

Break out the bullhorns

I have been raised by education. At the ripe age of three I was dragged, kicking and screaming, to the first institution I set foot in — nursery school. So far it's been a long 19 years of grooming filled with terrible lows and ego-stroking highs. Education is all I have known and, most likely, all you have known.

While I was attending high school in Vancouver the local teachers' union went on strike around this time of year. I remember the sun starting to hang around longer in the evening and the trees sporting embryos of leaves. I also remember the strike being the golden excuse for slacking off.

The three week holiday in March of 1993 was perfect. There was nothing to do but sleep, party and golf. No matter how often my mom yelled at me to read textbooks, english, social studies and math were no longer relevant. I had no control over the strike situation. It was being decided by a "board" or something or other. At that point I couldn't have cared less. In hindsight, I still don't care because high school was a joke. I used my time off in common fashion. I got wasted and roamed the streets for something to keep me occupied.

But the impending strike at Dal is neither high school nor a joke.

We as students have been busy taking third-person stance on this whole disgraceful thing. So far we have proven to be armchair

enthusiasts; jumping on the newest info like predators, then regurgitating it to family and friends like mama bird barfing up worms for her whining babies. We have successfully done nothing when this whole issue is about us.

Worst of all, the people we elected to represent us, the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU),

administrators has affected us all. Those who worry about everything are adding to their self-induced stress. Those who wear letters on their sweaters are currently planning "Strike Bash 98" — the biggest kegger this side of Montreal. But whether you view the possible strike as a blessing or a nightmare, all the uncertainty has diverted our attention from Dal's real problems.

Dal's undergraduate programs are no longer competitive with those of other universities. There are less real professors,

classrooms or services for the bulk of the Dal community.

Have you thought about that lately? Have you been wondering why the course calendar lists so many classes that Dalhousie doesn't really offer? Did you become angry when you realized the calendar is merely a recruitment tool — an advertisement masked under the auspice of intellect? Have you wondered why Dal pumps so much money into graduate and professional programs while those programs serve a fraction of the Dal community? Probably not. We've been too busy sucking up this "Prof vs. Suit" pre-game show.

It's safe to assume that we're all sick of being used as pawns. We are caught in the middle of a labour dispute, with people we don't even know making decisions which could make this year a total waste of our money and time. Sure we're angry, but students aren't doing anything. Our apathy has become something to count on. No doubt the administration and the faculty association expect us to do nothing. For once, let's prove them wrong.

A strike is unacceptable. Professors wasting class-time to garner support from students is unacceptable. The DSU's passive stance is unacceptable. That leaves us. What are we going to do to ensure the education that was promised when we coughed up tuition continues?

We can take control of this situation. The only thing that's stopping us is our general laziness.

JOHN CULLEN

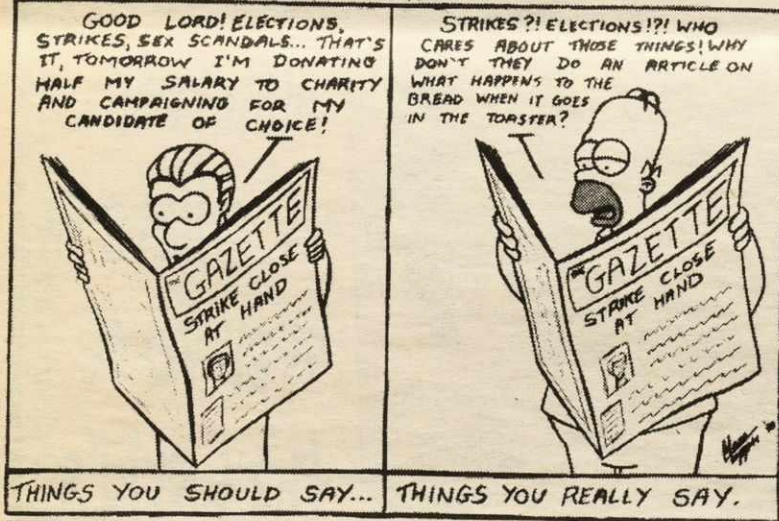
Editorial

have done little either. This is shameful because these situations are perfect for student representatives to prove they serve a real purpose. This year, the DSU is starting a postcard campaign and writing a "Student Bill of Rights".

What the hell kind of leadership is that? During Dal's last strike the DSU held protests, information sessions, and generally got in the face of profs and administrators. By the time the postcards get to wherever they're going, it won't be worth a damn. As for this Bill of Rights, the DSU is wasting it's time with committee thinking. I think it's pretty obvious that tuition paying students already know their rights. Do something visual and loud, because your initiatives to this date are propagating the myth that student government is irrelevant powerless.

The six-month debacle at Dal between profs, TAs and

CHANGING TOONS BY ADAM TUPPER



THE DALHOUSIE GAZETTE

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Vol.130 No. 22

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All submissions must be typed double-spaced on paper, e-mailed, or on a Mac or IBM 3 1/2 inch disk, in a WP version not greater than Word 6.0 or equivalent. The deadline is Mondays at 4:30 p.m.

Founded in 1869 at Dalhousie College, the Gazette is Canada's oldest student newspaper. With a circulation of 10,000, the Gazette is published every Thursday by the Dalhousie Gazette Publishing Society, of which all students of Dalhousie University are members. The Gazette exercises full editorial autonomy and reserves the right to refuse or edit any material submitted. All editorial decisions are made collectively by the staff. To become voting staff members, individuals must contribute to three issues. Views expressed in the Gazette are not necessarily those of the editors or the collective staff. Unless otherwise noted, all text © 1998 the Dalhousie Gazette Publishing Society. ISSN 0011-5819

Letters

Halifax MLA speaks out on strike

To the editor,

I am an Associate Professor of Surgery at the Dalhousie Medical School. Post secondary education; including teaching and research from my daily routine for many years. In November 1997, I was elected MLA for Halifax Citadel and am now the Liberal Candidate for the Mar. 24 provincial elections.

I wish to comment on possible strike action by the Dalhousie Faculty Association(DFA). I am appealing to the Dalhousie Administration and the DFA to continue negotiations until the end of the current year. Public support for both sides will vanish if students, especially those graduating, lose their academic year.

Strike action, if unavoidable, would be less damaging to all concern after the April exams:

(i) the parties would have four months to bargain;

(ii) an early settlement would avoid injury to the university's reputation among prospective first year students; and

(iii) most importantly, it will show that both sides care about the welfare of their students.

As the Liberal Candidate seeking re-election, and as a faculty member, I recognize the significance of the *Technical Report on University Funding* from the Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education(NSCHE). This report, well researched, recommended and additional \$23-million injection into university funding, \$8.3-million for Dalhousie. In addition, federal funding must follow the 25 per cent of students in Nova Scotia universities who are from out-of-province. The value of investment in Post-Secondary Education (PSE), to individuals and the community, is well documented. Discussions are underway for developing a Research Development and Innovation Policy for Nova Scotia, and a research foundation has been proposed.

I acknowledge, like all Nova Scotians, the requirement for continued fiscal responsibility. I recognize, also, the need for additional university funding as recommended by the NSCHE, and the necessity for provincial support for PSE research.

C. ED KINLEY MD
Liberal Candidate
for Halifax-Citadel

Wake up — the almighty dollar rules the world

To the editor,

I was amazed to read the opinion outlined in 'Standing up for the hostility in the Gulf' featured last week. It is obvious that some people still need to get their heads out of the sand.

I can't help but laugh as Mr. Leblanc naively outlines Canada's diplomatic prowess at averting war. So, sending missile-carrying naval frigates to the Persian Gulf is not a hostile act of war?

To suggest that anti-war protesters of mid-east descent are actually siding with Saddam Hussein is a ridiculous statement — did you not notice the people of other races that participated?

The whole basis for conflict in the Middle East is engineered by western nations who are in short supply of their own oil reserves. Over 75% of the world's oil lies underneath the Middle East, with a significant portion in Iraq. Did you not hear of the OPEC oil embargo of the 1970s and the strain felt by the American economy? Obviously not. If you naively think the US and other UN nations are in it to uphold democracy and save the rest of the Mid-East from peril, you are sadly mistaken. The only real concern is oil, not human life. This was aptly expressed in the UN deal for oil.

I would like to know how you can expect us to discredit stats and figures put forth about the death of children in Iraq when there are no stats of this nature being put forth by the UN. Do you think it is in the interest of the UN to reveal statistics regarding civilian deaths? No, that is why there are none, because it isn't an issue of concern. It is, however, more useful to portray all people of Mid-East backgrounds — especially Muslims — as war-mongering terrorists and I am afraid that Mr. Leblanc has obviously fallen for the stereotype.

You say that with the US strategic bombing of military targets they are not interested in hurting 'villagers'. Don't you think that economic sanctions hurt people? A lack of medical supplies, food, and clothing — necessities we take for granted — are certainly decreasing life expectancy and have most assuredly taken lives.

Throughout your diatribe you constantly equate the misdeeds of Hussein with the average Iraqi and anti-war protestor too. Do you really think that images transmitted to the West showing Hussein supporters marching through the streets are not simply government engineered propaganda, the same tool we also use? I shudder to think that the idiotic actions of Jean Chretien could possibly be linked to me. This is such a narrow adolescent view that does not even scratch the surface of understanding. It is time to stop watching CNN and falling for UN rhetoric.

Yes, Hussein is an aggressor. Yes, Hussein needs to be held in check. Yes, biological weapons and weapons of mass destruction must be destroyed, but lets be realistic about the UN's real interests here — power, given by money, given by oil. Wake up — the almighty dollar rules the world.

KATHLEEN MATTHEWS

Check out our web site
<http://is2.dal.ca/~gazette>