



By STEPHEN KIMBER

After more than an hour of playing "ring around the Dalhousie Gazette" Council last week shelved consideration of the Gazette Committee Report. Council sources indicate that the decision to have the report tabled was made after it became apparent that the report would not get Council approval as it stood.

Bruce Gillis in presenting the report to Council, noted: "The purpose is to improve the Gazette, not enforce legislation upon it, and the most effective way to do this is to have the Gazette make the necessary changes itself". He warned, however, that if major improvements as outlined in the report were not forthcoming, "it should be understood that the question of the editor's competence arises."

Major recommendations to come out of the eleven page report include:

- that the Gazette obtain copies of CAMPUS REPORTER for distribution to staff members.
- that the Gazette adopt the concept of objectivity as "expressed by the commercial press and the wishes of the student body as expressed in the survey taken".

- that the Gazette "recognize the responsibility of the paper to its readers to report news and publish a paper that deals with matters of interest to them".
- that the rigidity of the Gazette budget be relaxed in order to assure that material of interest will be competently reported.

Council Vice-President Pam Etter led off discussion of the report by asking Gillis in his refer-

ence to objectivity wasn't "unnecessarily conservative". Chimed in Science Rep Murray Mac-Cutcheon, "What do you mean by objectivity - say as in the Mail-Star?"

Debate then turned on democracy and structure in the Gazette. Former Editor-In-Chief of the Gazette Kim Cameron explained to Council that democracy is a dialectical relationship and that it "starts at home just like accidents". Present Editor-In-Chief Ken Clare added: "The things you're saying against our type of structure are the same things the Board of Governors use to exclude students from participation, because first and second year students don't know enough about university".

Commerce Rep Neil Sharpam advised Council that he felt the Gazette method of reaching decisions was "commendable" and gave staff members a sense of "identity" with the paper. "All I'm saying," retorted Gillis, "is that first year people don't know anything about newspapers".

Kim Cameron answered Gillis by declaring that decision-making could not be arrived at by structure or authoritarianism. "If you as editor can't convince a first year student that you're right, then you shouldn't be editor, but you must convince him rather than act as an authoritarian. In terms of their relationship among staff, it is based on democracy," he told Council.

When asked if the paper shouldn't be more representative of student interests, Ken Clare commented: "The only way we can be representative is if people of different viewpoints write for us. I

can't write a right-wing article," he added, and then took a shot at Committee Chairman Gillis: "I asked Bruce to write an article for me at the beginning of the year and he hasn't done it yet. That's the trouble with Liberals."

It is impossible to represent student opinion declared Arts Rep and former Gazette staffer Nick Pittas - "By throwing out alternatives, you either mould support or mould opposition."

Bob Parkin, regional field worker for the Canadian University Press was present to refute many of the Committee's recommendations, telling Council that the book CAMPUS REPORTER, put out by CUP several years ago had been almost disowned by CUP. "It's a nice book, but it was not very useful," he told members.

He also said that CUP papers were beginning to realize that the concept of objectivity was a myth. "The report could have been changed by further references from other University newspapers," he commented. "You want a paper that is doing roughly what the Gazette is doing. A campus paper should be developing a frame of mind that leads one to question why."

The discussion moved in an ever-widening circle and it became apparent that the report would not be accepted as presented. In order to prevent its total defeat, the motion to table was introduced. Commented Council President A. R. Smith after the meeting: "The Gazette's not off the hook yet."



## ACTION at the Dal Law School

By BILL DYER

Law schools have traditionally been viewed by many as staid institutions, more often than not distinct from the community they purport to serve. Recent student activities at the Dalhousie Law School may significantly alter this image. A Law Students' Action Committee has been formed to act on social problems in the community.

General Chairman of the Committee Bruce Preeper, when interviewed by the GAZETTE, said the movement was initiated on the premise that there are a recurring number of social problems in the community surrounding the Law School, and that law students could play a particular role in assisting to alleviate some of them.

"With a conviction that at least some of these social ills are a result of outmoded laws," he said, "and keeping in mind the basic inertia to change inherent in any society, the Committee decided that the most effective role students could play is that of public educators in the broadest sense."

The committee also asserts that there are shortcomings in the present legal aid programme in force in the city of Halifax, not to mention the rest of the province. Thus a secondary objective is to establish contact with other self-help agencies in the community and to ascertain and identify any problems of a legal nature which they may have, and, in proper cases, to refer people either to Legal Aid or to some sympathetic Barrister in the community.

In order to fulfill these functions the Committee

has been divided into four sub-committees, each of which has a distinct function to perform while at the same time they are inter-dependent with the others.

The sub-committee on research is basic to the entire programme. It will investigate the laws in areas such as landlord-tenant relations, health regulations and ordinances of the city of Halifax. This group will also attempt to collect information about the community itself, including, initially, the examination of assessment rolls. Upon completion of research in a particular area, sub-committee chairman Wayne McLeod will be in a position to turn the information over to the other sub-committees for further action.

Preeper also expressed the hope that a pamphlet, using the research committee's findings as a principal source, could be drawn up and distributed to various agencies and individuals in the community. The legislation sub-committee, chaired by Derek Smith, will examine the results of the research group and compare them with findings in other jurisdictions. The sub-committee will then be in a position to suggest ways in which local laws might be improved.

Any recommendations felt to be particularly meritorious will be turned over to the publicity group which is chaired by Mike Carten. This group has been assigned the function of establishing contact with the various communications media and organizations such as service clubs, trade unions, the NSAACP, the office of the Registrar of Credit, etcetera. The task of communicating to the public

information of a responsible nature relates directly to the primary goal of public education, says Preeper.

The case-work sub-committee, chaired by Barbara Penvodic will function, in part, as a "sympathetic listener". Students will rotate on a daily basis, if possible, at the Neighbourhood Centre on Brunswick Street in order to listen to problems on a person-to-person basis. Pertinent legal aspects to any of these problems which might be considered to be of a sufficiently serious nature will be referred either to Legal Aid or to a sympathetic barrister.

Professor Keith Jobson of the Faculty of Law thought it "fantastic" that the first-year class was taking the initiative in the programme.

"Students are citizens; they should get active and do something about community problems," he said. "Although few students take time to push new interests, it would seem to be their duty to promote, publicize, and push for reform. Furthermore", he pointed out, "such programmes can be as effective as organization and a responsible approach will let them be".

Jobson was hopeful that this would mark the beginning of a series of ventures by Law Students into solving community problems.

Four other faculty members will be working with the committee. They are professors John Cavarzan, John Yogis, Cedric Jones, and Arthur Meagher. In addition, several local barristers have offered to be on call if their services are needed.