

Confusion over figures

by Heather Hueston

"At issue are salaries" is how some news reports close their stories on the seven day old Dalhousie faculty strike.

But there are two different issues at stake. One is the amount of money each side says a contract demanded by the Dalhousie Faculty Association will cost. The other issue is whether the university administration actually needs more government funding to meet this settlement.

DFA president David Williams states that Dalhousie has enough money now to make a settlement. "There is no 'bottom line'. They make it up," said Williams referring to Board of Governors' claims of inability to pay.

Premier John Buchanan stated Tuesday that the government would not transfer more funds to the university. Buchanan told the Halifax Chronicle-Herald that Dalhousie receives the "lion's share" of Nova Scotia university funds, which is the largest per capital (per total population) in Canada.

Royden Trainor, interim chair of the Students Union of Nova Scotia, said Buchanan cannot absolve himself of the responsibility. Trainor said the premier had not fought hard enough

against cuts made by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney to federal transfer payments for education. Trainor added that per student funding in Nova Scotia is the lowest in Canada.

The administration says that DFA demands would cost the university an extra 25 per cent to its faculty salary budget over the next two years. Included in this estimate is wage comparability for female DFA members, something the DFA says should have been settled long before the contract negotiating began.

DFA spokesperson Caroline Savoy said COLA, scale, Blue Cross and CDI adds up to about 9 per cent in the first year and 7 in the second.

In a press release dated November 7, the DFA outlined the nature of its salary demands. The major demand is for a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to be included in the agreement. (In an October 27 release, the DFA cited 13 Ontario universities whose 1988/89 settlements were at least 4 per cent. They also published the contract won by Saint Mary's University faculty giving increases of six, five and five per cent over three years.) The DFA is asking for scale which would raise the minima and maxima of

Continued on page 14



Students joined last Friday's DFA march in a show of solidarity.

Raymond Mah: Dal Photo

DSA strike averted: settlement reached

by Lyssa McKee

The Dalhousie Staff Association (DSA) reached a tentative contract agreement Wednesday after three days of intense conciliation meetings with the Dalhousie administration. The contract is expected to go before the DSA membership on November 21 for ratification.

DSA Executive Director Bette Yetman is confident that the membership will accept the settlement. In the past, she says, "the union has always accepted the negotiating team's agreement. Of course, there are no guarantees."

Yetman was unwilling to divulge the terms of the agreement, explaining that the union would have to be formally notified before the public was informed. Administration negotiator Michael Rougheen was unavailable for comment.

Conciliation began on Monday, and progress was made on several non-monetary issues by 6:30 pm.

The talks resumed Tuesday morning and continued until 5 am Wednesday. At that time the

DSA made its final wage offer, telling the administration that they would accept the total pack-

age if the wage proposal were accepted. The administration's negotiating team adjourned the

meeting in order to consult with the Board of Governors. Talks resumed at 11:30 am, and the DSA's final wage position was met by the Board.

According to Yetman, the main issues at the conciliation table were job security and the wage increase. Though some gains were made in terms of equal pay for work of equal value, the issue of pay equity was not the major concern in the negotiations.

At the same time the agreement was being finalized, many DSA members were marching with the strikers in a pledge of support for the Faculty Association. Yetman explained that the strike has made the staff see how much they have in common with the Faculty. "There is a lot of personal loyalty to the faculty," she said. "It is painful for the staff to see their colleagues on the picket line." The staff is expected to continue supporting the DFA. "I myself will be out there with them," Yetman said.



Photo: Ariella Pahlke