

# editorial

Last week's Gazette carried the opinions of the Student Union elite on their positions, the role of student council and the power of the student union within the university. This week the corresponding opinions of the proletariat sector of council populace — the student representatives, is presented. There are important and interesting differences. While executive and SUB operations hierarchy see weaknesses in Council operation and are somewhat discouraged by the lack of real power at Dalhousie, they still believe in the system. This is, of course, because they exercise the only power. If student council, in its present form, benefits anyone, it is those people who control it.

This isn't true with council members, however. They have no power — and they know it. For them, council meetings are merely preludes to the real meetings of importance — between Smith and Graham, and Smith, Graham, and Hicks. They are frustrating and morally exhausting exercises in futility. Students council reps know before they go to a meeting that only a very small percentage of the segment of Dal students to which they belong elected them — 25% seems a common figure. They know that the majority of students don't give a damn what happens at council and what they say or do.

After a council meeting, the rep knows that it doesn't matter what he's said or done. All that matters is what Smith wants done. The rep sees Smith using the power his position gives him and the additional power he taps from student non-participation and good old fashioned politicking to ram through any by-law or resolution that



benefits him personally and enables the system to work more efficiently for his successors.

The student representative is caught right in the middle of the student apathy and the executive brutality and sees nothing to do to accomplish his end — in most cases, an honest desire to represent interested students democratically. An excellent example is the resignation of council chairman, Andy Watt, for the very reasons cited in this editorial.

However, lest Smith and Co. seem the only villains here, it must be pointed out that few council reps are taking advantage of the frustration offered them by an inside view of Dalhousie student government. Many either quit, or continue being ineffective, or do nothing but wait for their term to end so they can get the hell out.

There seems to have been no attempt on anyone's part to organize — council members or students — against the insidious system which is the creation of the people who run the university to maintain their position.

There have been few attempts to bring the real issues before the students and patch up the gaps between representatives and the people they represent. Several reports and any number of individuals on campus have stated Dalhousie's chief problem to be "communications". The Gazette disagrees. It's obvious from the people we've talked to that everyone knows what's going on. The problem is a lack of activity — why doesn't somebody get off their ass and do something?



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