

not even mention the fact that some power beyond my control has the right to destroy one year of my life!

What if I had only two years to live? What if my future depends on a career which starts upon my graduation, May of 1989, and this is the only chance I'll get? What if the ozone layer decides to quit? The Greenhouse effect? World pollution? Star Wars becomes a reality?

Here I sit, typing this letter, when I feel like I should be standing in front of the A&A building screaming my lungs out continually!

Why are we accepting this as if it has nothing to do with us, when in fact, it affects us more than anyone else involved or evolving this mess! No one even asked us! Sacrificial lambs, that's all we are, not students, not humans, not real lives. . . And here we just sit and sit and wait and the odd fool writes a useless letter like this!

Catherine G. Cross

A faculty opinion

To the editors:

As a member of the Dalhousie Faculty Association on strike I should like to make some comments to the students — my own opinions of course and not those of the DFA since I am not an official spokesperson for my union.

In the first place — and I think students appreciate this already — faculty members are extremely reluctant to do anything which harms the students. I have been on the faculty for 25 years and have never missed a class if I could possibly avoid it. The reason: I enjoy teaching, I enjoy interacting with students and I have a strong sense of responsibility that I should do my best for them. I also think it is a pleasure and an honour to be a professor in a university and work in a milieu of reason and intelligent debate. I hope I can be back in my classroom and working with students as soon as possible.

In spite of all that I am now refusing to teach — with the rest of the DFA, I am on strike. We feel strongly enough on the issues that we accept a severe penalty, the loss of our pay, for our refusal to teach on the terms the administration offers. The administrators, whose intransigence is also preventing our students from having their classes, accept no penalties: they continue to take their high salaries without providing the services for which they are paid.

The ultimate reason for our resolve is the conviction that present directions are disastrous for the future of Dalhousie University. Our university cannot exist as a world apart from the rest of the Canadian academic community. We have to compete on the market for well qualified academics and we have to be able to offer them, when they choose to come here, prospects for career earnings and opportunities that are comparable to what they may expect elsewhere. We cannot be known as Canada's academic

poorhouse and still offer students from this region the quality of faculty and the quality of education they can look for in other parts of the country.

The other problem — as I see it — is more convoluted: we cannot be attractive to more students if we cannot offer a good quality and a good variety of programs that meet their interests, and we cannot maintain these programs unless we have more students. The student-teacher ratios are low in much of our university (though not in professional programs, which work to fixed ratios) and that makes the cost per student high. The response of the administration to this is to say we must lower the number of faculty to make the programmes more cost effective. The number of faculty members, however, required to offer good programs at the undergraduate and graduate level does not depend solely on student-teacher ratios. The programs themselves require that we be able to cover a number of areas with staff that are qualified in each area.

Practically every department and school in the university (I don't know of exceptions — and expect this applies to our professional faculties as well) is struggling to mount undergraduate and, in many cases, graduate programs with smaller faculty numbers than in any comparable institution in Canada. We don't have excess faculty, we have less than we need to fulfill our present objectives. Further, attrition can only mean our programs do not deserve to attract good students — and if we can't attract students we can't maintain the programs.

Look at all the letters.

Keep them coming, but remember, they must be typed and double-spaced.

Perhaps we need to examine the number of programs we offer — but there again there are implications for the numbers of students we can attract. If graduate programs were the ones to be axed not only would our students be deprived of the opportunity to do work at that level in our province, but our ability to attract high quality faculty members for other programs would be reduced. Without the opportunity to work at graduate levels and to do research with graduate students a lot of our faculty would leave and a lot of capable people would not come.

In the end we have to face the fact that it costs a lot of money to run a good university — and it requires careful management of resources to make sure the money goes in the right places. It also requires some vision and conviction about the role of the university in our society. If we lack these things we shall probably get what we deserve! For my part, I hope we can find the means and commitment to keep a good university and get back to work.

Robert L. Comeau
Professor
Dept. Of Economics

Media death squads

To the Editors:

I am writing the letter to raise my voice and call upon you to raise yours against the major danger posed to democracy by the monopoly-owned media, the three "major" political parties and their allies. In the current election, the rich are providing them with all the facilities, while my candidacy is brazenly discriminated against, and the people treated as voting cattle.

One such facility is the farce of "all candidate's meetings" where the three major parties are given every privilege, the format is organized according to their dictate, and question-periods tailor-made so that the real concerns of the people cannot surface:

1. The organizer of the YWCA meeting told me that the PCs and Liberals refused to debate with any but the 3 parties on the podium while the NDP stated he would only give up part of his time if the other two also agreed.
2. On Nov. 1, I was personally informed by Brad Whalley, president of SMUSA that, in reply to their request for a meeting at SMU, "I was told that they had an agreement to speak at only one university."
3. On Nov. 9, 10 and 12 meetings sponsored by the Public Service Alliance, Dal Students' Union and the Labour Council were confined only to the three parties or with the inclusion of Her

Majesty's loyal opposition, the Moscow "Communist". Mr Terry Crowley, representing the Dal Council introduced the meeting by stating that "we had originally decided to limit it to the three major parties but when the Communist Party actively solicited inclusion, we decided to invite him as well."

4. Speaking frankly, Mr. Crowley was engaging in cover-up and duplicity. My official agent had approached him 10 days before, on Nov. 1 about inviting myself only to be abruptly told, without discussion, "it is absolutely out of the question", with the "reason" being "we would have to put up a new poster, spend money", etc.

5. Incredibly, these 4 candidates then had agreed beforehand to take only 12 questions (I was the 13th person at the mike).

6. When the dockyard workers were taking McInnes to task for his betrayal of their cause, Mr. Crowley intervened, saying "this is a debate amongst the candidates, not between the candidates and the people." By their silence, the candidates agreed. This precisely expresses the danger to democracy.

Democracy means the exercise

of the will of the people, but the electors are reduced to being mere spectators.

Democracy means that the deputy must render account for his actions to the people, the electors, but these politicians through such forms or through "media opportunities" shield themselves from the people like kings on the stage.

Like the mass media and the three parties, the students' council and the trade union centrals have already decided who the winner (the three parties) will be and the loser. People are trapped into the three parties and made their hostage. This is then called democratic. It is no more democratic than elections in El Salvador: the only difference is the media and others perform the role of the death squads. Any other candidate or party, according to them, is a joke. Through the label "fringe candidate" character assassination is committed as a norm. You students have been politically disenfranchised, and your vote has been pre-empted. When everything is said and done, it is the three parties and the mass media which will be the winners, and the people who will be the losers. If you are bemused by this drama and farce of the federal elections, then you too can call yourself a winner. I will be a loser along with the rest of the people. I do not like this a bit. The people do not like this one bit either.

150 years ago, Nova Scotia democrats warned against the danger of the "Committee of 12" which dominated political and economic life in our province. No less dangerous a "12" dominate political life today.

As your reporter correctly urged ("Marxist-Leninist made the most sense: debate loses track of topic") students must take a good look behind the pretty words and see the substance. Nay more, if we are to exercise our sovereign rights and control our lives, we must also defeat the dangers posed by the three major parties, the media and those such as Mr. Crowley, who operate just like them, as a threat to democracy and the interests of the people, including those of students.

Tony Seed

Indep. Candidate
(Marxist-Leninist)

Students should organize

To the Editors:

In the past weeks there has been much discussion about the strike by the faculty here at Dal. At first the news did not seem to alarm anyone, but as the weeks went by, there were an increasing number of concerns about it.

Some students feel that their academic situation will be affected. Others are confident the strike won't last long, and that there's no need to panic. Well, this is an indication that not everyone has been properly informed.

It is every student's responsibility and right to understand the situation at hand. No agreement

has of yet been made between the faculty and the Board of Governors. The Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) has rejected the contract proposal already offered to them. Thus, a strike.

The sooner people start putting pressure on the administration, the sooner the strike will be over. This is our education, and we the students should not have to suffer for administration's problems. We must take action immediately in order to obtain quick results. If we do not act, the possibility of the strike lasting for a while is quite probable.

So, sign a petition, organize a protest, complain to the administration. We have a voice in this matter and we should be heard; the louder the better.

Jennifer Wylie

Victims of society

To the Editors:

The universities' method of selecting and accepting students is unfair. How can universities distinguish a person's ability and personality by a grade point average?

Students spend twelve to thirteen years of their life in junior and high school. After graduating out of grade twelve academic, they should be allowed to attend university. High average should not be their ticket.

I had a friend in grade twelve with me at Liverpool Regional High School. Having a 62 per cent average, he applied to Acadia, Dalhousie, and UNB. He could not get accepted to further his education. In Liverpool this year, he will pursue the same courses as last. No matter how you twist this, you have to agree, he had a year of his education stolen.

I was pushed off the major highway into a bushy trail also. I graduated along the side of my friend at LRHS. I had a 60 per cent average and felt that I had earned my entry into university. Instead, I had my future goals rearranged. I am in university this year but only as a TYP student (Transition Year Program). Passing this year will enable me to attend regular university next year. The problem is, I waste a year and acquire no credits.

Here at Dalhousie University, I see students who had 70-80 per cent averages coming out of high school. These same people are failing and robbing other students' positions. I would like to be taking a BA or BSc. But my graduating marks would not allow me. I feel my friend and I are victims of society.

The performance to acquire a higher educational status is demanding and pressuring. This performance is even more frictionated by the university's method of selection. My friend and I are capable and eager students. We should be taking a BA or BSc, not TYP and high school.

— Cory Francis