

## STRIKE AVERTED

Faculty back down on strike threat and settle with administration during low turn-out meeting

By COLLEEN MACKEY

AS THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY geared up for full strike action faculty members voted 246 to 200 in favour of calling off the strike at a Jan. 24 general meeting.

Only 446 of the 728 DFA members showed up for the meeting where members voted to accept the board of governors' latest offer.

In an earlier vote taken by a show of hands the vote to call off strike action had 202 voting in favour, 200 against.

The proposal included a measure to remove the integration of the Dalhousie pension benefit with the Canada Pension Plan benefit. This move

is valued at \$1.8 million. It will replace the DFA's proposal that the board repay the actual surplus taken during its pension holiday.

Decision-making in the reconstituted Pension Advisory Committee would be taken on the basis of a simple majority of those present. Equal numbers of board and bargaining unit representatives will sit on the committee.

The board's offer on salaries included an increase of three percent for 1985/86 and 3.7 percent for 1986/87. The Career Development Increment (CDI) will be \$1030 for both 1984/85 and 1985/86. The CDI is based on the professor's contribution to the university and may be withheld. The Income Maintenance Change (a cost of living arrangement) will be 1.4 percent.

## Decision meets with mixed reaction

By BILL MITCHELL

THE DECISION BY THE Dalhousie Faculty Association not to strike is meeting with mixed reaction from union executives and faculty members.

DFA president Dr. Sandy Young says the strike should have gone ahead.

"We would have got a better contract if we had gone on an all-out strike," he says. Young says the strike would only have lasted a few days before pressure would force the administration to settle.

Professor Gilbert Winham is one union member who says he is relieved the decision to strike was reversed. He says a strike by the DFA would not have been that effective as the strike would have only been supported by a minority of members.

"The dispute could have been solved in three ways—the DFA giving in, the administration giving in, or the government stopping it." Winham says he believes that if the government did not intervene the strike may

have lasted longer than anticipated.

Tom Sinclair-Faulkner says the decision not to strike was not a defeat for the union.

"We made progress on pensions," says Sinclair-Faulkner. He says he was concerned about the effect of the strike on students.

The problems with this round of negotiations have caused the DFA executive to re-think their strategy. Both Young and Sinclair-Faulkner agree change is necessary.

Sinclair-Faulkner recommends that the next time negotiations come around, the executive call a strike vote earlier.

He says he no longer supports escalating job actions such as informational pickets because they simply do not have a pronounced effect on the Board of Governors.

Young says there was too much talking and little action during negotiations.

"When we went to a strike vote, the Board of Governors moved. When we had the one day strike, the Board of Governors moved," he says.



Would you take these guys seriously if they threatened to sue? That's what they were doing at a press conference Thursday — threatening to sue the university in event of a strike. Several hours later the faculty made the threat pointless by suddenly settling with the administration. Photo: Mary C. Sykes, Dal Photo.

## Funding recommendation inadequate

By SAMANTHA BRENNAN & KATIE FRASER

OPPOSITION IS QUICKLY mounting to recommended funding levels for post-secondary education in the Maritime provinces.

Students, faculty and university administrators are criticizing the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission's (MPHEC) announcement of its recommendation of a 4.5 per cent increase in funding levels for the Maritime's post-secondary institutions.

The MPHEC is the body that submits a plan for financing higher education in the region to the Council of Maritime Premiers.

Om Kamra, president of the Nova Scotia Confederation of Faculty Associations (NSCUFA), says the MPHEC's financial plan for 1985-86 is unsatisfactory and unprincipled.

"They simply tailored their recommendation to suit political pressures," said Kamra. "Their report embodies a defeatist attitude to government restraint with recommendations based on the real needs of educational institutions and students."

For the past three years the Nova Scotia government has cut back on the funding levels recommended by the MPHEC. Critics of the commission's 1985-86 financial plan say the MPHEC is recommending funding levels to suit the provincial governments and not the real needs of the institutions.

John Kiefton, a spokesperson for the Association of Atlantic Universities, says the commission has failed to take enrolment

increases of up to 30 per cent into account in their financial plan. He says the commission's apparent decision to be taken seriously by the provincial government is neither a fair nor logical approach to reaching a funding recommendation.

Dr. Margaret Fulton, president of Mount St. Vincent University, says she's concerned that the MPHEC recommendations will interfere with the university's badly needed renovations.

"Well, it will mean we can't do any of the things we need to do," says Fulton. She says that with such a low recommendation, there would not be enough funds to go through with additional faculty hiring, purchasing of equipment and to fund a new communications building, which would alleviate MSVU's space problems.

In the written section of its report the MPHEC itself details

an increase of 8600 students to the Maritime province's higher education system in the past five years. This is about equal to the combined student population at Dalhousie and Technical University of Nova Scotia.

For universities like Dalhousie a 4.5 per cent increase will not even cover the interest payments on the institution's staggering debt.

There will be a 3.8 per cent penalty on Dalhousie if they don't balance their budget this year, making the real increase quite small, says Caroline Zayid, Dalhousie Student Union vice-president external. She says that in the end the real losers will be the students.

"Without proper funding the students' education suffers. We (Nova Scotia's students) pay the highest tuition fees and don't necessarily get the best education," says Zayid.

## Problems not over — Gigeroff

By SAMANTHA BRENNAN

The threat of a strike may be over but Dalhousie's problems are far from over, says Alex Gigeroff, Dalhousie Student Union president.

"I feel a lot of the problems this crisis brought out are still here," says Gigeroff. "We've avoided a strike this time but the internal problems faced by the university haven't changed and neither has the external funding problem."

He says it was a good thing the

DFA decided not to strike but the decision wasn't something he expected.

"The consequences would have hurt so many people," says Gigeroff. "But I still feel a little disappointed for the faculty." He says the DFA took a gamble with their threat of strike action and lost.

He says priorities for the university now include speaking out against the MPHEC funding recommendations and changing the decision-making process in the university to give faculty and students a greater voice.