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Dal rassles with rent review ruling in favour of Fenwick residents

by Ralph English

A second round of decision and appeal is underway in the Renwick rent review case.

The Nova Scotia Rent Review Commission (NSRRC) has ruled Fenwick Place subject to rent control legislation. The NSRRC also upheld an earlier residential tenancies officer decision to limit a proposed 14 percent rent increase to 9 percent.

But Dalhousie administration has given notice of appeal to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia.

Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) president Tim Hill says the DSU will finance the legal opposition to this appeal.

Jill Allen, the Fenwick tenant who contested Dalhousie's appeal to the NSRRC, says exemption from Residential Tenancies Board jurisdiction would deprive tenants of recourse to the board as a forum for grievances. No other independent body exists to meet this need.

The Rent Review Act excludes "a university" from its definition of "residential premises". In its October 31 decision the NSRRC cited two reasons for subjecting Fenwick Place to the provisions of the Act.

First, "The commission finds that the mere fact that the Uni-

versity owns a rental premises does not in itself exempt the premises from the jurisdiction of the Rent Review Act." (N.S. Rent Review Commission report.)

If this were not true, the university could purchase apartment buildings anywhere in town and rent them out unfettered by rent control.

Secondly, unlike Howe Hall or Sheriff Hall, Fenwick Place allows occupancy by non-students who are spouses of Dal students. The report continues "For Fenwick Place, in reality to be strictly considered a student residence, it would be necessary that occupation of the premises be restricted to students of the University."

But application of the law does not appear to be consistent. Clay Fowler, manager of the Loyola Building at St. Mary's University, says the building is exempt from rent control legislation. The Loyola Building contains men's dormitories and 104 units for family housing similar to those at Fenwick.

Aquinian article still creating controversy

FREDERICTON (CUP)—While the Aquinian, the St. Thomas student newspaper, is negotiating to avert a threatened law suit, the paper's Oct. 5 article on foreign student housing continues to cause controversy.

A student housing committee formed to review the University of New Brunswick housing service called Oct. 31 for the resignation of Helga Stewart, off campus housing officer, for refusing to attend hearings into accusations of discrimination in the housing office.

UNB student council formed the Foreign Student Investigative Committee after the Aquinian quoted several racist slurs made by UNB housing director Roy Brostowski, which are now the subject of legal negotiations.

UNB says Brostowski's remarks were taken out of context and is demanding a retraction and an apology.

The Aquinian hired a lawyer, Sherron Hughes, when it felt the STU student association lawyer was not defending its best interests.

The Aquinian will not retract Brostowski's quotations, said editor Peter Boisseau, because they were presented accurately. The Aquinian has submitted a statement it would print as clarification of the article, but a response from UNB is still pending.

UNB and STU share the same campus.

CFS : The student movement is recovering

by C. Ricketts

The fledgling Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) is finally getting its wingfeathers. It still can't fly, but it's getting ready to.

Longstanding criticisms of CFS held by the Students Union of Nova Scotia and Dalhousie were addressed at the national conference held last week in Ottawa. There is now a permanent chair to manage research and field-working staff and an established forum for representatives of provincial organizations to meet with the CFS executive to iron out problems as they arise.

VP External Atul Sharma feels very positive about the changes in attitudes towards the structural organization of CFS. "Most of the other provinces agreed with us," he said. "I feel really positive when other institutions see the same problems and arrive at the same conclusions as Dalhousie."

Peter Kavanagh, SUNS' executive officer, agreed. "BC and Nova Scotia, the two main antagonists, didn't square off."

For the past two years, covering four national conferences, student organizations from BC and Nova Scotia have been diametrically opposed as to how CFS should operate. At last May's national conference in Saskatoon, Dalhousie delegates accused BC of stacking the conference to block proposals from Nova Scotia.

Other positive improvements drafted at the conference were:

- Increasingly, member institutions and provincial organizations will be mounting their own campaigns for post-secondary education. In the past, national campaigns have been poorly co-ordinated and ineffective.
- A change toward research and fact sheets in order to reflect and update changes at a provincial level on education funding, student unemployment and other student concerns.
- A new direction for CFS-Services (Travel CUTS, Youth-

saver cards and a speakers bureau) to be more available and relevant to student needs.

• Establishing a committee which will look to amalgamate CFS-Services with CFS, the political wing. There has been criticism that services such as Travel CUTS are run on a profit-motive and not for students' benefit, which was their original mandate.

"We've gone a long way forward at this conference," said DSU president Tim Hill. "But one

swallow doesn't make a spring."

Hill's optimism is a little reserved until changes to the organization are implemented. And that depends on how much money will be available.

The CFS conference was adjourned at 3:00 am Monday, November 14, before its operating budget was approved. And CFS was directed by its member institutions to pay of a 60,000 deficit by April before any extra monies are spent.

Alternative conference wants changes in CFS

TORONTO (CUP)—The same issues that have provoked sharp debate within the Canadian Federation of Students dominated a Nov. 5-6 meeting held to discuss the future of the federation.

The meeting, organized by the University of Toronto's student council, brought together students from both CFS and non-CFS campuses across the country.

Some delegates expressed concern that CFS is out of touch with its student membership. UBC's Barb Urwin said her school has never received more than a "newspaper" from CFS. She said the federation has been insensitive to local issues.

A number of delegates said

they thought the federation should be used to exchange information and to lobby the federal government on education and funding issues.

Nancy Taylor of Hamilton's McMaster University, said CFS will be successful when "all involved participate fully." Her opinion was supported by Ian Nelmes, chairperson of CFS-Ontario.

"CFS is member organization. The national body is there to implement the individual organizations' wishes," Nelmes said.

Regarding the scope of the debate within CFS, some delegates said they thought the federation should avoid taking

positions on non-education issues.

Al Shpyth, a Saskatchewan delegate, said he thought non-education topics took time away from discussion of education-related issues. And Mike Ferrabee of Waterloo University said CFS should not adopt positions that will "alienate" large numbers of students.

The federation is in danger of losing three of its most important members. At the University of Alberta, which became the largest full member after an Oct. 21 referendum, an appeal by the federation's opponents to overturn the results is being considered by a student government committee.

