

# The dialectic of master and slaves

"The dialectic of master and slaves works in the political sphere in such a way that the victor compels the vanquished, not only to accept the vision of his world, but also to adopt the formulae by which he shall utter his own capitulation. In other words, the vanquished in the game of politics is he who allows the attitude of the other to be imposed on him, and judges his own acts with the adversary's eyes."  
Karel Kocik

One of the fundamental concepts of democracy is the safeguarding of the rights of the minority. Democracy does not imply that 'majority rule' equals 'minority banishment', nor does it imply that the majority should reap the harvests of the minority by rape. The attitudes of organizations such as APEC work on the principle of dialogue between "we" and "they", and it is this type of dialogue which leads to racism and outright violence. If the majority of Canada cannot accommodate the desires of the francophone population both inside and outside the province of Quebec, then perhaps they should question the entire concept of Canada. Let us not, though, look back to the history of the Plains of Abraham and say "We won, they lost, so why aren't they defeated?"

by Scott Vaughan

**Correction**

Thanks to the wonder of hot-wax pasteup, 4 lines fell off Ralph Surette's article in last week's **Atlantic Issues**. We apologize to both Ralph and to our readers. Below is the complete paragraph.

With their vast and intricate webs of subsidiaries and assorted holdings, the Weston and Nickerson interests are very nearly what is meant by the expression "the fishing industry." All that remains now for a neat and well monitored little summing up is for Weston to take over Nickerson.



## Teaching assistants

This letter, given to the **Gazette** by Milton Grieves, *Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students President*, is from the teaching assistants at York University in Toronto. Next week the **Gazette** will look into the situation of teaching assistants at Dalhousie.

**Dear Fellow Graduate Student,**

After four months of bargaining, negotiations between the graduate teaching assistants and the York University administration have reached a stalemate. The union is now in a legal strike position. While it is unusual for a union in our situation to communicate its difficulties to outside parties, we believe the problems are so serious that potential York graduate students should seriously reconsider any plans to attend the university in the coming academic year.

Our union is the legally certified bargaining agent of 900 graduate teaching assistants and part-time faculty members. While our members do a substantial portion of undergraduate lecturing, marking, demonstrating and tutoring, they work for very low wages, they have no job security, no benefits and receive no experience based wage increments. Currently, York teaching assistants are paid \$2700 for ten hours of work per week, which is \$400 less than graduate assistants receive at the University of Toronto. Our union has demanded a \$400 increase for its graduate students and parity between the latter and part-time faculty who are paid \$500 less for doing exactly the same work.

The university has made only one offer throughout the negotiations—a 6.5% increase. This is 3.5% below what the G.A.A. is legally entitled to under the Anti-Inflation Board Guidelines.

The union has sought, as well, some minimal form of job security, including a guarantee of financial support for the duration of every graduate student's studies. Currently, while graduate students might be offered assistance for the

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first year of their studies, they might well be cut off from funding in later years. In the interest of maintaining "financial flexibility" the university has rejected our proposal out of hand.

The university, furthermore, has sought to raise the teaching hours of Faculty of Science graduate students by 35% at the current rate of pay.

The union has attempted to be responsible in its demands. We have lowered our salary requests on two occasions. Throughout negotiations we have given up demands for certain benefits which would have given us parity with other unions on campus. We have offered to drop a major arbitration case in the Faculty of Science in exchange for other contract concessions. In short, we have demonstrated a willingness to engage in serious negotiations. The university, on the other hand, took the initiative to break off negotiations and dismissed our demands as "insulting" and as "garbage".

We are aware of the financial problems that York, like other Canadian universities is now facing. But we have no intention of being the scapegoats of current economic difficulties. Furthermore, we have not forgotten that when financial times were better, graduate assistants and part-time faculty were paid very low salaries.

This letter, then, which is being sent to graduate students at other universities, as well, is to inform you that for graduate students at York, salaries, benefits and working conditions leave a great deal to be desired. We hope you will pass this message on to students at your university.

We are still committed to resolving our present problems with the university administration. If they are solved, we will inform you of any significant changes that might render York a more attractive institution in which to pursue graduate studies.

Yours truly,  
Kevin Watson  
Communications  
Graduate Assistants' Association  
York University

### the dalhousie gazette

The **Dalhousie Gazette** is the weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student Union. The views expressed in the paper are not necessarily those of the Student Union, the editor, or staff. We reserve the right to edit material submitted for space or legal reasons.

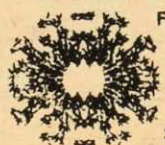
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