

Voice of Women confronts NATO ships

by Bernie Helling and Bradley Warner

The Voice of Women picketed Halifax NATO Headquarters last Sunday.

On this cold, dreary day, seven women demonstrated dockside in protest over government cutbacks in social services. They were further incensed by the fact that in this time of restraint, these services were being lost while the Canadian government had actually increased its expenditures in the military. Their cause surely cannot be

unreasonable and definitely should warrant our full support when one considers that in recent years, Ottawa's allotment of federal resources and energy in the military sector have been lackadaisical and fraught with waste.

The Voice of Women is an international peace movement with a Halifax chapter. The issues mentioned above are relevant complaints which motivate this organization. But it is no wonder that at

the present time, this and other interest groups have arisen to pressure the government into re-thinking its so-called anti-inflationist stance. Retrenchment from the provision of necessary social services, once a chief political ideal, now is sacrificed with the shoddy excuse that national resources must be diverted in order to fulfill Canada's international military commitments. Such heavy expenses may be excused out of political expedience -- or can they?

But what about the reception the Voice of Women received? They had chosen Sunday to picket NATO Headquarters as most of the naval fleet was berthed in the harbour for much needed R & R. NATO had chosen this day for a public relations Open House with tours of the fleet.

The seven idealistic women were ignored by the military and heckled by the local citizenry. They were lectured with such clever sophistries as: "without NATO we could wake up one morning and find that the Russians have invaded Halifax". Why should anyone want to invade, when the nuclear Superpowers possess single atomic weapons

which could wipe out the city ten times over? One guard displayed his displeasure with the protesters by spitting at them.

Were the Voice of Women so unreasonable with their picket? Their aspirations are commendable. They suggest that monies slotted for military expenditure should be used for the betterment of the people. There are a host of public sectors and interests which could only benefit from a change in the government's focus: everything from an indexed oil subsidy for Nova Scotia Power Corporation (until it can solve its energy production problems), public works employment, environmental management (which by the way could take advantage of the existing fleet for protecting fish stocks within Canadian waters), and so on.

Unfortunately the VOW numbers were too few so that they looked more like a disorganized motley crowd of malcontents. Next time they attempt to exert pressure on the federal or even provincial or municipal governments one could only hope that they are able to express themselves more visibly and with better clarity.



Mount students face problems

Mount Saint Vincent student council president elect has been relieved of the post. On March 30 the student council decided, in a vote of 6 to 2, in favour of accepting his resignation and appointed Dianne Wright as an interim president.

The resignation was brought about by accusations from current president, Anne Derrick, that the person violated an in camera meeting. The person demanded a public apology from Derrick, but when it became clear that none was forthcoming he submitted his re-

signation. Three days later he withdrew his resignation but council chose to ask for the resignation anyway.

This last crisis in the Mount's student council follows a general election in which only three out of twelve posts were filled. To assist the council through the summer, in hopes of initiating new growth, a part time student union manager will be coming down from Montreal once a month. To fill those vacant councils seats, another election will be held in October of 76.

Mount Saint Vincent Students

Your newspaper, the Picaro, may not be able to publish next year due to lack of staff. You can help out. On Tuesday 6 April at 7:00 in the Picaro office (Rosaria Hall) a meeting will be held for all concerned students. **Next year's Picaro does not as yet have an editor.**

For more information, contact Peggy Yates at 443-5237 or in 702 Assisi.

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