

Council gives kiss of death to CKDU

by Glenn Walton

The Dalhousie Student Council, at an end-of-the-year meeting last Sunday, voted to stop funding CKDU radio next year. A general meeting (see story, this page) called for Monday, April 13, to be the last chance for students to voice their support or disapproval of Council's move.

"There has been no increase in general Student Union revenues for 5 years" said Student Council President Gord Owen, "and we've been cutting across the board, right to the bone. The question was whether all student services were justified. The general reaction was no."

Student Council was asked to approve a CKDU operating budget that provided \$12,000 for operating expenses and \$13,000 for capital expenditures. Student Council Treasurer Scott MacLeod said that the general view on Council was that CKDU is a waste the way it's been operating. "The question was do we fix it up or shut it down. I have the feeling that CKDU only wanted to keep operating, but it's no use not having it go out of the SUB."

Graduate Studies rep. Peter Rans called the decision a "ludicrous solution" to budgetary problems.

"Communication with the student body is an ultimate priority of Council, and CKDU is one of the ways of pro-

viding communication, if money were put into developing it properly." The vote against the radio station was "a further vote in favour of isolationist policies," he added.

Senate rep. Neil Erskine said that councillors failed to realize the principle of student radio, which is to provide alternative and relevant information for students, and predicted that CKDU will view the decision of Council as "an affirmation of Council's desire to abdicate any social responsibility towards the Halifax community."

Council's decision came after it failed to approve the budget at a regular meeting on March 29th. After first reaffirming in principle support for CKDU AM, councillors balked at passing a budget that would have necessitated an increase in student union fees of \$13.50. The budget was tabled, and the meeting recessed to last Sunday. Members were urged to talk to their constituents.

At Sunday's meeting, representatives from Shirref Hall, Health Professions, and Commerce came out against CKDU funding. Marie Gilkinson, Health Professions rep. said she talked to her constituents at a meeting, and asked them which departments should be cut. "I mentioned several options, but the overwhelming consensus was to cut CKDU," she said.

CKDU station manager Mike Wile

voiced criticism of Council's decision, saying he didn't think that people looked at the recent referendum vote against funding CKDU FM as a no vote for CKDU in general. He mentioned that CKDU hadn't asked for extra money, but did take the vote as a sign that they should talk more to students about programming and look more closely at financial arrangements for FM.

Wile added that an estimate of the costs for CKDU expansion put before Council was exaggerated. CKDU had brought in Norman Leadbetter from St.F.X., who told council that the \$23,000 figure provided by technical services wasn't necessary, and that the work could be done much cheaper. (Leadbetter is reportedly suing Owen for \$25,000 referring to him as "an asshole" during Sunday's meeting.)

"A lot of people are prepared not to see CKDU go down the drain," Wile said, and added that messages from several community groups, CBC freelancers, and the mayor of Halifax have been received at CKDU supporting the station.

A Gazette spot poll in the SUB revealed widespread support for the station, but some concern that its programming could be better tailored to students' wishes. "The cost of tuition is so high" one student said, "and a few dollars more won't make any difference."

Communications Committee recommended

by Paul Clark

The permanent establishment of a communications committee is the major recommendation in a report on communications which was passed at Sunday's council meeting.

This committee would both act as a "watchdog" on Dalhousie Student Union (D.S.U.) communications as well as supply people to speak on different areas on campus, according to Peter Rans, chairman of the committee which wrote the report.

Other recommendations in the report include appointment of a Public Relations Officer to disseminate information regarding Council and DSU business, a logo for DSU communications, better distribution of DSU information at registration through mailings and booths, more mobility in the location of council meetings and a referendum day to serve as a "safety valve" for student concerns not addressed by Council.

It will be the responsibility of next year's council to implement these recommendations at their discretion with the \$3,000 that has been budgeted them for communications.

Although the report said that the success of Union communications "may well be the single most important facet of the future effectiveness of the Dalhousie Student Union", it was passed quickly with only minimal discussion at the meeting.

Rans said he was disappointed the

report didn't receive more attention, but recognized councillors were "emotionally and physically exhausted" from the prior CKDU debate.

On the subject of CKDU the report had surprisingly little to say, merely recognizing the potential effectiveness of the station in the way of communications but claiming with weakened transmissions to residences its effectiveness had declined considerably in the last two years.

Rans said while he personally wished to emphasize the potential value of CKDU as a communications medium, differing opinions among individual members of the committee on CKDU expansion required that only general references to CKDU be in the report.

Other media reviewed were the Gazette (an appendix on Gazette operations and policy was also in the report), posters and banners, council reps, the president and vice-president and the student handbook. Rans said that Student Union communications reports since 1973 were consulted and that in-depth interviews were done with various individuals presently or in the past active with the Student Union. Because their ad hoc committee was formed only a month ago, Rans said they were rushed and had to work on a very tight schedule.

Rans said he didn't see the report as an exhaustive study of its subject, but the first step in a continuing evaluation of communications. "I don't want it to

be five years until the next one is set up."

Student Union President Gord Owen, who proposed the study be undertaken, said the recommendations were good but perhaps didn't go far enough.

"I wanted some kind of magical solution to this huge problem," he commented, adding he was "congratulatory" to the committee for the results it did obtain.

Fee hike only item on agenda — so far

A proposed six dollar hike in Student Union fees is so far the only item on the agenda for Monday's General Meeting of the Student Union, but the issue of financing to CKDU is expected to come up.

The fee increases which have been recommended by Council require ratification by a General Meeting where all students have voting rights. They include \$3 more to pay for the Health Plan, an added 50¢ for the Yearbook and a \$2.50 increase for General Revenue.

Nothing regarding the financing of CKDU's funding is presently on the agenda, but Station Manager Mike Wile says a motion of some kind about CKDU's budget will be made. Such an amendment to the agenda would have

to be passed by a two thirds majority. Motions regarding financial matters cannot be made at a General Meeting,

according to Council Chairperson Steve Campbell's interpretation of the Student Union constitution, but a motion forcing Council to reconsider withdrawing funding to CKDU is possible. This motion is not binding on council, however, and can be overturned by a simple majority.

"But it would at least force them to debate the issue," he said.

Failure of the student fee increases to be ratified will send the budget back to Council for reconsideration. If fee increases are again necessary they will have to be passed at yet another General Meeting.

