

Dalhousie part-timers & TAs are voting again

Negotiators heading back to the table after long absence

BY PAUL MANSFIELD

Dalhousie part-time instructors and teaching assistants are getting a second chance for a strike vote.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) local 3912 responded to demands for the long-awaited results of the first vote, stating that because of inaccurate lists provided by Dalhousie's administration, they cannot confirm whether a majority of their members voted.

Michael Earle, treasurer-secretary for CUPE 3912, said that the voting period was too short and that the new one will give

all of the union's members a chance. In order to be in a legal strike position, at least 50 per cent of the union members must vote.

"We have several teachers that might be from out of town, they might only be teaching one class and they might have missed the chance to vote," he said.

Earle went on to comment on the inaccurate lists, stating CUPE had to either believe its own members or the Dalhousie administration.

"We would have to call the members who are not on the list liars if we went by the lists provided by the Dalhousie administration," Earle said.

However, Dalhousie's administration stated earlier — and still asserts — that the union was given accurate lists.

"We don't know the results [of the first vote], but they said that the strike vote was not completed and

I just found out they were having another," said Michelle Gallant, a Dalhousie spokesperson. "I don't know what degree of support they had but I do know that they are struggling."

Earle said it was the position of the union not to release the results of the first vote. He did say that voter turn-out didn't reach the necessary 50 per cent, but blames the results on inaccurate lists.

"I think it was more than a third, but I really don't know. I can't say for sure without proper lists. It has been the position of this union not to release any numbers until this next vote is completed on Sunday [Mar. 15]."

When asked about the possibility of the union not having a majority of support for a strike, Gallant just shrugged her shoulders.

"It doesn't change our position. With our without a strike vote the

only important thing is getting back to the table. Strike votes are just part of the process and we really only care about a resolution," said Gallant.

The union has already begun the new strike vote. It started on Mar. 9 and will continue until Mar. 15.

CUPE is doing everything it can this time to ensure that everyone votes. Members could have voted at Dalhousie's Student Union Building on Monday, Mar. 9 and Tuesday, Mar. 10. If they missed those days they can vote at CUPE 3912 headquarters in the Coburg Place Professional Centre; and if that isn't a possibility for their members, CUPE officials have said they would arrange for a volunteer to come to any place so that a member may cast his or her secret vote.

If a positive strike vote is obtained on Mar. 16, CUPE members will be in a position to strike after 48 hours.

Gallant thinks that the union's method of obtaining votes is very unique.

"I think it is unusual, but I'm not totally informed about what is required in regards to voting according to the labour laws."

While another vote is taking place, new talks have also begun. The administration and CUPE officials met Mar. 11 and 12 with a provincial conciliator to discuss some new proposals and objectives.

"The key development was the ability to reach an agreement at Saint Mary's and we saw that as an indication that there is clearly some flexibility on the part of the union. There was such a gap between [Dalhousie's] offer and their expectations," said Gallant.

Part-time professors at Saint Mary's University (SMU) voted in favour of accepting a new contract from their administration last Tuesday, Mar. 2. The pay agreement incorporates a differential between a basic rate, a rate for those on a precedence list — which includes all those who have taught at SMU during three of the past five years — and those with five years experience teaching at SMU.

There will be an immediate raise bringing the salaries of present part-time instructors up to \$6,100 for this school year. In 1998, the three categories will see part-timers make between \$6,250 and \$6,600. In 1999, that will increase from \$6,400 to \$6,750. In 1999/2000 a new contract will have to be negotiated which CUPE officials hope will bring SMU part-timers past the \$7,000 per course mark.

The union sees negotiations with Dalhousie's administration as a positive step, but feels there is much left to accomplish.

"We are far from completion, but it is coming together. There certainly has been movement on certain issues regarding part-time instructors, but the teaching assistant [TA] situation is still far from an agreement," Earle said.

Gallant says the real problem with negotiations is that the union has combined part-time instructors with TAs.

"The complicated issue here [at Dalhousie] is that we have part-timers and TAs together in the same union where the other two universities do not even have TAs. They are together in one group, but their circumstances are completely different."

Election expectations

continued from page 1...

students listed a tuition freeze, student loan restructuring and job creation among their major concerns.

But they also had concerns beyond university. Students don't remain students forever, and many are trying to look beyond their current needs.

"Well there's health care. There's education. There's jobs. And there's the balanced budget — but that seems more cosmetic than anything," said Holly Casey, a Theatre student at Dalhousie.

As cosmetic as the issue may appear to some, balancing the budget turned out to be a big concern for a lot of students who don't like the prospect of someday

paying down a debt created by earlier generations.

"I think people in the past have been spoiled, thinking the money

"No party will answer the [People Against Casinos] challenge about VLT machines and casinos. If one did I'd certainly vote for them."

would never end," said Scott Morley, a BSc student at Dalhousie. "The government has to realize, and I think they have, that you have to

run the government like you run your household — you don't spend more money than you take in."

Tania Theriault, a Masters student in International Development at Saint Mary's University, has more specific concerns.

"No party will answer the [People Against Casinos] challenge about VLT machines and casinos," she said. "If one did I'd certainly vote for them."

Students' broad range of concerns show that their vote isn't as cut and dry as it often appears. Promising a tuition freeze may not be enough. And with students representing a significant portion of the voters in the Halifax-Citadel riding, their concerns have to be addressed.

THE GAZETTE CLASSIFIEDS

(THE NEW OLD WAY TO MARKET)

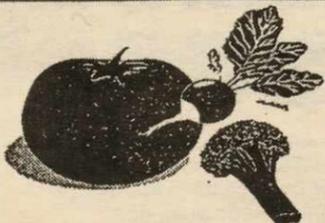
ALEXANDRA'S PIZZA

1263 QUEEN ST., HALIFAX
425-1900



VOTED BEST POUTINE IN METRO!

FREE DELIVERY STARTING AT NOON UNTIL CLOSING ON FOOD ORDERS OVER \$6.00 Not Including Pop & Tax



| | | |
|---------|-------------------|-------|
| Sm. | 9" up to 5 items | 6.70 |
| Med. | 12" up to 5 items | 8.75 |
| Lrg. | 16" up to 5 items | 10.95 |
| Ex Lrg. | 18" up to 5 items | 14.40 |

PARTY PACKS!!

A Large 16" pizza up to 5 items, plus garlic fingers with mozzarella & cheddar cheese, served with donair sauce & 2 Ltr. Pop 15.45

Travel CUTS offers you another exclusive deal!

Fly free to London!

Now, for a limited time, you can fly for free to London when you book a specific Contiki tour. Drop by your nearest Travel CUTS for details.

TRAVEL CUTS VOYAGES CAMPUS

Owned and operated by the Canadian Federation of Students

Contiki is the world's largest tour operator for 18 to 35 year olds.

3rd Floor, SUB
494-2054



Participants must have a valid International Student ID Card (ISIC). Tours must commence by 09 May 1998 and must be paid in full by 31 March 1998. Valid for departures from Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal or Halifax only. Full details available at Travel CUTS.

ANOTHER REWARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

\$750 GM GRAD PROGRAM



FOR DETAILS CALL 1-800-GM-DRIVE or www.gmcanada.com

www.gmcanada.com is a trademark of General Motors Corporation. Graduate rebate subject to program rules.