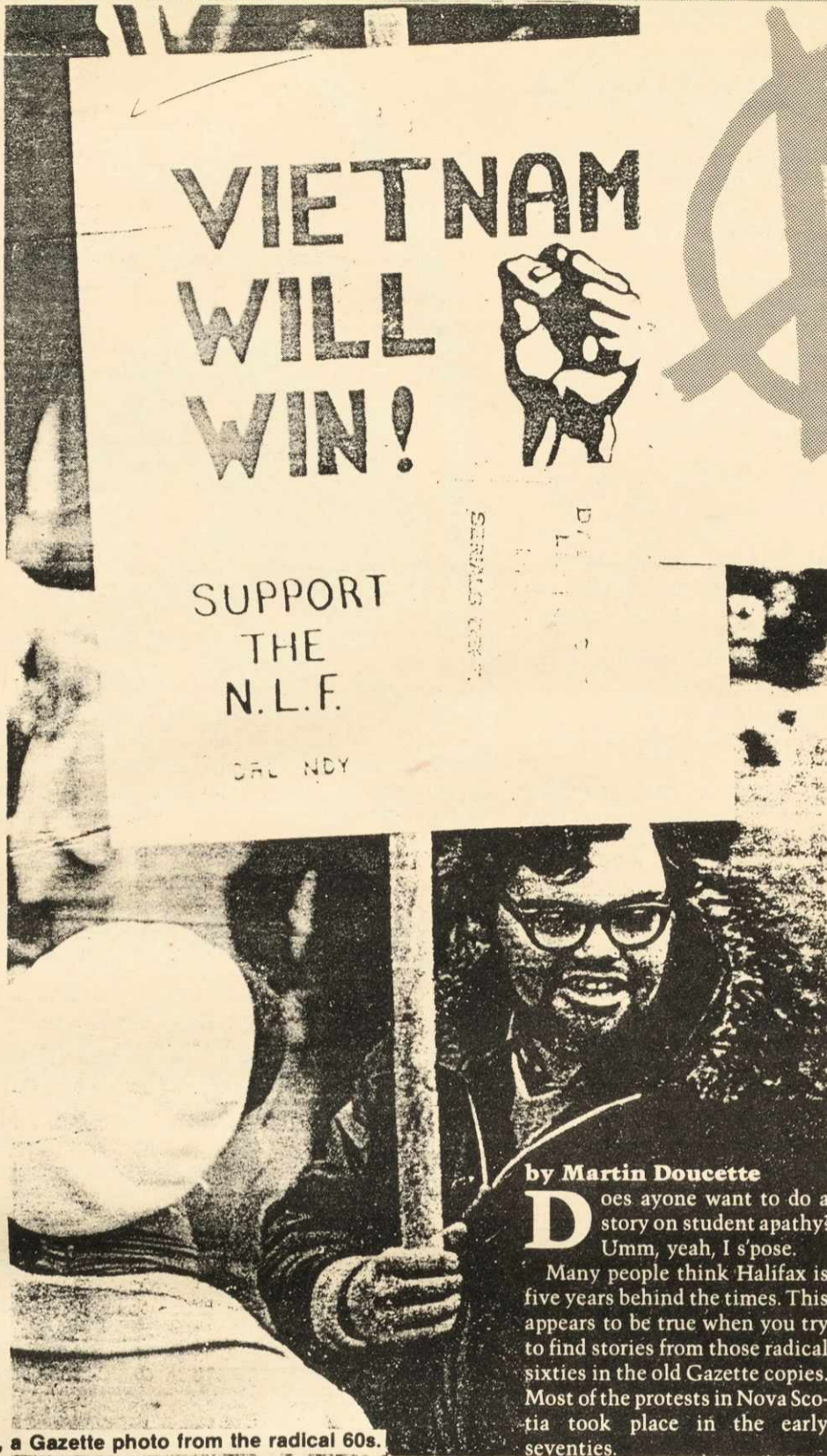


apathy

who cares?



The headlines from back then reflect the mood of the times. "200 university students protest nuclear weapons testing in the Aleutians", "Amchitka protest bombs out", "This University belongs to the students, dig it!" A time of much student involvement and a time of rapidly changing policies between the administration and the student body.

Did the protests in the sixties have any effect?

"The protests certainly had some effect. Students now have representatives on the board of governors and the senate. Locally there was some response," said Tony Thompson of the mathematics department. "Overall, the world seems less autocratic after the sixties."

November 28, 1969. A headline reads, "What is a radical?" The writer goes on to explain that "unlike a moderate, a radical is one who finds that s/he holds some principles that s/he cannot compromise with when asked to."

Though Thompson participated somewhat in the demonstrations two decades ago, he does not feel it is the best way to handle student concerns today. "Times change. You get older and you take a much more long-term view. I do not think demonstrations would have an influence today. A better route would be if large numbers of students wrote their MLAs or the ministers responsible."

Student Council President Caroline Zayid says, "Many students take problems personally. They phone Student Aid or the Awards Office or write to the ministers, but they do it on an

individual basis, so it's not noticed as much.

Do you think students today are apathetic? Is there general lack of concern in regards to affairs which directly do not affect us? Thompson says, "I think students are unsure of themselves. Student life is fairly complicated and there is less time to go sit in the library and read or take part in campus organizations like the Gazette." Zayid says, "People simply don't know how to get involved, but I think students do want to. Students have a lot of pressure to deal with. They have part-time jobs and limited time for other activities."

A headline in November 1971 has Dr. Ray Pierce, chair of the task force on the quality of student life, calling "Dal students apathetic". What would he say of the student attendance at the President's Symposium on Undergraduate Education?

Zayid says, "I think there was a good representation. Students didn't speak up enough, but they have to realize that they can speak what they think and people will listen."

October 31, 1969. Headline read, "Contemplation but no action". A Dr. Hayakawa says, "rallies, parties, be-ins, hootenannies, hoedowns, shivarees, and all other public events are likely to disrupt the studious in their reading and reflection."

Zayid says, "Dalhousie is a school for grownups. Students have to be advised that they do have a say in things and we are trying to do that through things like the Orientation and the Dispatch. In the meantime, I'm not pessimistic."

Dig It, a Gazette photo from the radical 60s.

by Martin Doucette

Does anyone want to do a story on student apathy? Umm, yeah, I s'pose.

Many people think Halifax is five years behind the times. This appears to be true when you try to find stories from those radical sixties in the old Gazette copies. Most of the protests in Nova Scotia took place in the early seventies.

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