deeply into the inner workings of council. On the outside it may appear like a well oiled and efficient, albeit lacklustre, administrative machine. Inside, however, spiders and other creatures secretly make their homes, spinning sticky webs for unsuspecting victims. Parts of the machinery rub and squeak and frequently run to a halt.

Given the present circumstances, council's decision to hold a plebiscite instead of a referendum on CKDU's proposal to expand and go FM seems somewhat justified. Councillors have only been presented with heresy figures of between 50 and 75 thousand dollars as the proposal's total cost and don't know how this would be broken down into operating and equipment costs. It will be at least a year before all of the information on the proposal has been collected to take down with CKDU's proposal to the CRTC. A referendum held sometime next year before the CRTC hearings when more information is available would have a greater chance of being a success, while not interfering with CKDU's timetable for going FM. In the meantime, a plebiscite will indicate students' feelings, the project and, assuming there is a definite response, support CKDU in their efforts or tell them to give up right now.

On the other hand, it is hard to see what harm there would be in a referendum. The proposal's total cost is known approximately and students can be provided with a good idea of the product they can expect. If students want it, fine. If they don't, CKDU can always go back and draw up a more suitable proposal. The assurance of student funding at this point would allow CKDU the security of knowing all of their time and effort put into their FM proposal would actually be serving some purpose and it would stimulate them to greater activity.

Whether council was right in quashing the referendum at this time is a question which certainly has two sides and this editorial is not concerned with jumping all over councillors for this particular decision. Council's real shortcoming has been in its treatment of CKDU's whole proposal.

The **Gazette** believes that getting CKDU on the FM band city-wide would be the single greatest accomplishment of any council since the construction of the SUB. Students all over the Halifax area would be able to tune into good rock and roll, informative, provocative talk shows and down to earth, easy going broadcasting which beats anything else Nova Scotia radio has to offer.

A CKDU-FM would also provide council with some of the publicity it so badly needs. Last Friday the years only general student union meeting, called to ratify important council decisions, was attended by nine people, and only one of them was alleged to be a non-councillor. One non-councillor! One wonders if this individual was lost, dragged in, looking for dry, open spaces or just infatuated with Dick Matthews curls. The problem is council this year has been more chronically invisible than Pierre Trudeau's election year has been more Joe Clark's chin. A CKDU-FM station would help change this.

the Dalhousie Gazette

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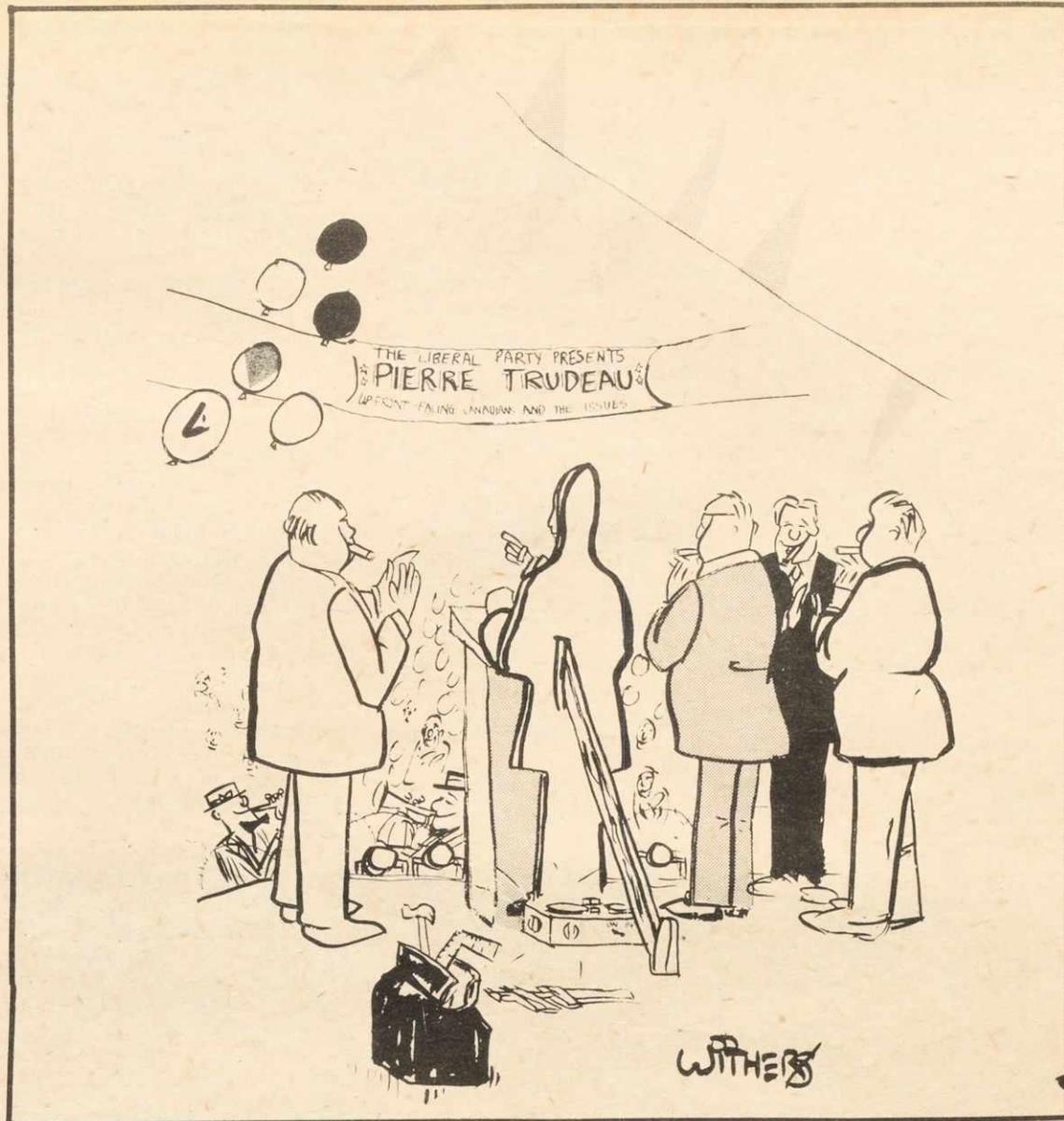
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Because of the tremendous service it would provide students and the publicity it would give council, getting CKDU's proposal off the ground has been one of council's most important tasks this year. Unfortunately they have fared no better in this respect than would Don Knotts in a night out with Bo Derrick.

A plebiscite about CKDU going FM should have been held in September or October, not in the middle of February.

The council executive should have been meeting regularly with CKDU, not once every couple of months.

Council should have made clear to CKDU what information they required to endorse the idea of a referendum. CKDU still thinks they have everything required.

An FM committee should have been established in September, if not in the summer, instead of still being discussed in late January.

CKDU should not have been led so royally along the yellow brick road, convinced all along until a few days ago they would get a referendum.

What really cerebrally palsies this political and managerial clumsiness is the childish and unscrupulous ways the council executive has been behaving lately.

Rumors had been circulating around the SUB for the last month that the executive had gone sour on CKDU's FM proposal, but CKDU was never given a reason why.

President Dick Matthews one day tried to swindle the **Gazette** into launching a proposal of our own which, in a tricky way, would have made it impossible to have a CKDU referendum this year and was intended to set us to fighting among ourselves.

People come back from council office with tales of pen, pencil and eraser fights among the executive.

The executive's actions at last Sunday's council meeting, which included an unsuccessful attempt to challenge the chair, a successful effort to table before discussion was complete the important motion of the night (and maybe of council's whole term in office)—the proposed CKDU-FM referendum, and the executive repeated reliance on their influence on an uninformed council, were seen by many observers as disgracefully mean politics.

Through inaction and misjudgement, council has delayed and perhaps unintentionally dealt a deathblow to CKDU's FM proposal. Along the way they have damaged a reputation which, for awhile, was pretty good.

Let us hope they can learn from their errors and, at the very least, come up with an agreeable wording for the CKDU plebiscite, see that it gets publicized, get to work now on CKDU's FM proposal and see that structures are now implemented which will ensure the continuity of this work into the term of next year's council. Let us hope they can ensure that next year's council, confronted with a CKDU referendum proposal will not feel forced to say they are lacking information and are not yet ready to make a decision.

Letters

To the Gazette:

The International Night celebrated in the SUB cafeteria was a unique experience in Dalhousie University. 22 hotels and restaurants offered free food. To cut down costs further DAGS rented the cafeteria for us. Many people, in spite of examinations the next day, helped in organizing the function. Newspapers like the **Dal Gazette** and **University News**, gave us free publicity—all because we were trying to raise money for OXFAM. And we did raise approximately a thousand dollars. Such a thing has never happened in the history of International Nights in Dal, which has usually lost money.

In order to increase our collection for OXFAM, I requested the Students' Union to give a percentage of the bar profits since it was a benefit for OXFAM and not for the Students' Union. It is unfortunate that Council feels that they should not part with the money because that might set a precedent. But would it not be nice to set a precedent which would show that the Students' Union is involved in encouraging and contributing towards humanitarian activities and not just interested in making every function a Student Union benefit? I know the SU needs the money but the function was not designed to serve that end.

Yours sincerely,
 Bikash Roychoudhury