

while we watch....



Canada's Oldest College Newspaper
The Dalhousie GAZETTE is the weekly publication of the Dalhousie Student Union. The views expressed in the paper are not necessarily those of the Student Union, the university administration, the editor, or the staff. We reserve the right to edit or delete copy for space or legal reasons. Deadline date for letters to the GAZETTE and outside contributions is the Friday preceding publications. No anonymous material will be accepted, but names may be withheld on request if there are extenuating circumstances. The Dalhousie GAZETTE is a founding member of Canadian University Press.

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Subscription Rates: \$5.00 per year (26 issues)

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In every Psychology class that I have attended, the classical tale is told of the eighteen year old switchboard operator who was raped and murdered in the Bronx. She eluded her assailant and rushed out into the street, naked and bleeding, screaming for help. It was during the day and a crowd of forty people gathered. No one, however, called the police, or offered any assistance. The rapist then dragged her back into the building and stabbed her to death. This story has never failed to get reactions of outrage, anger and disgust from students.

Yet, similar situations have taken place on numerous occasions involving groups of individuals, and we, Dalhousie students, have often, but not always, been generous with our sympathy.

If you read last week's article in the GAZETTE on the Ojibway Warriors Society, who were assaulted by the RCMP, while we, the onlookers, 'watched', you will be able to draw a striking parallel.

The Ojibway Warriors asked all student groups, labour unions, and other supposedly open-minded organizations to support their cause. This, the Dalhousie Student Council refused to do. GAZETTE reported:

"He (O'Connor) said it would be laughable if Dalhousie Students union supported every Indian group that came along solely on the basis of the Union's general support for the Native Peoples' struggle for basic Human Rights."

"Wayne Gillis insisted that Cameron (Chairman of the Ojibway Warriors Society) represented only a small minority of a single tribe of Indians and that he in no way reflects the interests of the majority of Native Peoples."

The above-mentioned statements show that the Student Council is not prepared to disrupt the status quo. Why spoil the reputation of Dalhousie University? If, as President Hicks said in *Counterpoint* "Universities are meant to train people, and not meant primarily to solve the 'communities problems'", then Student Council should perhaps be expected to echo this feeling.

The Ojibway Warriors made headlines when they occupied Anishabe Park on July 22nd. The issue arose because it was claimed that the Park had been Indian Land until 1959; the land had been bought with Indian money in 1929. The Indian Affairs Department declared Anishabe Park to be surplus land and had turned it over to the town of Kenora. No Indians were involved in the decision-making but they were involved in the outcome; they weren't allowed in the Park.

In the Kenora Area, 200 Indians have died violent deaths according to a report published by the Treaty 3 Chief's Council between 1970-73. People under 40 constituted more than two-thirds of the deaths. Alcoholism was a known factor in 70 percent of the deaths.

In the light of this information, The Ojibway Warriors isn't just another Indian group but one representative of younger Indians protesting all across Canada [in Regina, Winnipeg, Cache Creek (B.C.), New Brunswick...]

The 300 'militant' Indians in Ottawa were only interested in *talking* about their Rights. They were not terrorists holding hostages (who have, incidentally, received better treatment internationally because they threatened violence) but native people, CANADIANS, subjected to a blatant show of force by the RCMP. One could expect the Government in Ottawa, in true Nixon-style, to disclaim all responsibility.

The rape of these Indians is no less an infringement of human dignity than the rape of the eighteen-year-old in the Bronx. This time, Canadians everywhere are watching. Perhaps, history will be repeated, unless we take the initiative to back-up the demands of the native-Canadians whether on paper or by our presence.