



IFC president Mike Dunn (far left) celebrates with friends during kick-off party in their bid for a seat on council. Photo by Russ Adams/Dal Photo

## Sex keeps IFC out

By TOBY SANGER

A recent Judicial Board decision has ruled the Interfraternity Council promotes discrimination based on sex and therefore contravenes the DSU constitution.

The constitution further prohibits discrimination — or the promotion of discrimination — based on race, colour, sexual or political orientation, ethnic origin, or national origin — a clause which could also outlaw many of the cultural and religious groups on campus.

The decision, which is binding on the student council, ruled that the IFC's bid for a seat on council is unconstitutional but did not recommend the IFC — an umbrella organization of fraternities and sororities — or other groups be denied society status by the DSU.

Instead, the report suggested the constitution be amended to allow these groups to maintain society status under the jurisdiction of the DSU.

At its meeting last week, council referred to the matter to its constitution committee to recommend necessary changes.

One member of the three person judicial board disagreed with the majority report.

Chair Glen Johnson says the membership qualifications of the fraternities exist primarily to define the group, rather than to exclude certain groups from the organization. Hence, he says, the fraternities are not discriminatory but instead facilitate a bonding process which helps to create a "community of communities" at Dalhousie.

Johnson maintains "the reasoning underlying the decision indicates that the DSU must withdraw its recognition from any society whose membership requirements contravene" the constitution. He says the International Student's Association and the Dalhousie Gazette could fall into this category.

But law student Caroline

Zayid, one of the two people who made representations to the judicial board, disagrees with Johnson's reasoning.

She says fraternities are different from religious, cultural, and women's groups which need membership qualifications.

"Nothing distinguishes fraternities except that they're a social club."

Dalhousie Women's Alternative member Alison Brewin agrees: "disadvantaged groups should be allowed to share common experiences . . . but (fraternities) in themselves are perpetrating discrimination by excluding certain people."

Interfraternity council president Mike Dunn claims fraternities at Dalhousie haven't even had a chance to practice discrimination. "There's been no documented cases of females being refused entry into male fraternities. There hasn't been a call for co-ed fraternities."

He says it's not impossible for Dalhousie chapters to change their constitutions but it must be done at the international conventions of the fraternities.

Despite the setback, Dunn says the fraternities will continue to push for more representation and influence at Dalhousie.

"A number of fraternity people are running for council (and) we're going to lobby all the candidates."

In an effort to get the constitution changed to allow fraternities, Dunn says they'll be lobbying the constitution committee and student council.

Dunn also revealed that "we're looking at getting an appointed faculty alumni advisor" with strong connections to the fraternities.

"We want someone to represent our needs to the administration . . . we'd like to have our interests looked after," explains Dunn.

Dunn says closer ties with fraternities could increase school spirit at Dalhousie as well as

## MPHEC

# Ignored but not abolished

By ELEANOR BROWN

The Nova Scotia government's seeming lack of interest in the recommendations of the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission has prompted rumours of an impending pull-out.

The regional board, created in 1974 to advise the Council of Maritime Premiers on post-secondary education funding levels, has come under heavy fire in the past few months. Critics have accused the MPHEC of counselling what board members think they can get away with rather than what universities really need to survive.

The MPHEC released its 1987-88 financial plans January 20. The report suggests a total funding hike of 6.5 per cent. That figure includes four per cent increase to maintain current levels of activity, one per cent in

'catch-up' funds, 0.5 per cent in equalization payments for poorer universities, and 0.7 per cent more for program expansion.

The 19-member Association of Atlantic Universities had requested 7.8 per cent in order to maintain the status quo.

Nova Scotia ignored the MPHEC's recommended 5.8 per cent increase for 1986-87. The actual over-all increase in the Maritimes this year totalled 3.6 per cent.

But that doesn't mean the organization is doomed, according to N.S. Education Minister Tom McInnis.

He pooh-poohs the dismantling of the MPHEC. "I don't think we'll pull out at all," he said. "It has to be strengthened . . . I rather suspect it will be there for a while."

But McInnis won't give any hints about what's in store.

And if MPHEC acting-chair Larry Durling knows, he's not letting on. Durling said that although Nova Scotia hasn't followed the advisory council's recommendations in the recent past, the province isn't ignoring the commission.

Says Durling, "The commission is a creature of the three governments. The role it plays is dependent on its master. The Nova Scotia government hasn't accepted any recommendations, but it has paid attention."

McInnis said whether to follow along with the MPHEC's report must be based on the economy. He said that although the 6.5 per cent hike may be realistic, it's too high for today's budget-conscious world. A decision will be announced this month.

Ken Ozmon, chair of the AAU, pegs Nova Scotia's acceptance of the report as improbable. But New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are likely to follow through, he added.

The AAU attacked the MPHEC in a brief presented to the commission last November.

"The MPHEC has, to a large extent, assumed the role of governments by recommending funding levels based on its perception of what governments might be willing to approve rather than on the real needs of universities," the study states.

Durling says that isn't true. "I think the difference between the AAU's and the commission's perspective is the definition of need."

Continues Durling: "It's not a matter of the commission modifying its advice for governments to accept — but what's reasonable in current economic circumstances."

The base increase, Durling said, was not calculated according to how much universities

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