



Farmer Howard Dill presents the latest lifestyle for pumpkins. Pictured is Doris Pumpkin, a single mother, with her children (L-R) Bob, Biff, Barb, Brian and Bingo. Mrs. Pumpkin is suing Mr. Ted Pumpkin for deserting the family for a zucchini in St. John's.

Photo: Ellen D. McKenzie, Dal Photo

Disabled people face unique problems

By CAROLYN SAUNDERS

Paul Gouett does not open his own mail. He doesn't balance his chequebook, or even scratch his own head when it is itchy. Gouett is in a wheelchair, a victim of multiple sclerosis. He has only limited use of his arms, so he must rely on others to do these things for him.

The former high school teacher lives in an apartment on the campus of St. Mary's University in Halifax, which he shares with a different student every year. In return for free rent and some spending money, the student performs those duties for Gouett that most people take for granted.

Despite the difficulties of living independently, Gouett is determined to stay in his own apartment, as he has since he was first confined to a wheelchair in 1977.

"If I really needed it, I would go to an institution," he says. "If I had a million choices, that would be the last one."

Donald Curren, recently retired Executive Director of the Canadian Paraplegic Association's Nova Scotia division, says that independent living takes both money and hard work. Still, most disabled people prefer it to institutionalization.

"We're not talking about the 60- or 70-year-old who's had a stroke nearly as much as the 18-year-old who's dragged out of a car or the 22-year-old who's pulled out of a lake with a broken neck," says Curren.

The major obstacle to living independently, says Gouett, is finding and paying for an attendant to look after daily tasks, which may range from bathing and other per-

sonal care to preparing meals.

The amount of care needed varies with the degree of the disability, says Curren. Attendants are not recognized as an occupational group, so there is no basic training course available for them, Curren says.

Curren suggests the government could assist in the training of attendants by offering a training course at the Nova Scotia Institute of Technology.

Community care workers in the Department of Social Services' Homemakers Program are trained at NSIT, which has a close working relationship with the government.

According to Gouett, the homemakers program is a good one, but it is geared more to the needs of the elderly than those of the disabled.

The government could help by

providing for the expenses of living independently and paying for attendants, says Gouett. Although he receives funding from the federal, provincial and municipal governments, Gouett is still existing below the poverty level.

He manages by eating less and paying low rent because he lives in a university residence. A brother in the food service industry often provides him with food, and he writes to companies that offer free samples.

The major worries are sometimes lost in the difficulties faced by Gouett day to day. He is an accomplished writer, whose work has been used by *Atlantic Advocate* and CBC Radio, but he has difficulty putting his words on paper since he lost the use of his arms.

The alternatives to typing, such as a computerized voice operated typewriter, are expensive, so he must rely on a friend who types while he dictates. Gouett calls her "my accompanist on the typewriter."

Gouett is fighting a whole range of obstacles so he can stay in his apartment and remain independent.

"You can stagnate so easily. You can't let your life die, as it often does in an institution." □

Noam Chomsky speaks

In accordance with Remembrance Day, 1984, there will be a public lecture entitled "The Question of Peace" to be delivered by Dr. Noam Chomsky on Monday, Nov. 12, 1984. This lecture will begin at 8:00 p.m. and will be held in the Theatre Auditorium, McNally Building (Main Administration Building), Saint Mary's University, Halifax.

Dr. Chomsky is a longtime political activist, a writer and a professor of linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts. He is the author of many books and articles on United States foreign policy, international affairs and human rights including his most recent book, *Toward a New Cold War* and the two-volume work, *The Political Economy of Human Rights*.

This is Dr. Chomsky's first visit to Halifax, and it is a unique opportunity to share his views on world peace immediately following the 1984 U.S. elections.

A reception will follow Dr. Chomsky's lecture. He will also be speaking at the Weldon Law Building, Dalhousie University on Tuesday, Nov. 13 at 12:00 noon. His lecture will be on the situation in Indonesia and East Timor.

Dr. Chomsky's visit to Halifax has been made possible by the Speakers Committee of the Dalhousie Law School and the Sociology Department of Saint Mary's University.

Conference

Lagos Plan of Action

By DORAH KITABURAZA

"It is a very difficult situation . . . to be in a position of begging for food when in fact Africa is not a poor continent . . . Exploitation of African resources has not been done, for example, Africa is rich in natural resources, minerals," said Dr. Robert Ouko.

Ouko, the Kenyan Minister of labour, was participating in the Lagos Plan of Action conference at Dalhousie last week. The conference was sponsored by the Economic Community for Africa and Dalhousie University.

African heads of state met in Lagos in 1980 following their concern over the slow rate of development of the African countries in economic and other fields. Following the contracted discussion at different levels, by different sets of ministers, the Lagos Plan of Action came into being. The plan takes a comprehensive view of the fields of food and agriculture; human and natural resources; industrial development, science and technology; transport and communication; trade and finance, which are the problems of the least developed countries in Africa.

With respect to the drought

situations in Ethiopia, Ouko says he is grateful to Canada, Britain and other countries that have volunteered to assist Ethiopia.

"Other African countries that have food surplus have extended this gesture . . . but out of 50 African countries are facing drought . . . We are all beginning to take into account the possibility of failure of rain . . . In line with the Lagos Plan of Action, we have a very comprehensive policy with which our efforts will be directed the problem of food production, storage and distribution to Africa."

All African countries are involved in the Lagos Plan of Action. The heads of state had pledged their commitment to the Lagos Plan of Action pledge. The only difference is that there is no super-national authority to impose its wishes on the other states. Each member state has a right and duty of implementing the guidelines of development in the Lagos Plan of Action. It is a guideline of their own making, so all countries are bound by it. They have to take measures which are clearly outlined in the plan in order to fulfil their component of the continental improvement. □

Amnesty International focuses attention on China

By WENDY COOMBER

Lobsang Chodag, a worker in a truck-repair shop in Lhasa, was arrested in 1980 accused of putting up political wall-posters in the streets: he is reported to have been brutally treated shortly after his arrest and his jaw broken.

Amnesty International examines human rights abuses in China in their latest 136-page report, *China: violations of human rights*. The organization, which works to free political prisoners, says it is concerned about the imprisonment of prisoners of conscience and the extensive use of the death penalty in the People's Republic of China.

Beginning in 1979, China has adopted a number of laws trying to put an end to the "lawlessness" which existed during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). While the new legislation provides in principle greater protection for human rights, it also contains provisions which are used to imprison people for the peaceful exercise of their rights.

Most of these are included in a section of the Criminal Law dealing with "counter-revolutionary" offences. Articles 98 and 102 deal with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation," organizing or taking part in a "counter-revolutionary group", and incitement "to resist arrest and violate the law and statutes of the State."

Peggy Matthews is a founder of Amnesty International's Halifax

chapter. The group began ten years ago and now has close to 140 members.

Matthews says the group's two adopted prisoners of conscience have just been released. They are waiting for the International Secretariat in London to assign two more to them.

One of the men they helped release was Chilean. The other, Ahmed Habchi, was a teacher in Morocco. Both had been in prison close to ten years.

The Halifax group, says Matthews, had sent letters to Habchi's government since 1974, asking for his release. One particular problem, however, about writing to the Moroccan government, says Matthews, is that you have to write in French.

Habchi was released from prison this year as part of an annual gesture of Morocco's king Hassan II. In an effort to be a little more democratic, says Matthews, the king frees certain political prisoners each year on his birthday.

The Halifax chapter of AI was active during last month's Prisoner of Conscience Week. This month they are concentrating on Chinese prisoners of conscience, particularly Fu Yeuhua. Yeuhua is a 37 year old Chinese woman imprisoned for organizing peasant demonstrations against poverty in Beijing (Peking).

For more information about Fu Yeuhua or Amnesty International in Halifax, call Jim Lacey, 445-4323. □