

Board = System

Dalhousie University is a class phenomenon. All of Donald McInnes' sons and daughters either have passed or are in the process of passing through these hallowed halls. But how many students here are Nova Scotian blacks? How many were born and grew up on Creighton Street? How many come from families earning less than \$3,000 a year. The answer is simple: almost none.

In 1966 the now-defunct Canadian Union of Students held a nation-wide survey of university students. The questionnaire was sent to 10,221 students; there were 7,611 respondents. The study found that less than 28% of university students came from families earning \$5,000 or less per year, while over 52% of the population of Canada fell into this income bracket.

As a contrast, while only 6.1% of Canadian families earned over \$10,000 a year (in 1966), over 25% of the university students came from families in this bracket.

The poor cannot afford to pay high tuition fees, but they are paying for university even if their children will never be able to attend. The Carter Report has amply documented that the burden of taxes falls on those who earn less than \$5,000 a year. This tax money, extorted from those who can least afford to pay it, goes to pay for well over one-half of the total operating costs of Canadian universities.

The very same universities that their children are effectively barred from entering.

The very same universities that perpetuate the system which daily grinds their faces in the ground.

The very same universities that deny us an education.

This university, for example.

Money's the aim

The motto that "I'm not here to get an education - I'm just here for the degree" is hardly a radical doctrine nowadays. Everyone, even the most hardened Commerce student, admits that the economic coercion of the Diploma is the only reason a human being will stay on in such a brutal and cannibalistic place as Dalhousie for years on end. We are lucky. We will get good jobs. Happy is he who can look forward to having his humanity destroyed at \$7.50 an hour in an office instead of \$1.15 an hour in a fish plant.

But, as this study has shown, no matter where you go, the bosses remain the same. Those who decide that poetry has to be graded and that they know better than either us or our professors as to what we should and shouldn't be learning are the same ones who'll be telling us what, how, when and where to work in two years. They're our Board of Governors.

It's proverbial that a capitalist won't do anything unless there's something in it for him. But why are men like Oland, Jodrey and MacCulloch serving without pay on the Board? Perhaps they have a civic spirit after all?

Board's functions

The Board of Governors is "the supreme governing body of Dalhousie University". It makes all long-term decisions on how this university will operate. As such, its decisions influence every

level of the university. Senate can be overruled on any subject, at any time, by the Board's whim. So can the President (who is hired by the Board, as are all faculty and staff). So can the Student Council. So can the students. If the decision is ever made to send cops onto the campus, the Board will make that decision.

The Board decides whether a requested building will be constructed, thus determining whether classrooms are going to be overcrowded or not and whether or not we'll need binoculars to see our professors.

The Board's primary function is that of overseer and long-range planner for the university. It does not play a very direct role in the day-to-day administration of the university, although it is within the Board's statutory power to do so. Rather, the President, Dr. Henry Hicks, and his administrative staff take care of the humdrum chores related to maximizing the efficient and orderly functioning of a great metropolitan multiversity.

The Board does exert virtually complete control, however, when one looks at the long-term management of the university. They determine what the university's priorities in the coming years will be; the determining of these priorities affects every sphere of activity within Dalhousie. For example, a decision to build a new gym before constructing a social sciences building, would have ramifications in many different areas: the classroom facilities open to students in the social sciences, differentials in budget allotments between departments in the social sciences and other disciplines, the number of courses that can be taught, and even the number of faculty in social sciences that will be hired, or the relative ease or difficulty that will be encountered by a prospective social science major when he applies for admission. And all of this stemming from the seemingly simple decision of whether to delay one construction project in favor of the earlier completion of another.

Board never challenged

Being in complete financial control of the university (except for the whims and vagaries of the provincial economy in general and the availability of money from the University Grants Committee in particular), the Board has few factors within the university to contend with. Outside, of course, is a different question. A recession is an external factor that cannot be legislated away by the Board's fiat (at least, not a recession under capitalism). But inside the university, the Board's hegemony is unchallenged. The Senate will never seriously question most of the priorities drawn up by the Board - it will never question the class basis of the university, or the legitimacy of lectures as an educational tool, or the lunacy of grades in an alleged educational system.

And at this point the student body presents no real threat at all. When students start to demand more than tokenistic representation on anti-democratic bodies by self-seeking bright young men like Bruce Gillis, when they start demanding that university become a human institution dedicated to fulfilling human needs instead of a think-tank

and boot-camp for the capitalist economy, then the Board will respond to the student body. It will send in the cops.

The Board determines how Dalhousie will expand to accommodate greater enrollment. By 1980 Dalhousie will sprawl, a solid mass of buildings, from Oxford to Robie (and beyond) and from South to Coburg. According to Mr. David Sustar of the City of Halifax's Planning Division, 1723 people lived in this area when the 1966 census was carried out. Considering the cancer-like rate of Dal's growth and the overcrowding of residences due to the city housing crisis (with a 99%-plus occupancy rate for rented dwellings) that number is probably around 2,500 people today.

These people will be expropriated and evicted. Period.

The Board cannot afford to divert \$80,000 to set up a Transitional Year Program for a token number of black and Indian youths. Yet in less than one year it bought more than a quarter of a million dollars worth of stock in Noranda Mines alone.

Frank Covert is on three boards of directors with members who are directors of Noranda Mines Ltd; Donald McInnes is on two such boards; Victor de B. Oland, W. H. C. Schwartz, R. A. Jodrey, J. C. MacKeen, Gordon B. Isnor and Richey B. Love are on one such board each. None of them serve on boards of directors with blacks. None of them serve on boards with Indians; either. Such boards do not exist.

Board provides image

The Board is at least partially responsible for the perpetuation of the examination and grading system. Grades are the logical extension of the capitalist system into the classroom, just as bunker C is the logical extension of capitalism into Chedabucto Bay. Of course, grades have nothing to do with education, but for that matter, neither does university. University merely carries the middle classes, gives us a modicum of skills and a maximum of conformity and obedience, and spews us out into the world, a diploma in one hand and the want ads in the other. Through the grading system, the Board molds us in its own image, to be ruthless, manipulative, cunning, avaricious, traditional businessmen.

The point that must be emphasized here is that this crap will continue as long as people put up with it. As Catch-22 says, the bastards will do anything to you that they can get away with. As long as students can be cowed, persuaded, coerced or intimidated into putting up with grades, with accepting examinations, and with coexisting with a system that differs from Buchenwald only in degree, that system will continue.

The executive of the Board of Governors will meet in the Board Room on the first floor of the Arts and Administration Building on April 17, 1970, at 4:00 p.m. The meeting, as always, will be a closed one - no students will be admitted. As other articles indicate, several members of the Board have quite a few embarrassing questions to answer. Let's be there to make sure that those questions get answered.