

About the CP mystery

Last November the GAZETTE ran an editorial on the confusion in the Campus Police organization. Our search for "truths" had only unearthed conflicting "facts". Two months have passed and the only result has been mass confusion.

Three CP's, two of them assistant chiefs, have resigned before they were about to be fired; there has been at least one suspension; Chief Carl Thomas has been accused of being a dictator; there are clear cases of misuse of position; an unexplained case of mismanagement of funds; and there is the possible loss of two accounts due to incompetence. Perhaps indicating the extent of the CP mess, there is a Senate Inquiry into the CP's.

Again to go back to last November, we were accused of being inconsistent and printing falsehoods. Shortly thereafter the CP's held a closed meeting to deal with the GAZETTE, even though this was denied at the time by Terry Linden. Carl Thomas then became the only person authorized to provide information. The effect of this was to make the clarification of rumours much more difficult.

In the past week, Linden and Norm McNaught who both quit on New Year's Eve spoke with us. Many suspicions were confirmed, new insights were obtained and our overall opinion of the Campus Police has tremendously diminished. Linden and McNaught are not entirely free of criticism either. Accusations have been made at Linden in particular (which he denies) but as yet no one will talk about his case in any way.

The most important part of their statement was that Thomas was running a dictatorship with Mike Chiasson and Wes Hubley following along, using their positions for personal gain. There has been no denial of these charges.

Chiasson's actions are another case. Over the Christmas holidays he signed himself up for 88 consecutive hours of work, much of which meant overtime pay. Not to mention his fat paycheck and his probable inefficiency after so many hours of work, other CP's were refused work.

Another CP questioned the system of pay and he was immediately suspended. This was later cleared up, but the fact remains that there is little recourse for CP's who wish to question certain aspects of the

organization's operation. It appears that Carl Thomas is the final authority when it comes to CP policy. The only other university department connected with the CP's is the Athletic Department and John Allen, who is only responsible for the financial aspects. They have nothing to do with policy or hiring and firing.

The contingency fund, which covers such things as accidents on duty, is said to be lacking the proper amount of funds. Ten cents an hour from every paycheck goes into this fund, producing more than \$200 a month. Over a period of two years, this fund has been overdrawn by over \$800. There can be no need to draw from this fund to such an extent. Again there has been no explanation for this strange disappearance.

The potential loss of accounts to the professional Pinkerton's guards has been ignored by the CP administration. If it does happen, then students will be out of jobs, it will cost more to bring in professional rent-a-cops, and despite present hassles with CP's, there will likely be even more with the full-time guards.

The Senate Inquiry hopefully will be investigating what is definitely an inadequate and incompetent CP administration. The hierarchy, if the system of communication is any indication, must be eliminated if the Campus Police force is to function efficiently. Dictatorships are not what is needed in an organization that is supposed to be preserving "law and order". There are reasons to believe that that the CP administration, from the Athletic Department on down, is not sufficiently trustworthy to deal with so many people.

If the CP's are to be maintained, then the structure will have to be changed rapidly. As it stands now, the only system of change is a coup. Though it may serve the purpose for the present, it's very necessity shows the need for structural change.

And since the students will be the only ones affected by the Campus Police, then they will have to decide what kind of 'protection' they want.

Come February 16 the students of Dalhousie will be faced with choosing another cast of representatives to make up the Student Union Council. There are 28 of these people whose job is to work for the benefit of the students.

Most members of the Council executive are agreed that these representatives leave a lot to be desired as far as performance of their duties is concerned.

In a GAZETTE article earlier this year President Brian Smith and Treasurer Ian Campbell agreed that Council is "only relevant to those who take some kind of interest or are involved or affected by it."

Attendance at Council meetings is sporadic: they are frequently postponed for lack of a quorum. In fact, at a recent meeting to elect an editor for the GAZETTE only eleven members (not a quorum) arrived to ask the candidates questions. Thus the actual decision had to be made (according to the Constitution) "in executive". This must be later ratified by the Council if enough members can be induced to appear. The important thing is that the consistent failure of these people to appear for meetings can only indicate a lack of interest in representing students.

If anyone doubts this accusation, look in the mailboxes that are given to members and see the old mail that has never been picked up. Or ask President Brian Smith what sort of response he gets when he asks Council members to report on the opinions of "their" students. The answer has always been "very little". Better yet, go to a meeting (sometimes Mondays, sometimes Wednesdays) and watch "dedicated" members like Mike Bowser, Alan Moors and Gary Smith make jokes, and quibble over unimportant matters rather than accomplishing anything significant. This serves only to obstruct the efforts of those serious Council members and generally turns what should be a serious affair into a farce.

It is impossible to attend many of these meetings and/or talk to the members and their executive without wondering why there is a Student Council. This attitude seems to be shared by a majority of students;

a common voting turnout is approximately 30%. This indicates that people don't care, largely because they are so far removed from their representatives once they are elected.

So why bother? When something is not working properly it is either fixed or discarded. In the past many attempts have been made to "fix" student councils and none have worked.

The next step would be to discard it, to be replaced perhaps by an administrative board. As it is the Student Council is not succeeding in representing or organizing Dal students effectively and such an executive board would certainly function more efficiently. Right now the present executive is already unofficially fulfilling such a role. Out of necessity they are performing all the duties that Council members neglect — and that's almost everything. Far too many Council members seem to regard the whole affair as either a joke or a boost to their egos.

For years, Dal students (with the exception of the graduates and professional schools who have wanted out of the Union for some time) have accepted this situation as inevitable, but now that the Student Union has become a corporation of no small stature and control, it is time we realized that a change is necessary. A change that could entail the establishment of an executive board who would make a serious attempt to bring some unity into the government of this student body.

In past years it has been the policy of this paper to interview candidates for positions on the Student Union Council. At that time it was felt that this would give students a chance to analyze and choose their various representatives. Now it is obvious that this has had little effect for, with the exception of a handful of responsible members, the representatives of the past year have been just as irresponsible as those of a decade ago.

In light of this the GAZETTE will not be running interviews with candidates this year. This is not to prevent people from hearing the views of these people

The fallacy of student reps

(they may have limited advertising space — free of charge) but because we feel it to be a useless practice. In addition, we urge that the students at Dal NOT vote in the upcoming elections in order to show their dissatisfaction with the lack of adequate representation on the Council and to force a decision leading toward an alternate form of government.

Perhaps if the truly responsible members of the Student Union Council are made aware that the students are not willing to support such an inadequate organization, they will see the need to seriously study various alternate, efficient forms of government.

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