

Comment

Killam defends policies and services

On January 22 the Gazette printed a student comment under the heading "Killam rules archaic", this week the library is presenting its position.

Unfortunately, no platitude is more relevant to the policies and services of a university library than, "You can't please all of the people all of the time." It is in the attempt, however, to hit the highest common denominator, that most university libraries keep voluminous statistics. Dalhousie University Library keeps circulation statistics, statistics on reference questions, on numbers and kinds of phone calls, on recall, searches, serials, on off-campus borrowers, on overdues, etc., etc.

Library hours

Our statistics show that, not unexpectedly, the greatest use of the Library occurs from Monday through Thursday. Reduction of library service on week-ends is a perennial problem. An alternative to our current "solution" would be to close the Library Friday evenings and leave it open on Saturdays. (Evidence seems to show that society's "night out" has shifted from Saturday night to Friday.) The ideal -- open 24 hours a day -- is not inconceivable, but it is, at present,

impossible. Priorities dictate that the \$10,000 plus (it would take this to single-man both the Killam and Macdonald, at minimum wage) is better spent on the Collection.

Admitting the limitations of the present system, it is worthy of note, however, that Dalhousie Library hours compare favourably with other libraries: Dalhousie - 100 hours per week; Halifax City Regional Library - 57½ hours; Memorial University - 92 hours (closed at 6 pm Sat.); Mount Saint Vincent - 71 hours (closed at 5 pm Fri. and Sat.); Saint Mary's - 71 3/4 hours (closed 5 pm Sat.); University of New Brunswick - 107½ hours; Queen's University - 99 hours.

Library Collection

The need for expansion and improvement of the Library's collection is undeniable; of necessity, this is a slow, but hopefully, an on-going process. A ten-year period has seen the growth of the book budget from \$142,600 to \$500,000. When money was available, a building was constructed which anticipated future library needs. Now housing the Computer Centre, the Printing Centre, Language Laboratory, School of Library Service, Faculty of Administrative

Studies, School of Business Administration, School of Public Administration, and the French and Mathematics Departments, Killam Library has ample room for the future expansion and growth of its Collection.

Loan periods / System of fines

As with other libraries, loan periods and fines are our constant concern, and experimentation with the possible loan period / fine combinations has been conducted. Our present no-fine, four-week loan period, with borrower notification of overdue material, seems to work well. A recall on an item may be placed by filling in **one** card; regardless of status, the borrower, if he / she has had the item for two weeks, must return it within five days, or be fined. Given the mail service, a five-day recall is more equitable than a three-day. With a 16% increase in circulation statistics since September, 1975, recall notification by telephone is not feasible. The exception here is for Reserve items, which, because of their short loan periods, are handled Rush.

Circulating vs. non-circulating

The debate between the advocates for a circulating collection and those for a non-circulating collec-

tion is presently without resolution. The arguments for both are strong: it's pleasant to find that essential book on the shelves; but if it is **not** on the shelves, it's equally pleasant to realize that the "System" knows where it is and how to get it back for you. A partial resolution is the "mixed" system, where some items (the Reference Collection, the non-circulating Z Collection, for example) do not circulate but the main body of the Collection does. At the moment, and at the request of students and faculty, the University Library is experimenting with a non-circulating policy for current journals in Science. If this policy is successful and the need is felt, perhaps it can be extended. This, of course, would place new and different kinds of strain on the Collection.

Without again trying to sound trite and platitudinous, it is enough to say that the Library Administration and Staff welcome input and comments from the community they serve. Dorothy Cooke, the Chief Librarian, would be pleased to talk with anyone regarding the Library's policies and services. Concern about the Library may also be directed to Margaret Murphy and Glen Robertson, the student representatives on the Library Committee.

Letters

Feel no shame!
To the Gazette;

The Dalhousie Student Union has always made it a condition for giving grants to any student organization or joining in the sponsorship of any project that such organization or project or both "will benefit the Dalhousie student body". Although the manner of benefiting the student body remains unexplained, it may be assumed that the Student Union, being a non-profit making organization, seeks merely to cover its basic costs in all financial transactions. Granted this assumption, benefiting the student body must lie outside the material realm. In this case it is not far fetched to seek this benefit in some academic pursuit, some cultural change, some intellectual consolation or a combination of these. It would also be imagined that such projects would not aim at embittering certain elements of the Union or creating certain prejudices or complexes of these. I am not trying to impute any values that might be alien to the objectives of the Student Union; what I am saying is that as long as "benefit the Dalhousie Student body" remains open ended, it is open to the inevitability of interpretation.

Now to turn to the "Rich World, Poor World Night", I must congratulate the Steering Committee of the International Students Association for initiating and executing it. If this credit is theirs, the debit likewise is their desert. How were the activities of this night intended to "benefit the Dalhousie Student body?"

To put first things first, the Meal! I do not know what transpired on the rich world table; all I can say about it is that I saw servants dashing around in the usual pattern of aristocratic pageants, I heard the name of coffee and tea and ice cream etc. Whether their richness lay in their monetary cost or in their nutritive value I do not know. I have no particular prejudice against those whose lot it was to eat that meal. Although labelled "Poor Meal" the rice vegetable soup with meat in it is rich enough by poor world standards. Where this fell below poor world standards was in its quantity. In other words, qualitatively the meal was that eaten by the rich in poor world countries and quantitatively it was not a poor meal. Therefore it was neither a "Poor meal" nor a "poor world meal". What it really was is best known to the organizers.

Having cleared the misnomer in nomenclature of the meal, I must still ask how it or its contrast, benefited the student body? Is it not a glaring case of injustice to

have treated equals unequally?

"Feel no shame!" Of course I do not have to feel any shame at what I am saying. OXFAM, I am sure, understands that the best way to appeal to the developed world for funds to aid the starving millions of

the third world is not by presenting unrealistic and distorted films. Contrast is not contrast when you have to contrast two already very different things. Contrast should aid discrimination among things

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