

EDITORIAL

Senate gets secretive

Yesterday afternoon, a Gazette reporter was told he could not sit in on a Senate committee meeting discussing proposed course withdrawal dates.

One Senate member (coincidentally, the person who originally proposed moving withdrawal dates back) objected to the reporter's presence, claiming he had previously been misquoted by the venerable publication.

The reporter was then asked to leave the room while the committee discussed whether its proceedings should be open to the press. Twenty minutes later he was told his presence was not welcome.

The reporter was not even allowed to say why he thought he should be allowed to stay.

Now, nobody likes being told they aren't wanted, but in this case, the rejection was particularly appropriate.

When the administration

rolled back the dates for withdrawal, students were neither consulted about the issue nor informed about the university's decision except through the fine print in the university calendar.

The student union has attempted to bring the issue to the attention of students, but unless there is publicity about their discussions with the administration, they are fighting a losing battle on this and other matters.

It is unfortunate when the ruling bodies of an institution which is ideally based on the free dissemination of information finds itself too xenophobic to let students know about what decisions they are making for them.

At Dalhousie, it happens only too often.

Incidentally, the motion to move the final date for withdrawals from first-term arts and science courses ahead by two weeks to October 20 passed unanimously.

Court of Last Resort

Bruce Curtis has already become a cause celebre at the young age of 23. That wasn't what he had planned when he went down to New Jersey four and a half years ago to visit his school friend, Scott Franz.

He found himself embroiled in the midst of a weekend of family violence. The subsequent court case turned out to be almost as bizarre as his vacation. Since then, the prosecution, whose arguments landed him 20 years in prison for manslaughter, has discredited the evidence of its two chief witnesses.

But Bruce remains incarcerated despite irregularities in a trial which included plea bargaining by one of the principal witnesses and the presentation of evidence from his diary clearly irrelevant to the case.

Unfortunately, it has taken the case of a nice kid from a good family who are willing to fight for their child to expose some of the injustices of the New Jersey court system. One wonders what many of Bruce's fellow inmates,

many of whom are illiterate and not from "good families", have suffered from the same system.

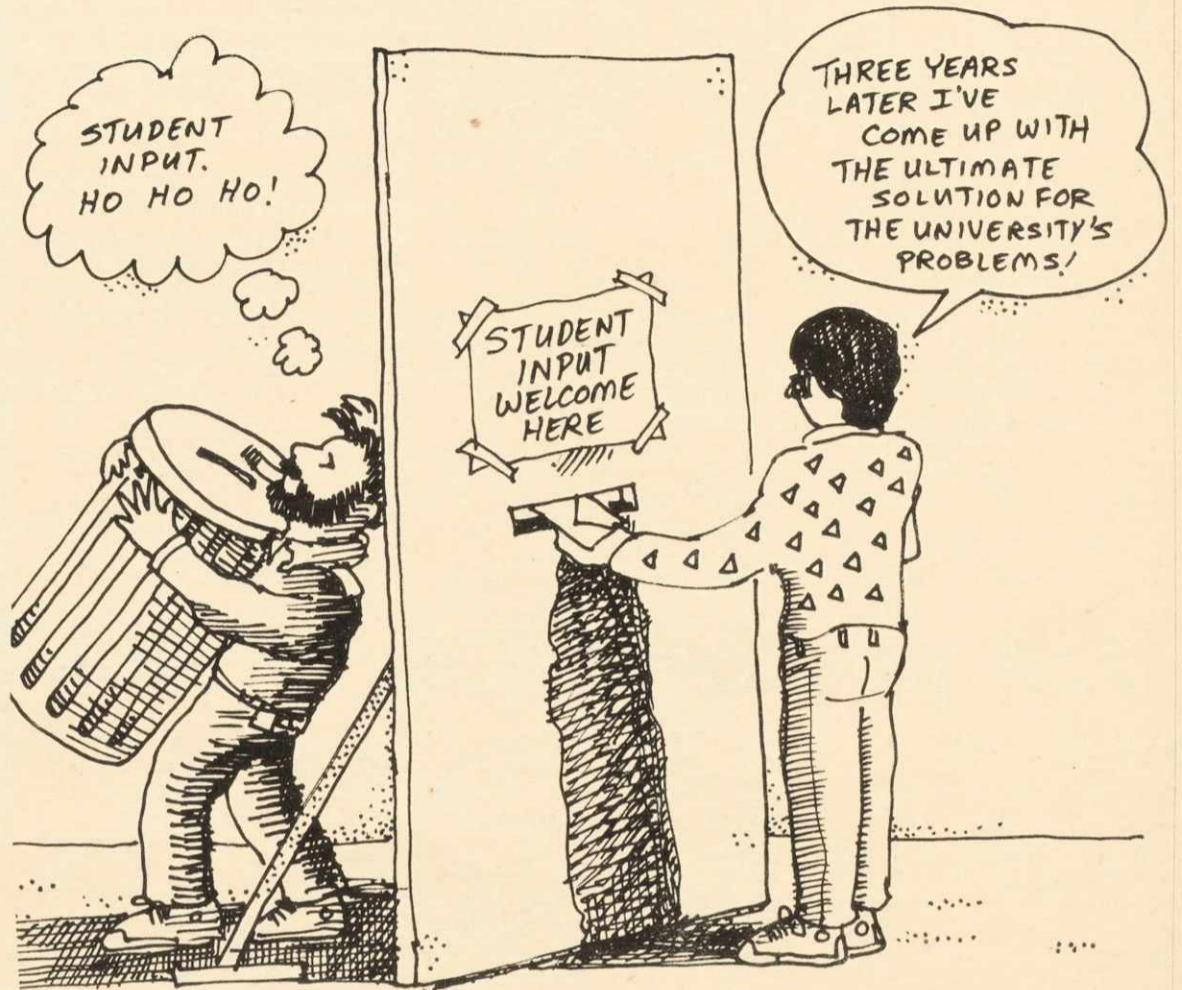
It seems the New Jersey justice system is now just trying to protect its own reputation rather than admit its faults and attempt to establish justice — a spectre we are not unfamiliar with in Nova Scotia.

Bruce Curtis will be celebrating his birthday this week, no doubt counting the candles on his cake and wondering how many more flames have to burn before he can leave "the land of the free" and return to his native Nova Scotia.

The prominent Toronto lawyer Edward Greenspan echoed the sentiments of many of Bruce's supporters when he told an audience "Bruce's fight can now only be fought in the Court of Last Resort — the public forum ... an enlightened public forum can remedy injustice and free Bruce Curtis."

It's a responsibility we all share.

Toby Sanger



LETTERS

Aiming arms at the enemy

To the Editor,

January 19 marks the second official celebration of the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. Although he died almost twenty years ago, his light as a champion of human rights still shines on. His quests and victories for social and economic justice continue to brighten the horizons for millions of oppressed people.

As students, we should be proud to know that it was the students of the 1960's who filled the

streets during freedom marches, sang the songs of social change, and wrote letters and petitions voicing support for the advancement of human rights legislation. As Jewish students, we remember Dr. King's acute perception of political conflict. In 1968, at an address at Harvard University just before his assassination he proclaimed that, "When people criticize Zionism, they mean Jews ... You are talking anti-semitism."

Then, as now, few express such honesty and clarity in the face of

an overwhelming Arab propaganda and military campaign attacking Israel's very right to exist. Yet, we dream as did King for a better world. His vision has moved us all to do more.

On January 19 Jewish students join hands with all of God's children in celebrating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

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THE GAZETTE

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As 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, racist or homophobic 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 the 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, Monday 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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