

Council armed with February referendum on CFS

by C. Ricketts

Arms buildup is becoming a DSU councillor pastime. Councillors are not quite sure why they need a weapon, or what the fight is all about. But they feel safer armed.

The weapon is a referendum next February to decide whether or not Dalhousie will remain a member of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). Dal reps plan to use it at the upcoming CFS national conference starting Nov. 7 to make other delegates at the conference see things Dal's way.

Grad rep Frank Dunn said "(DSU president) Tim Hill's approach will give us more leverage. As he said, it will put a gun to their (CFS') head." A poll of seven other councillors supports this sentiment.

This poll of eight councillors also revealed that only two of them knew more than one problem Dal has with CFS. Two other councillors were unable to name one issue, but all agreed the information was available and

The eight councillors also agreed the average Dal student does not know very much about either CFS or CFS services.

CFS chair Graham Dowdell says Dal has been talking about a pull-out referendum "for quite a while". At last May's national conference in Saskatoon Dal



CFS Chair Graham Dowdell

most said they would take a close look at the issues.

made it clear it would call a referendum unless problems with the organization were addressed.

"It's encouraging they didn't hold a referendum in the fall," said Dowdell. "But saying they're going to have one in Feb. won't have a major effect (on other member institutions). It doesn't pose a whole lot of change."

Hill doesn't see the February pull-out referendum as a threat at the upcoming national conference. "I don't think we've sent a gun-boat to lie off Ottawa," he said.

CFS has "gone some way to addressing concerns" said Hill. Since May's conference in Saskatoon

★the requirement that member institutions of provincial organizations simultaneously belong and pay dues to the national organization was shelved

★a permanent chair has been chosen, and will be ratified at the

upcoming Nov. conference

★the National Provincial Meeting (NPM) was created. Currently it is an ad hoc forum for provincial student organizations to meet with the CFS executive and staff. Dal wants to have the NPM entrenched as a regular meeting. (CFS national conferences are meetings of individual institutions.)

★CFS staff had their first staff review at a Central Committee meeting in August.

Dowdell said Dal played "a pivotal role" in CFS' movement on these concerns. "Their analysis will be very important at this conference," he said.

Hill said problems still exist with communications between Dal and CFS. "If CFS is to become a national movement - and it's not now - Nova Scotia should have access to services and have their voice heard," he said.

Dowdell agrees, but said a

measure of blame falls to the provincial reps to the Central Committee who were ineffective in liaising between the two organizations. "I'm frustrated with the situation. A lot of problems stem from the person. But I am impressed with Caroline Zayid (the current CC rep)."



Dalhousie VP External

Plotting or planning?

by C. Ricketts

Remembrance day may come two days early for the Hart-Butler property if a rezoning application by United Equities is approved Nov. 9.

United Equities' proposal would have the current medium-density residential and university zoned land rezoned to accommodate high density residential development. The company wants to build two luxury condominium towers on the site.

In addition, United Equities proposes amendments to the Municipal Development Strategy (MDS - formerly the Municipal Development Plan) to allow their proposed project to exceed height precincts established by the plan to minimize wind and shadowing effects on the Public Gardens and provide for construction on the site to proceed on a contract development basis.

Proceeding on a "contract development basis" means contracting with the municipality to mutually acceptable conditions. Construction is expected to follow a defined time schedule and proceeds along certain guidelines.

Apart from possible ecological damage to the Public Gardens and changing the context in which they sit by tearing down the Summer Street row houses and the Hart House on the corner of Spring Garden Road and Summer Street, there are potentially more serious ramifications.

Changes made to the provincial Planning Act in last spring's sitting of the legislature may mean the City of Halifax will lose a great deal of input into how development will proceed. The bill created a Municipal Board to

which developers can appeal if they and the City cannot agree on how a particular project should be completed.

"Before the onus was on the developer to prove its project complied with the MDS," said Richard Matthews, Director of Planning for Halifax. He said a complementary burden now lay with the municipality to object to the development only because it does not comply with the letter of existing regulations.

Formerly, the City's decision was final and unappealable.

Mark Laing, a graduate architect student at the Technical University of Nova Scotia, said if the United Equities proposed amendment goes through and they are permitted to build the condominiums anything part of their project will be successfully appealed. "The MDS is being tai-



lored to fit this specific development proposal," he said.

J. Keith Allen, chief executive officer for United Equities, is resolute on the tower concept for the site. "If the city planning staff were to indicate something was wrong we'd change our prop-

osal." He considers United Equities is using the best possible plan.

Nearly 8,000 Haligonians disagree. They've signed a petition opposing the high-rise condominium concept.

Said Charlotte Lingren, co-

ordinator for the Friends of the Gardens, "We're not anti-development."

Adds Laing, "There is a way to have medium-rise high density development which would better fit the MDS."

The rezoning application will be heard Nov. 9.

Conflicting council interests call for correction

by Ralph English

What happens when the employer becomes the employee of the employ? Conflict of interest.

Dalhousie student council rejected a motion barring council members from employment on the student union staff. An ad hoc committee will be appointed this week to study the conflict of interest issue in a more systematic fashion.

The nearly unanimous decision was made at the October 30 council meeting. But despite its defeat the motion has already had an impact.

Shawn Houlihan, chair of the

Employment Resolutions Committee, explained the conflict of interest issue to the councillors in question and asked that they voluntarily accept alternative employment. Two accepted offers of lower paying jobs with Dal Security.

Law rep Pam Reardon called Houlihan's actions "presumptuous." But Houlihan disagrees. He says councillors can think for themselves, and if they disagree they have a voice on council. But a motion was passed giving high priority to the rehiring of affected councillors.

Conflict of interest problems could, and have, included:

- Patronage. Councillors might obtain jobs for themselves.
- Council controls the hiring, firing and wage rate of the DSU staff. This could lead to undue influence by councillors or preferential treatment for them.
- Council/staff members have brought management issues to council circumventing appropriate channels or creating problems for staff supervisors.

All councillors agree in principle with the setting of conflict of interest guidelines. But Frank Dunn, president of the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) staff society, criticized the motion put forward by the Employment

Resolutions Committee.

Dunn argues that the DSU constitution guarantees all of its members full rights. He says this should include the right to have their applications for employment considered.

Some honoraria positions also compromise councillors, says Dunn. For example, the chairs of the Orientation and Winter Carnival Committees. Such positions could place a councillor/employee in the position of being both boss over, and employee under, a given supervisor, he notes.

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