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GM aborted at KSU

by Jerry West
and Marie-France LeBlanc

The Annual General Meeting of the King's Students' Union was aborted Monday night by a call for quorum. The meeting had progressed for two hours when the honorarium of Mark Farrell, the KSU President who resigned earlier this year amid allegations of embezzlement, reached the agenda.

"I would not have called quorum myself — but retrospectively it seems to have jarred the students out of their apathy," said Andrew Han, one of the students opposed to the motion to award Farrell his honorarium in spite of his resignation.

Quorum is the number of persons necessary at a meeting for the proceedings to be legally valid. Under Robert's rules of parliamentary procedure, if quorum is called and the number of people present is insufficient, the proceedings of the entire meeting are declared invalid.

For a general meeting of the KSU quorum is ten percent of the student body, or 71 people. When the debate over Farrell's honorarium took an unfavourable turn eight people walked out the door, leaving 63. The last person out the door, Mike Daily, called quorum.

"Most people [there] seemed to know Mark," said Daily. "They only wanted to discuss what a nice guy he was."

"[The meeting] was going around in circles — the issue was getting nowhere," said Mary Abbott, manager of the KSU bar the Wardroom.

Farrell resigned on March 9, six days before the end of his term,

after a request from his executive. "To absolve us of any suspicion," the executive wrote in their letter.

The scandal began last summer. Farrell was given a choice, for his summer honorarium, of \$360 cash or courses worth \$720. He chose the courses. When a Canadian Federation of Students conference took too much of Farrell's time, he felt compelled to withdraw from one of his courses.

When he was asked how his courses went in September, Farrell did not mention the withdrawal to his fellow councillors.

"I was academically embarrassed about receiving what I thought was a W (withdrawal) and a little ashamed of the fact that I did it on Union money," said Farrell in his resignation.

Farrell was further questioned in the November council meeting and he admitted to withdrawing, but said that he had not received a refund for the course. There was some question as to what had happened to the money paid for the course, so Farrell encouraged an investigation of the matter apparently believing he had withdrawn from the course too late to be reimbursed.

The rotating strike at Dalhousie slowed the process of this investigation. In the first week of March the KSU learned a cheque for \$185 had been issued by Dal as a refund. The cheque was deposited into Farrell's account through a banking machine on Coburg and Oxford on June 20, 1990.

The KSU executive then asked for Farrell's resignation, saying they considered his actions "embezzlement... an act of theft."

Farrell then resigned "for the sake of my personal integrity,"



Controversy at King's college campus.

saying "the appearance of embezzlement is indeed burning."

Farrell was later invited to the March 14 council meeting to defend himself against the executive on the awarding of his honorarium. He declined, saying the invitation to attend the meeting was patronising. The KSU decided not to award Farrell his second-term honorarium amounting to \$441.

A petition was then circulated to have Farrell's honorarium put on the agenda of the annual general meeting. "The General Meeting is the highest body, it gives the average student a voice," said Farrell.

The overwhelming majority of students at that meeting were in favour of awarding Farrell his honorarium, but the call for quorum wiped out all of the proceedings including a motion to have birth control pills included in the KSU health care plan.

The general meeting has been rescheduled for April 2, when the King's student body will debate

their executive's decision. Farrell's defenders will argue he performed the duties of his office well and, in light of his repaying the \$185, deserves his honorarium. The other side will argue he was dishonest and does not deserve the money.

"He did a good job — not a stellar job — but since I've been here he's the only President who has been asked to resign," said Mike Daily, who called quorum. "So from where I stand he did a bad job."

Farrell, who will be next year's chair of the Students' Union of Nova Scotia, has received letters of support from the Students' Unions of Dalhousie, Mount St. Vincent, St. Mary's, Acadia and St. Francis Xavier Universities.

"This is no longer about honour and constitution, but rather about bitterness," said Farrell. "If I hadn't hid behind half-truths in September for the sake of embarrassment I wouldn't be in the muddle I find myself in now."

Co-ed housing at Dal

by Paul Doucette

Dalhousie University's first attempt at on-campus co-ed housing seems to be going very well, but there are concerns over the possible expansion of the program.

When the Board of Governors ratified the recommendation of its own Committee on Student Relations and Residence to provide for a limited pilot project allowing co-ed residence housing last spring, Dalhousie became one of the last Canadian universities to launch such a program.

Heather Sutherland, Director of Housing at Dalhousie, says the consultation process leading up to the advancement of the proposition to the Board, involved representatives from the resident governments of both residence halls on campus, the Dalhousie Student Union, administrators of Dalhousie Student Services and Dalhousie Alumni. Response to the idea was overwhelmingly positive.

The Board of Governors' Decision called for a limited allocation of on-campus space for the pilot project. Accordingly, all of the 84 spaces in the three-year old Eliza Ritchie Hall and the 82 spaces in the Bronson House wing of Howe Hall were reserved for co-ed living, representing about 15 per cent of available on-campus housing space.

The program is working well, says Brian Muscat, Howe Hall's Coordinator of Student Life. "There's a generally more positive environment," he says. "Inter-gender relations are improved. Most residents respect the fact that there are now women in the residence and have become friends with women." Muscat noted that, judging by the number of applications for the co-ed spaces

in Bronson for next year, residents outside the co-ed space are interested in giving it a try.

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Food bank necessary to city

by Shaune MacKinlay

Tucked into a ramshackle building on Gottingen Street, the Metro Food Bank Society does little to attract the eye. However, for thousands of Halifax and area residents, these modest headquarters are the difference between a good meal and going hungry.

Formed in 1984 by a number of concerned church and community groups, this non-profit organization provides emergency food as-

sistance to approximately fifty thousand Metro residents.

The Metro Food Bank Society depends upon a large volunteer staff who organize food drives, coordinate fundraising activities and form various committees as well as a Board of Directors.

The society collects and stores food which it then distributes to its twenty-nine members agencies, including many church and community groups such as Hope Cottage and the Salvation Army.

Despite the large number of people who depend upon the Food Bank Society, the food bank is aiming to shut its doors by December 31, 1994. According to Jeff Regan, a member of the food bank's Public Relations Committee, "Food banks are not a positive way of dealing with the problems."

Regan says that while food banks help people "get back on their feet", they are also detrimental to a person's dignity. He says that opportunities are necessary to re-

place people's dependency on food banks.

The Metro Food Bank Society treats only the symptoms of what is a much greater, underlying problem; poverty. It recognizes that families on social assistance often use their food budget to help pay rent and utility bills.

To continue to provide a consistent level of service, the Metro Food Bank Society is wholly dependent upon the donations it re-

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