

the Dalhousie Gazette

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The Dalhousie Gazette is Canada's oldest college newspaper. Published weekly through the Dalhousie Student Union, which also comprises its membership, the Gazette has a circulation of 10,000.

As a founding member of Canadian University Press, the Gazette adheres to the CUP Statement of Principles and reserves the right to refuse any material submitted of a libelous, sexist or racist nature. Deadline for commentary, letters to the editor and announcements is noon on Monday. Submissions may be left at the SUB Enquiry-Desk c/o Dal Gazette.

Commentary should not exceed 700 words, letters should not exceed 300 words. No unsigned material will be accepted, but anonymity may be granted on request.

Advertising copy deadline is noon Friday before publication. The Gazette offices are located on the 3rd Floor SUB. Come up and have a coffee and tell us what's going on.

The views expressed in the Gazette are not necessarily those of the Student Union, the editor or the collective staff.

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MPHEC up for sainthood?

Time was when university presidents, the MPHEC and the provincial and federal governments could all be nicely lumped together in their attitudes to the quality, access and price of university education.

Well, things have changed, if not improved.

For all their faults, the presidents and the MPHEC seem to be at least dimly aware that universities are no longer in crisis, or just stagnating—they are **deteriorating**.

After a decade or more of fat-trimming, we hit bone some time ago when pens, paper clips and xeroxing became luxuries departments could only dream about. It happened about the same time a departmental chair faced the prospect of pulling the plug on their only PhD programme. All this and more has escaped the attention of the Nova Scotia government.

Or is it that they know and don't care? If we can take Terry Donahoe's recent statements at face value, he clearly doesn't realize the extent of the deterioration in the quality of education. Terry doesn't see the vastly overcrowded fourth year seminars (now lectures by virtue of their size) or the full-time profs teaching five or six courses because the university can't afford to hire part-time staff.

We wonder if science students who can only have their weekly labs every two weeks or those "would be" students who aren't here because they didn't have the megabucks to pay skyrocketing tuition fees would agree with Terry. We doubt it.

There are more students in university today than at the high point of enrolment in the mid-sixties—but the budget, in real terms, has plummeted to half, per capita.

What do we have to do to get our message across? Teach classes in the snow?

Perhaps the Minister would be kind enough to tell us what, in the eyes of the Buchanan cabinet, constitutes a decline in the quality of education.

Or is the agenda of the government more simple than that?

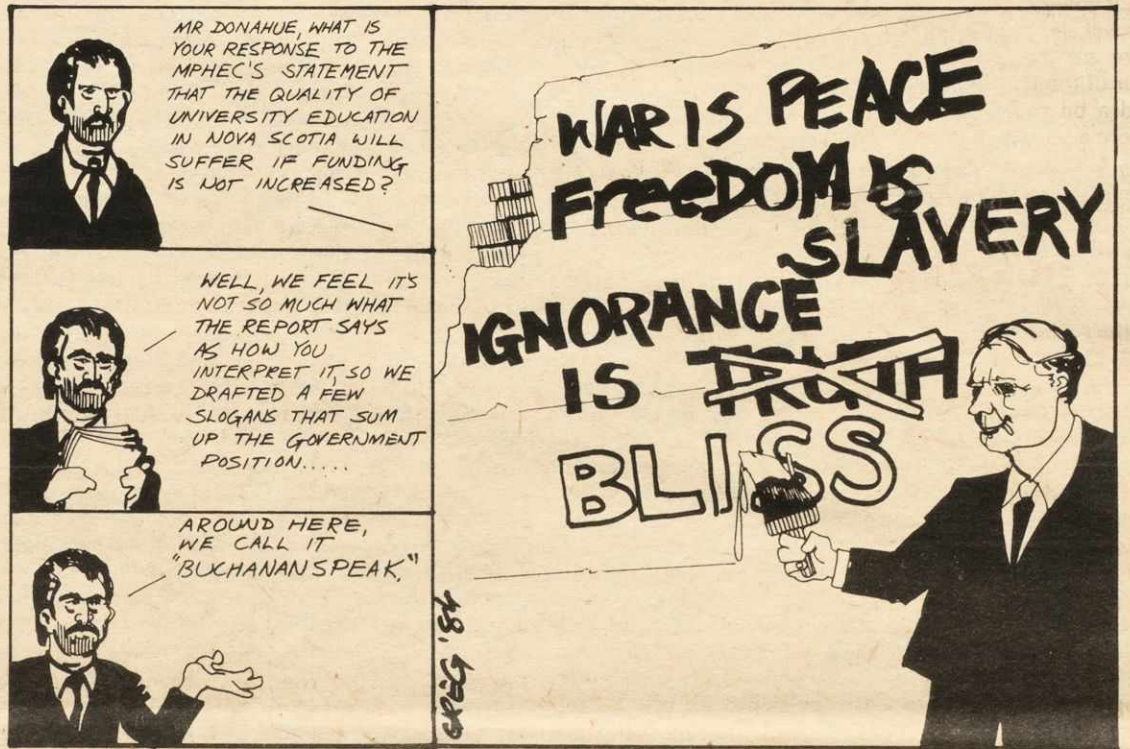
"If they're going to be unemployed, for God's sake, let's keep them uneducated."

Perhaps the federal minister of youth's comment about the options for our generation being "resignation or revolt" has been heard by Buchanan, and he is now stacking the deck against us.

Time was when we were worried about the MPHEC. Lately they've been bucking for sainthood.

J.L., S.B., G.M., A.D.W.

See story in centre spread for feature on the MPHEC report.



Comment on the quality of life * * * * *

On Friday night, a film was shown by the Newman Society which dealt with the rising unconcern over treatment or lack of treatment of patients in hospitals who are possibly terminally ill, and of babies who are born with physical defects or genetic disorders.

The film, titled "The Slippery Slope" focussed around the case of a child born in hospital in Bloomington, Indiana that had Down's syndrome and was allowed to starve to death over six days. The parents refused to allow the adoption of the child, and a court order that granted jurisdiction to the parents also, in effect, gave them the power to

suspend feeding of the child. The child, since known as "Baby Doe", was left in a crib with a sign posted on the side which instructed nures not to feed him.

The film also addressed euthanasia in cases of elderly or terminally ill patients and effectively countered the misconception that speeding a dying patient to his or her death is an act of compassion. Many cases were shown where, with proper use of painkillers, the last few hours of a dying person's life were a blessing attended by the family and loved ones of the patient, a form of tender farewell and acceptance, rather than the "compassionate" needle of a doctor's

assistant.

In a phone call to Dr. Joe Johnson, director of the Student Health Service at Howe Hall, I was told that approximately fifty students apply for abortions at the V.G. through the Health Service each school year and that virtually none are turned down.

According to Judy Monroe of the Health Professionals for Life, complications in abortions are not that rare—one wonders about just how many incidents worthy of indictment would be found at the V.G. were the law able to meet its criteria of evidence in regards to feticide. In concordance with regulations, however, all aborted fetuses are

disposed of along with normal medical refuse, or incinerated.

In a discussion following the film, experience of dealing with the presence of this anti-life attitude on campus were related. One concerned the assumption of the part of one of the doctors at Student Health that a pregnant girl had come to apply for an abortion when this was hardly the case. Another was about the prevalent attitude that contraception should be, and is, in some cases, a green light for emotional and physical irresponsibility in relations to the opposite sex.

This is happening at the present time on this campus, although it has, for the most part,

been unexposed. It resides in the respectability of a professor's "professional" viewpoint about human life; in a Health Service which acts as an input for abortions; in biology courses, or sexuality courses which are closed to the truth that a person is a person from conception. All of these things the student fights at his own risk because they are entrusted with "authority", an authority which puts the objector into the abuse of his peers and superiors. At this time, though, the house that allows all these things to come to pass, is built on sand, and great will be the fall of it.

by Andrew Agar