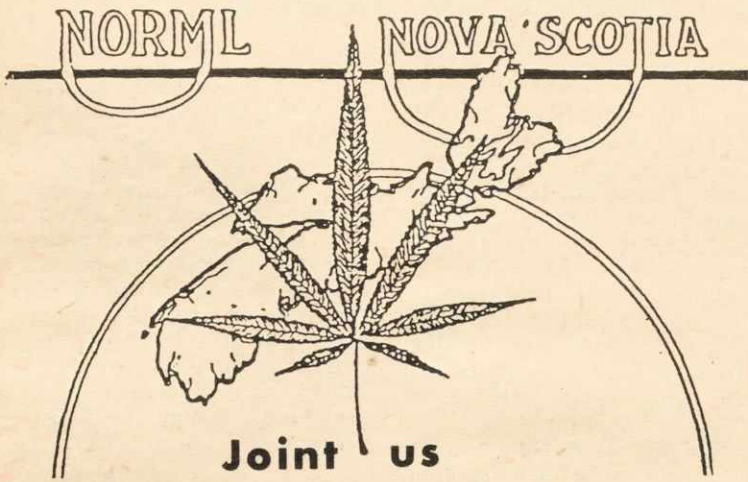


# Call for legalization



by Ellen Broadhead

This eye-catching phrase is not a typo, but rather the slogan of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, (NORML—Canada) an organization dedicated to the active pursuit of changes in present drug laws. A widespread publicity campaign aimed at Parliament Hill is the main focus of the organizations' activities, but NORML also directs a portion of its' energies toward the awakening of concern on the part of users of marijuana, and

non-users alike, as to the tremendous waste of tax dollars, court time, and most importantly, youth, that results from the unjustifiable inactivity of the various government agencies concerned.

The comprehensive statements of position and policy distributed by NORML and reiterated in the outside publicity that they receive, embody the re-evaluation that they feel must be done, considering sheer numbers of arrests for simple possession. NORML is for decriminaliza-

tion, but not legalization; the difference is an important one, implying the recognition of "the ability of informed individuals to make decisions as to whether they choose to assume whatever personal risks accompany recreational drug use," without actually condoning an unhealthy habit.

NORML is also advocating the consideration of "other acts incidental to possession, including cultivation and transportation for personal use, and the casual, non-profit transfers of small amounts of marijuana" as equally harmless to others. It is stated that once these freedoms become realized, it would be "inconsistent and irrational to provide harsh and costly penalties for those who distribute marijuana for profit."

What seems to be most "inconsistent and irrational" at the present time is the necessity for an organization such as NORML. All three major political parties in this country have gone on record as being for decriminalization. But by simply agreeing with this position, and not acting upon it, the politicians are

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viously did not place an old debt in this year's budget.

The Vice-President further stated that PoliSoc "should have first appealed to the Arts Society for funds but failed to do so." He apparently neglected to collect and digest the facts before making his accusations. In fact, PoliSoc did approach the Arts Society before going to the Grants Committee but the Arts Society was not accepting budgets until November 12 and was not granting funds until November 19. The Grants Committee was informed of this and agreed that PoliSoc's immediate financial need warranted special consideration. A \$300.00 grant was recommended, based on PoliSoc's proposed budget, list of activities for the coming year, and services which the Society provides to the Political Science students and to the Dalhousie community in general.

The most surprising thing about this whole episode is Mr. Wells' apparent ignorance of every aspect of PoliSoc's financial situation. Indeed, judging from the statements made by him and other councillors at the meeting which involved PoliSoc's budget, it is obvious that neither Mr. Wells nor any councillors outside the Grants Committee read PoliSoc's 1978-79 budget, the extensive list of activities for that year, or the budget and proposed list of activities for this year. All of these were readily available from Jim Wentzell and should have been studied so that no one would have to speak (or vote) from ignorance. But, perhaps, this is all we can expect from our elected representatives—if so, it surely is a sorry day for Dalhousie.

Yours truly,  
Mark Coffin  
President,  
Political Science Society

## Chairman replies to article

To the Editor:

In reference to last weeks article, "The Grants Committee a Giveaway", I feel a few things should be corrected. As Chairman of the grants Committee I see no harm in talking to the gazette about the committee; however the attempt at good reporting left something to be desired. I had assumed that if a storey is being done on a committee that the chairman would be the first person contacted, not the last to answer supposed criticisms. There is nothing wrong with complaints, but information on how the committee works should be given before the complaints. AS for the comments of MR. Wells, and he has the right to them, they should not be the basis for an article entitled "a Giveaway" as the majority in council saw them as fair grants. I would venture to suggest that most groups who receive money are rarely satisfied with the amount they receive. The grants committee looks very closely at the budgets of all groups and how they raise their own money, it is by no means a giveaway.

My final complaint is the inaccuracy of the quotes. I am not sure why I was given credit for the praise of the debating club. The Gazette never asked me this question and I was unable to be at the council meeting when this was passed so I would rather not be given credit for something I didn't say. In reference to the Poli-Soc Grant letter from them this week will

explain the problem in the reported comments about them

In conclusion, there is no need for sensationalistic headlines that base an entire storey on one persons opinion that is contrary to many others, nor is there a need for misquoting. The grants committee a giveaway? No!

Jim Wentzell  
Chairman of  
The Grants Committee  
Student Council

In reply to Mr. Wentzell's letter regarding the article on the grants committee, I would like to clarify a few things.

To begin with, the quote which Wentzell found so disturbing was not printed as a direct quote nor was it intended as such. In my interview with Graham Wells, I asked him how Wentzell justified giving the debating society what I saw as an unusually generous grant. Well's said Wentzell cited the tremendous amount of public relations that Dalhousie received through the debating society.

Mr. Wentzell also seems to feel that I should have interviewed him first, and then asked Graham Wells for criticisms. What I would like to know is why he failed to inform me of this preference when I contacted him. Wentzell should know that it is not always necessary to contact the chairman of a committee in order to find out information about that committee.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the whole issue has made me question the validity of my article. Instead of reporting on whether or not the grants committee was a giveaway, perhaps I should have questioned whether or not the position as president of the grants committee was a giveaway.

Marlene Peinsznski

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