Orientation '87 **NEEDS**

YOU!

Committee members are needed for this year's Dal Orientation. Available positions are Shinerama director and Off-campus Frosh Squad Leader. For more information pick up a newsletter in Room 222 at the SUB.





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TRAVELCUTS Going Your Way!





Alexa

By ERIN GOODMAN

Ten years ago, Alexa McDonough reached towards a social work degree and pulled out what she sees now as a band-aid solution. Today, the leader of the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party attacks an ailing political system directly, from her seat in the Nova Scotia legislature.

A graduate of Dalhousie University and the Maritime School of Social Work, McDonough credits her involvement in the women's movement and committment to the disadvantaged to her rise in the gritty arena of provincial politics. "The current political arrangements really do very little to change Canada for the better," she explains. "Social work just mops up casualties of injustice, and of unfair policies and practices.

McDonough was elected leader of the provincial NDP party in 1980, becoming the first woman in Canada to lead a major political party. A year later, she was elected to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly as the one woman and sole NDP representative.

McDonough, who cites one of the NDP's major political goals as being "to work towards the full equality of women in the political-economic system" waged a tough battle against 51 male representatives opposed to New Democratic ideals. "One of the reasons that conditions for women continue to be adverse,' comments the politician, "is because we don't have women in public office." There are currently three seats held by women in the 52-member Nova Scotia legislature. Says McDonough, 'It's one of the worst records of women represented in legislature in Canada

Although she is frequently the target of sexist slurs in the political arena, the party leader feels she is protected from serious persecution by the public nature of

her job, and explains "They really can't get away with being outrageously sexist.

Her main concern about the tiny minority of women in legislature arises when she presents bills concerning women's issues to an uninterested House. McDonough actively promotes an improved daycare system which would allow more women to continue their educations or enter the workforce. She feels that the majority of women still bear the full responsibility for childrearing, and condemns a system which denies women access to senior positions due to family commitments.

"It's exceedingly important that we have affirmative action programs in place in terms of hiring and promotion (of women)."

She is currently preparing to mount a campaign concerning equal pay for work of equal value with the help of local women's groups. Although equal pay has already been legislated in several provinces, including Ontario, the Nova Scotia Conservative government has yet to produce an offical document concerning the issue after ten years in power.

Nova Scotia is in the wilderness in terms of equal pay for work of equal value," comments McDonough. "We've made very little progress in enhancing the status of women.

McDonough is particularly dismayed by the growing trend of traditionalist groups such as R.E.A.L. Women, a right-wing, pro-family lobby group. 'They're intent on rolling back commitments to achieving equality for women," she says. Describing the lobbyists as "very intimidating women", she believes that their need to appeal to men's superior status arises from feelings of inferiority and poor self-image. "People have got to fight it.

Society's demand that women be dependent on men became continued on page 5