

NEWS

Students thwart administration's greed

BY ROB ANTLE

Student apathy?

The Board of Governors at Dalhousie certainly don't think so any more.

Dalhousie students gained at least a temporary reprieve from a proposed tuition hike when about six hundred students stormed a Board meeting Tuesday to demand

the legislation be scrapped.

After a spirited debate filled with heckling from students, the Board agreed almost unanimously to take another look at the tuition raise.

The meeting had to be moved twice — from the Board Room at the Arts and Administration building to Henson College and finally to the McInnis Room at the Student Union Building — because of

the number of students who insisted on being present at the meeting.

Student Union President Peter Pottier was amazed by the large turnout, "one of the largest in decades."

"There have never been protests like this before," Pottier said in an interview. "I think people just kind of got fed up after last year's 25 per cent increase. It's only now, after paying tuition in September, that the students realize how much that actually is."

During the rousing meeting, Dalhousie President Howard Clark defended the proposed increases, telling students that these tuition hikes were necessary. He said the government has frozen education spending, money which counts for 80 per cent of Dalhousie's operating budget.

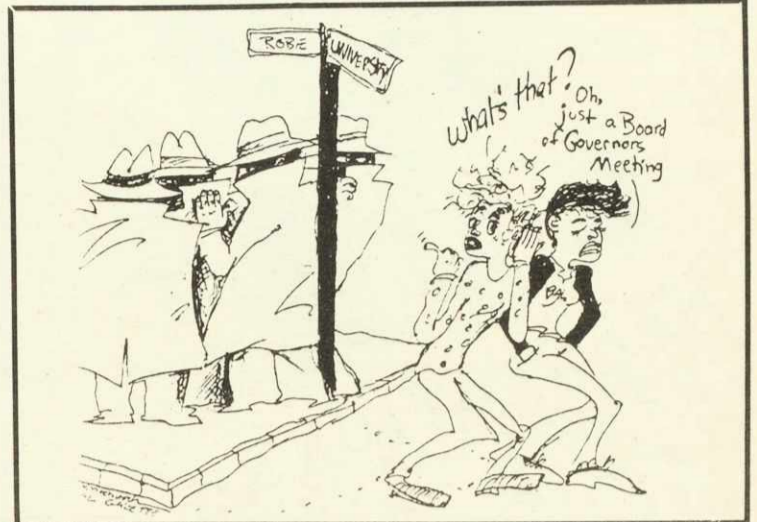
Students and student leaders vehemently disagreed.

Dalhousie student Paula Clark opened discussion on the plan by asking students if they had seen improvements at the university as a result of last year's tuition hike. Throngs of students cheered and jeered enthusiastically.

The charged atmosphere was markedly different from the Board's usual meetings.

Instead of in its small meeting room in the Administration building — a room with ornately carved chandeliers and busts of former Dalhousie presidents — the meeting was held in the McInnis Room, a venue normally reserved for concerts.

The Board sat around a make-



shift table, assembled in the middle of the floor, after students climbed up onto the stage, holding siege there. The hundreds of students jammed together sat or stood around the board members, some close enough to actually touch them.

Pottier lauded the courage of the board members, saying the room was "like a lion's den."

However, student leaders had no praise for board members on the key issue of the tuition increase.

Student representatives questioned chair G.C. Piercey on Dalhousie's policy to have tuition fees five per cent above the Nova Scotia average. They also asked management to disclose their salaries to the students.

Piercey refused.

The partisan crowd gave student rep Beth Beattie a standing ovation when she challenged the chair.

Piercey remained calm through

most of the barrage, calling on a legal advisor to read out the Board's own rules of order.

"These are our own set of by-laws to set out procedure," Piercey said.

Regardless, the amendment to delay the vote on the tuition hike proposal until January was passed. Pottier put forward a motion that students should be informed at least two weeks in advance of the board's next meeting.

That motion was also passed.

Pottier said after the meeting that the DSU only learned about the planned fee raise last week.

A release put out by the DSU to students said "your student government [has been kept] unaware and uninformed of the definite increase in tuitions over the past few weeks."

Pottier said council members put on "a complete blitz over the last few days."

"This is definitely a student victory," he said.

Security reacts

BY LARA MORRIS

Dalhousie Security staff were busy delivering a Security Bulletin last Friday as a result of an attack on campus. A woman was assaulted in the Cohn parking lot at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 14.

Security responded quickly to the report. "We were informed of the attack at 11:40 a.m. and had distributed 600 copies of the bulletin by 3:45 p.m.," said Sandy MacDonald, Chief of Security.

MacDonald is aware some people are apprehensive about reporting incidents. He stresses "any assault is serious enough to report."

Barbara Harris, the President's Advisor on Women, acknowledges there are many of reasons why people don't report assaults. "Sometimes they don't think it's serious," she said. Harris stresses the importance of reporting as two-fold. It helps Security look for any patterns in the attacks, and it gives them the opportunity to inform the campus community about what is going on.

"People need to recognize that if they avoid something happening the next person may not be so lucky," said Harris, "and reporting may prevent that next person from being attacked."

MacDonald is also aware people are concerned about confidentiality. Last Thursday's attack was reported by someone other than the victim. "If the victim wishes to remain anonymous we will honour their wishes," said MacDonald. In

Thursday's attack the victim was asked through a third party if she minded the details of the attack being published.

Members of the Dalhousie Community are buoyed by Security's quick response.

"I'm really pleased Dalhousie Security acted so quickly to inform the campus. That allows people to decide what precautions they want to take and helps make people more aware," said Harris, "that awareness may help with prevention too."

"The expeditious manner in which they acted is commendable," said Candida Rifkind, a member of the Dalhousie Women's Group. "It's important for the information to be distributed as soon as possible and to as many people as possible."

MacDonald says he was just doing his job. "I've always maintained that when something like this comes to our attention we'll advise the campus community."

Rifkind thinks the Week of Reflection events may have helped too. "It could be the direct result of an event put on by the Women's Group called 'How Safe Are You On Campus?'. We spent a lot of time talking about publicizing incidents at that event," she said.

The bulletin was distributed by hand in the SUB, Killam library, Grad House and on car windshields. It was also posted in the bookstore and Tiger Trap and put on the electronic mail system. Tiger Patrol worked with Security to ensure the bulletin was posted in as many places as possible.

Security Bulletin

Dalhousie Security has been informed that a woman student was attacked, in the Cohn Parking lot, on November 14, 1991, by two unidentified males.

The incident occurred at about 6:00 p.m., while the student was attempting to enter her vehicle. Because there were a number of other individuals in the general area of the attack, the victim was able to escape without serious physical harm.

Any person(s) who witnessed this incident and can provide further information are requested to contact the Security Department immediately (494-3344). All information received will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Recipients of this notice are requested to ensure it is given the widest possible distribution.

G.A. MacDonald
Chief of Security

Painting Dal's dangers

BY STEPHANIE NOLEN

A group of women painted the words "Rape Zone" and other slogans about violence against women in more than 25 places around the Dalhousie campus last week.

Dal Security Chief Sandy MacDonald says his officers were notified that three or four women were painting the slogans at 2:21 in the morning of Nov. 14, but when security personnel arrived in the area where the vandalism had been reported, the women were already gone.

MacDonald adds that Security is not assuming the women who were seen were responsible for all of the vandalism. He says that they have no suspects.

They do know who isn't responsible: The Dalhousie Women's Group (DWG).

The incident took place during the Week of Reflection, an event organized annually by the DWG was responsible for the signs, as

But the Women's group says they knew nothing about the signs. "The Dalhousie Women's Group was not responsible," says Gayle Heinrich, DWG member and Week of Reflection organizer.

"We didn't do them, we didn't ask anybody to do them, we didn't authorize anybody to do them, and we knew nothing about them," says Heinrich.

But she does understand why people assume her group was involved. "Because of Week of Reflection, because who else would do it, because that's the impression people have of the group," Heinrich says. "People automatically assume we would have done it."

Heinrich doesn't support the vandalism, but she says it may have been misunderstood.

"Women who saw 'Rape Zone' think a bunch of men did it to be misogynist, to frighten women," Heinrich says. "But I think if they saw the signs that said 'Stop Violence Now' then maybe they would

see it differently.

Sandy MacDonald says the education effort was ill-placed and unjustified.

"It has caused a lot of concern from many students about their safety," he says. "I can't comment on the intent of these women but they have caused a lot of alarm."

MacDonald says the areas labelled 'Rape Zone' or 'Date Rape Zone' do not in fact pose danger to women's safety.

"There are no statistics to support it," he says. "Not for here or for any other area of the city, for that matter."

The backlash from angry women, who misunderstood the signs or who disapproved of the guerrilla education tactics, frustrates Heinrich. "People are angrier about the signs being painted than they are about women getting raped. If they took women getting violated and abused as seriously as they do vandalism, then the world be a hell of a lot better place."