

They hate lawyers don't they?

by Gretchen Pohlkamp

Flogging a book can be pretty deadly work, says Jack Batten, author of the bestseller *Lawyers*, but the worst part of it is promoting an open-line radio show. Batten spoke last week at law hour about his experience as the brunt of radio talk-show audiences' anger.

"Their hostility surprised me," he said. "I wrote a fan's book about lawyers, purposely searching out the best, but I didn't expect to run into such a hostile attitude."

Batten says the criticism followed three main themes: (1) lawyers make too much money; (2) laws are too complex, it's all a plot to keep people in ignorance; and (3) lawyers are incompetent.

He said part of the problem is that the law societies which regulate the profession "are doing a lousy P.R. job." He said they don't let people know about the great lawyers who are compassionate, talented and capable. In fact, the law society of Upper Canada is now questioning one of the lawyers he wrote about, to discuss why he was

so open with Batten.

Another problem which Batten perceives is that people put lawyers on pedestals and expect them to have all the answers. "Then when the case is lost or they have to pay their bill, they feel as though they haven't gained anything so they blame the lawyer," he said.

The book follows several lawyers through their daily routines, sitting in on briefings, and plea bargaining, attending court, and persuading certain cases through their various stages. He attempts to show the reader that lawyers can be heroes too.

He said much of the posturing and air of unapproachability which lawyers assume come from the great expectation which people have of them. Lawyers don't always know the answers but people assume that they do, so they use legal jargon and sound incomprehensible to cover up.

Batten said it is not really a question of good or bad lawyers, it's a matter of perception.

He said if the bar societies

weren't so stuffy and staid in their approach to the public, lawyers wouldn't be perceived as being arrogant, self-centred, money-grubbing, power-hungry people.

"Most of them are confident, yes," said Batten. "And most get paid a lot. But they earn it." He said lawyers should advertise their fees and specify what they are good at.

"It works for both sides," he said. "If a lawyer can set out what he does, and he's good at it, the client will be getting his money's worth."

The matter of restraints on advertising by lawyers in Nova Scotia is presently being challenged by Ted McFedridge, a Dartmouth lawyer. McFedridge advertised fees for several standardized

transactions which his storefront office undertakes regularly. The Nova Scotia Bar Association is presently reviewing the charges to be laid against him.

Lawyers in B.C. and Manitoba are already permitted to advertise.

Batten's book is available from the Book Room for \$16.95.

Military spending cuts into student housing

OTTAWA (CUP)—The federal government could find money for badly needed student housing if they cut back on "wasteful military spending", says B.C. New Democratic MP Nelson Riis.

Riis was reacting to a statement from housing minister Paul Cosgrove who told a parliamentary committee November 4 that student housing was not a "high priority" item for the federal government.

With a shortage of money,

Cosgrove said, the needs of families and senior citizens would come before students.

Riis says all housing should be a priority.

The MP said student housing in particular should be seen as an "investment" rather than spending.

"If the government is at all serious about things such as job retraining, then they have an obligation to supply the housing as well," he said.

The housing, he argues,

particularly aids rural students who come into major centers and develop the skills to aid the country's productivity.

"Instead", Riis says, "they spend money on military jet fighters to stop us from being bombed by the Russians."

Riis says the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation is the obvious vehicle to fund housing. He says new student housing would be an opportunity to experiment with solar heating and energy conservation.

"Detesting", says Owen

Council protests decision to cut volleyball player

by Greg Dennis

Dalhousie Student Union President Gord Owen has written a letter to Dal's varsity volleyball coach Al Scott to protest the cutting of a player because of the length of his hair.

"The (Student) Council is extremely concerned over your decision and subsequent actions," the letter states, "and

urges you to reverse the decision."

Peter Jacobs, the player in question, was released from the volleyball team in September after making the team but refusing to cut his hair on Scott's request. Director of Athletics Ken Bellemare stood behind the coach's decision saying the hair might have an effect on a game's outcome

and because it would make for an unnecessary comment on the team.

In the letter which was sparked by Council's overwhelming objection to the action, Sunday night, Owen says "it is our sincere belief that within (the) principles (of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act) are embodied the rights to freedom of choice and freedom of action, and the freedom to self-expression and self-respect. We further believe that in these regards, the rights of Peter Jacobs as a student at Dalhousie have been violated."

At a meeting on Sunday, November 30, "the Council of Students expressed the feeling that your decision was abhorrent and detesting, taking the whole concept of Human Rights back to where it was twenty years ago", the letter said.

A copy of the letter was also sent to Bellemare and to university president Andrew MacKay, who is also president of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. MacKay has said the decision reached by Scott and Bellemare was unfair and has "urgently requested" a review of the deci-

sion. MacKay and Bellemare had a meeting slated for Wednesday, the outcome of which was unavailable at press time.

In a further development, another released volleyball player says he may have been cut because of the length of his beard. Derry Fahie, a former member of the Virgin Islands National Volleyball Team, said he was let go after three days' practice because Scott said "in terms of experience, I'd be playing catch-up." Fahie said that in light of recent developments, he thought he received "a raw deal."

Liberals refused grant

by Patrick J. McManus

The Young Liberals Association has been denied a grant of \$190 dollars and some members of the Dalhousie Grant Committee say they should not be given any money at all.

Young Liberal representative, Elaine MacGregor, appeared before the committee Sunday to request money in aid of defraying the costs of organizing on campus. Grants Committee Head, Caroline Zayid, says the group was refused the grant because they had not received word from the Liberal Youth Commission on possible funding. "We have a policy," said Zayid, "that we expect people to apply to us for grants only when there is nowhere else to go." Zayid assures that once this avenue of funding has been explored, and it is clear that the group can receive no money along this line, they will be eligible to re-apply for a grant.

Controversy was raised over

the issue of giving a grant to a political body. Men's Residence representative and committee member Larry Nelson stood against giving the Liberals a grant as it would set a precedent for funding other political groups. "Being a non-partisan body the Dal Council has no right to give a partisan body money." Nelson was accused of being anti-Liberal. "That's ridiculous", scoffs Nelson, "I'm a Liberal."

Student Union President Gord Owen felt that political affiliations was no reason to be refused a grant. "Using that same philosophy you can refuse a sports club finances because you don't approve of sports." Council Vice President Jeff Champion did not agree with this. "I'm going to vote against this grant and giving it to any partisan party because it's doing a disservice to the students by getting involved in it".

The grant was defeated, but at the time of voting there were six abstentions.

Electrocute dope peddlers



(ZNS)—The chief of the police force in Nashville, Tennessee, says that people convicted of importing marijuana or selling pot to minors should be put to death in the electric chair.

Chief Joe Casey says he would also recommend the death penalty for anyone convicted three times of either growing pot or selling it to

adults.

Says Casey, "you catch a person selling it to a minor and he ought to be electrocuted. He has killed that person. He has destroyed that person's life."

The Nashville chief insists that stern measures are necessary because marijuana

penalties in most U.S. jurisdictions "are not expensive enough. People have to pay for it with their lives," he says.

Casey admits that many people may look on him as a "horrible, cruel, and hard old chief." But, he adds, something has to be done to stop the spread of marijuana and other drugs.