

Gazette's choice for editor rejected; staff quits en masse

On Sunday, January 28, the Dalhousie Council voted overwhelmingly to veto the staff choice for editor of the Dalhousie GAZETTE. At the same time it approved Council Arts Representative Ken MacDougall as Editor for the 1973-74 term.

Marg Bezanson, the choice of the staff as well of Council's own Applications Committee, was defeated by a vote of 1 in favour, 10 opposed, 4 abstentions. As well as being Advertising and Business Manager since the beginning of the 1972 academic term, Bezanson was unanimously endorsed as President of the Atlantic Region of Canadian University Press (ARCUP) last November.

MacDougall has served on Student Council for one year and has served on various committees for the Task Force and the Alternate Student Government Committee.

Both candidates spoke at the meeting. MacDougall, proposed a structured organization, whereby he would be chief editor, or "autocrat" according to his oral brief to the present staff. He said he would try to bring up to 50 new people to work on the paper so that wider coverage could be given to the Halifax and Dartmouth City Councils, and the Nova Scotia Legislature, as well

as to news and activities in the Student Union and the university as a whole.

He also favoured purchase of a composer unit so that the paper could do more of the actual newspaper production. This unit was scheduled to be put into implementation last fall, but it was not, due to delays by the manufacturer.

Bezanson indicated that the collective approach to the newspaper's operation would be maintained. She acknowledged that there have been problems during the year, but that the staff had responded in many areas, including a vast increase in the coverage and a better system of providing on-campus events.

The attempt at a co-operative paper was desired because it allowed more people to get involved in many aspects of the paper's operation and because it allowed the entire regular staff to have an equal say in the editorial policies and overall content of the paper.

The motion to ratify Bezanson was defeated and the following motion to appoint MacDougall as Editor was carried by a vote of 10 in favour, 1 opposed and 4 abstentions.

Immediately following that, Council moved to amend Regulation 14 whereby the new editor could

take office at that time (9:20 p.m., Jan. 28).

This motion, requiring a two-thirds majority vote because of its Regulation status, was defeated. Council then moved to instruct the Chairman, Raj Nadarajah, to review this edition of the paper to ensure that no libel be printed. The apparent intent of this motion was to prevent the outgoing GAZETTE staff from deliberately writing libelous or defamatory stories in order to seek revenge against Council by initiating a law suit.

A wire was also sent to the Printer, Fundy Group Publications in Yarmouth, asking that no paper be printed unless initialed by the Chairman or President Brian Smith. This motion was passed.

A further motion instructing a member of Council to write a letter to Bezanson thanking her for applying for the editorship was defeated, an extraordinarily discourteous move.

Following these decisions by Council, the GAZETTE staff decided to resign in support of Marg Bezanson and in opposition to the undemocratic actions of Council.

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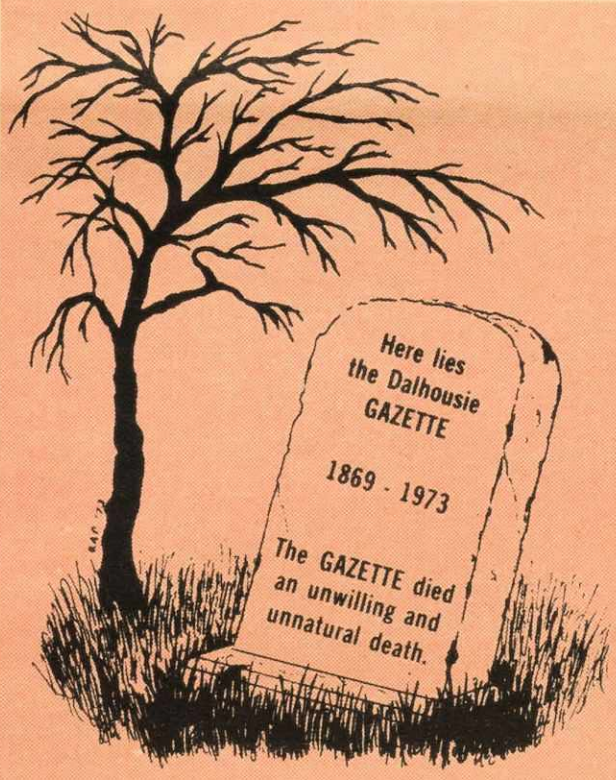
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This paper bears the



W. Brian Smith
Seal of Approval



"... Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will. Find out just what people will submit to, and you have found out the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them; and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress..."

Frederick Douglass, August 4, 1857

This is the last issue of the Dalhousie GAZETTE that will be produced by the present staff. If the GAZETTE is published within the near future it will not be our paper but published by the council, by their appointed editor. We will continue publishing a newspaper however. The name of this paper has not yet been decided but it will be forthcoming within one to two weeks from the date of this publication. Watch for it on your newstands soon!

Communications secretary voices support

Although, I was unable to attend the council meeting on January 29, I feel that I am close enough to the issue at hand, and have been informed of the meetings and events well enough to make a statement on the matter.

I must say that I am thoroughly disappointed with the actions and intimations of both the applications committee and council. Not only have these representative bodies done a tremendous injustice to Marg Bezanson, but they have also insulted the present editor and staff of the GAZETTE.

The injustice to Miss Bezanson is apparent.

The applications committee proved itself to be a farce. Of the three members, only one interviewed one of the candidates for editor and the other candidate was interviewed by only two members. At the council meeting, just these two members were present and one of them could not even vote for lack of information. Very little competence on this particularly important responsibility was demonstrated by the committee.

With respect to the editor and staff, council certainly showed none — of respect that is. Council must have believed that they were dealing with children who were going to try to get even with council.

Its attempt to immediately install Ken MacDougall as editor, before Glen Wanamaker's term had expired, displays an incredible and unjust amount of distrust. I have talked with the staff, before and after the meeting and I am convinced that the operating members of the GAZETTE have a good deal more integrity than would allow them to stoop to libelous reprisals. Council furthered the insult by imposing censorship on the paper — the highest offense possible to any newspaper. Not content with this, Council went on to instruct the printers not to publish anything unless approved by a council appointee or the president of the student union. To me, this is the action of a group of people who, upon realizing that they had grievously wronged someone, sought to protect themselves by imposing further sanctions.

The entire affair has been demeaning both to council and to the GAZETTE. I sincerely hope that all council members consider what they have done to the supposed free student newspaper.

Steve Long,
Student Council,
Communications Secretary