

Student Housing Society turns down single parents

by Greg Dennis

A motion to allow single parents easier access to living accommodations at Dalhousie's Peter Green Hall was voted down 49-33 last Tuesday by the Halifax Student Housing Society.

"The procedure that currently exists," said Society president Keith MacKay, "allows applications by married students to be handled routinely but single parents' applications must be brought to the attention of the Board. Single parents can gain access. There's a great deal of misunderstanding (on that point)."

Peter Green Hall is a non-profit housing co-operative and its tenants—married Dalhousie students, with or

without children—are members of the Society. Non-tenants can join the society for \$2.

MacKay, a Dalhousie law student and Peter Green resident, said when the Society—formally the Halifax Married Student Co-operative—was incorporated in 1966 "Married" was dropped from the name but the practice remained to only admit those married and living with their spouse.

"Although it was not expressed, it was clear this was the practice," MacKay said. "Peter Green Hall was a facility only for married students."

On June 1, 1971, the Society's board of directors decreed that single parents would be eligible for tenancy but his or her application

would entail "an extraordinary procedure for gaining access"; that is, a review of the application by the eight elected tenant directors, three Dalhousie University appointees and university services director John Graham who collectively represent the Society's Board of Directors.

However, MacKay added that since 1978 no single parent applications have been filed, "although there is a clear invitation to do so."

Katherine MacDonald, a paying member of the Society, says she is interested in finding out the "actual chances" of getting into Peter Green Hall. She thinks the business office may be turning single parents away but has no concrete evidence to back the sentiment.

MacDonald said Roland Hill, the building's manager, told her he was not in favour of single parents because "single parents were a financial risk and their children, obstreperous."

Hill "couldn't vote (at Tuesday's meeting) but he carried weight with the tenants," MacDonald said.

Hill refused to defend himself or comment on the issue.

"I think the reason for voting the motion down was a protection of the status quo," said MacDonald, a third year law student. "The building is working fine so there is no sense in changing policy. The basic arguments were incendiary and several quite offensive. The vote was emotionally based."

MacDonald says she is interested in the issue because she knows how hard it is for single parents to obtain housing in Halifax's south end. She said she was a superintendent at an apartment building some years ago and took in many single parents. "They were ideal tenants. I received 192 cheques and none ever bounced."



Education funding recommendations conflict data in MPHEC report

by Paul Clark

The government's advisory body on higher education has made an excellent case for increased funding for post-secondary education in Nova Scotia, but, paradoxically, this need is not satisfied by its funding recommendations for next year.

This is the reaction of Nova Scotia student politicians to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education (MPHEC) financial plan for 1981-82 which was released last week.

"They go through all of these great arguments for having higher recommendations and then they don't follow them through," said Student Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS) chairperson Loretta Mullen. "I don't understand where they got their actual recommendations from."

In the report the MPHEC recommends a 10.3% increase in funding for higher education in Nova Scotia, the amount it claims is necessary to sustain education programs at their present level in our inflationary times, assuming tuition fees are raised with the cost of living.

Mullen, echoing earlier comments by University of Mount Allison president Guy MacLean, disputed the MPHEC's fiscal calculations, arguing they would mean a decline, not a stabilization, in real funding.

"Dalhousie estimates that if funding is upped 10.3% they will have to raise tuition by 14 or 15% in order to keep going at their present level. That tells you how far off their recommendations are," she said.

But a mere stabilization of funding is not SUNS goals. Universities need better quality programs, said Mullen. Further, she said tuition fees

must be decreased to make university accessible to more students.

Mullen agreed with the MPHEC's statement that universities can play a key role in the economic development of Atlantic Canada, but she questioned how a funding policy which gives higher education a progressively lower priority in the government's budget will accomplish this.

Expenditures on higher education as a percentage of the provincial budget have consistently declined from 6.2% in 1974-75 to 5.3% in 1980-81. During this same period, participation rates in post-secondary education for Nova Scotians between 18 and 24 have declined from 19 to 17%.

Mullen also cast doubts on the objectivity of the MPHEC.

"I think they look at and recognize the situation as well as we do, but somewhere between looking at it, understanding its consequences, and coming up with final recommendations, I almost think they must phone up the provincial government and ask them how much they should recommend."

"They just seem to wimp out before they make recommendations. I question their objectivity."

Mullen also speculated the MPHEC may be worried about protecting its image. "They got embarrassed a few times by the government totally ignoring their recommendations. I don't think they want that to happen this time."

The Council of Maritime Premiers appoints the chairman (now Catherine Wallace) of the MPHEC and fifteen other members.

Two weeks ago Education Minister Terrence Donahoe

publicly announced that it was time for Nova Scotia's universities to tighten their belts and ensure their services are as efficient as possible. He said that in many areas there is a wasteful duplication of programs which can be removed by more cooperation between institutions. University administrators like Dalhousie president Andrew MacKay responded that universities introduced cost-saving measures and cooperation whenever possible. He also said it was senseless to criticize duplication of programs like English which are fundamental to all institutions.

No mention of Donahoe's concerns is contained in the MPHEC's report although several ways universities have cutback are described. Salary increases have been held below those in other regions in Canada, the employee numbers have been reduced, courses have been cut and discretionary expenditures like equipment replacement have been reduced.

The consumer price index has increased 35.3% in the last four years while operating assistances to higher education has increased 32%, according to the report. This anomaly is greater than it appears, however, because price increases for university non-salary expenditures for the Maritimes for the last decade increased at a rate of 3.1% higher than the consumer price index.

The MPHEC report also states that provincial operating grants per student in 1978-79 in the Maritimes were \$422 below the average for the rest of Canada, a gap that has been widening in real terms in the last five years.

Tuition may be up 10%

by Alan Christensen

Tuition costs will be going up for Dal students if the Buchanan government adopts the levels of funding recommended by the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, according to Dalhousie President Andrew McKay.

Although the President was not sure of the exact increase to anticipate, he said that increases of "up to 10%" may be expected. McKay stated that the MPHEC recommendations were "realistic" and that he would not press the government for further increases if it adopts the MPHEC recommendations.

Jeff Champion, Student

Union vice-president, said that this "illustrates the problem with the MPHEC" which he accused of "tailoring" its funding recommendations to what the government wants and not to what institutions really need. He stated that institutions "breathe a sigh of relief" when the government decides to accept MPHEC proposals and thus they do not fight for more funding.

DAGS rep Peter Rans concurred with Champion's view of the MPHEC stating that it has "ceased to be an objective body". Rans further said that Dal President McKay "seems to be doing a dis-service" to students if he does not fight for higher funding for post-secondary education.

And you thought "The Creature That Ate New York" was just a movie

And you thought "The Creature That Ate New York" was just a movie.

The British magazine Undercurrents reports that giant rabbits are plaguing the British Nuclear Industry.

"These dreaded creatures — immune to poison, as big as hares, and bold as brass — are running amok at British Nuclear Fuels Ltd.'s

Capenhurst enrichment plant and at the adjacent Electricity Council Research Center."

The superbunnies are munching on the grass at the disposal site and seem to be thriving on it, the magazine says.

"The only way of getting rid of them is to get in a rifle-toting assassin to carry out a cull every year or two."