

No nukes is good nukes

Peace groups celebrate NATO with protests

by Sandy Mackay

"Is the cold war over? With the dramatic initiatives in arms control that have taken place since the Gorbachev era, and with the European Economic Community's move towards a common market, some Canadians believe that it is, and have begun to question the future of one of the world's most permanent alliances

— NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."

The member groups of the Canadian Peace Alliance, along with Native Solidarity and other groups have planned a series of rallies and press conferences to help celebrate NATO's 40th anniversary.

The first rally will be held on April 5th, at noon in the Grand

Parade. This will be part of an international campaign to protest "low level" test flights begun conducted by NATO. The aim of a "low-level" flight is to avoid radar, the terrain at the test sites is similar to Russian landscape. Furthermore, the tests are conducted above environmentally fragile Native lands. These aggressive tests are being pro-

tested by Native Rights groups, the Peace Alliance and environmental groups.

On April 6th, there will be a press conference aboard the tour boat White Heather. It will leave the Bluenose wharf at 1:30pm to tour the NATO standing fleet, which will start to congregate in Halifax earlier in the week. The NATO standing fleet is com-

prised of seven warships: likely the American and possibly the British and French ships will be carrying nuclear weapons. (The Canadian government claims that there are "no nuclear weapons in our country".)

On Saturday April 8th and Sunday April 9th, tours are available to at least one of the warships in the NATO standing fleet.

In recognition of NATO's 40th anniversary, Dalhousie University's Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Maritime Command, and the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Halifax Branch, have organized a one-day conference, "NATO: A Maritime Alliance," to take place on Thursday, April 6 in the Canadian Forces Maritime Warfare Centre, Canadian Forces Base, Halifax.

Canadian Maritime links with Europe have been fundamental to our national identity and independence. The conference will examine the evolution of NATO, focussing on its maritime nature, and will assess the alliance from both political and strategic perspectives. It will also consider some of the challenges facing the alliance and will discuss future courses for its maritime dimension.

The Challenge... is when the rent comes due

VANCOUVER (CUP) — Women hired through the federal government's summer job program are in for a nasty surprise when they compare paycheques with their male co-workers.

The average hourly wage for men under the Challenge, an annual federal youth employment program that subsidizes employers, was \$5.70 compared to \$5.20 for women, according to employment and immigration statistics.

Women account for more than half of the young people hired through the program.

Although the federal government has an employment equity program that ensures equal participation of women, disabled people, natives and visible minorities, pay equity isn't assured.

"We can only encourage the employers to pay equally," said Noreen Campbell, co-ordinator of the program in B.C. "The problem is when we approve a job, it's not designated for male or female."

Canadian Federation of Students Pacific Region chair Pam Frache wants the ministry to act on the inequalities now. "It's been an issue for two years and they don't do anything. They should be made to answer for that," she said.

Frache said the problem goes beyond the Challenge program and cites a study by University of Victoria sociology professor Roy Watson which showed women students in general suffer from lower wages and higher debts.

"Women are half as likely to find a job that will earn enough

to get them through school. And they are twice as likely to have to borrow money," said Frache. "It's crushing women with debts."

The average gross income from the Challenge program last summer was \$2,193, according to CFS. University students in Canada are paying over \$6,000 for one year of schooling.

Campbell said the ministry "promotes the concept (of pay equity)" when they talk to potential Challenge employers and said the issue is "something we'll be bringing to the attention of the staff."

The Tories announced an overall increase in the Challenge '89 program in January, but re-directed it to high school students. The result is a loss of \$8

million worth of summer jobs for university and college students.

Charest's announcement included \$31.3 million allotted to New Brunswick and Newfoundland for special five-year employment programs for youths making the transition from school to work — negotiated last fall. Taking this into account, spending is actually down by \$12.3 million from last year's \$180 million.

Statistics Canada pegs unemployment for 1988 at 7.8 per cent. The jobless rate for those between the ages of 20 and 24 is 11.2 per cent. That number is 25.2 for Newfoundland and 18 per cent in New Brunswick — the two provinces with separate agreements. And unemployment among 15- to 19-year-olds is 13.2 per cent.

Natives

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which have seen large participation rates for native people but a low graduation rate.

"We're trying to tighten up the program to encourage students to complete the program," said Campbell.

Campbell said some bands which administer the program themselves have even been more strict in ensuring students complete the program. "When you give bands control, they tend to take the same approach," she said.

As for funding, Campbell said, "We feel it meets current needs. We think we have enough funds to meet the needs."

But Scow said the participation rates of native people — those accepted to post-secondary institutions — is rising 16 per cent, while the budget is rising only by 10.

With less than 10 days left before the changes are imposed, native students across the country took action:

- In Halifax, close to 150 supporters crowded into the Dalhousie University student union building. During the 20-minute gathering, a traditional MicMac drumming and chanting ceremony was held. MicMac Friendship Centre director and elder Noel Knockwood conducted a sweetgrass ceremony and said a prayer. The group then marched to downtown Halifax. The chair of the provincial lobby group the Students Union of Nova Scotia made an appearance.

According to activist Maureen Googoo, about 140 Nova Scotia students will be affected by the changes.

- In Ottawa, 600 to 1,000 marched two kilometres to Parliament Hill, waving placards for two hours before meeting back at a gathering of the Assembly of First Nations.

- In Thunder Bay, 200 demonstrators from area high schools, Lakehead University and Confederation College were stopped from entering the federal Indian Affairs department office building by police. Seven did get in, and planned a liquids-only fast. But management asked the seven to leave at closing time. They did.

The protest mirrored a week-long hunger strike in October held in the office building;

- According to Indian Affairs official Ken Williams, about 1,000 anti-capping protestors stood outside of Canada Place, a plaza housing most federal offices in Edmonton. Williams said he was informed that 150 to 200 people rallied in Calgary. Demonstrations were also held in Lethbridge and Winnipeg;

- Over 150 picketers staged a peaceful, five-hour demonstration at the Indian Affairs office in Saskatoon. The change will directly affect 50 students at the U of Saskatchewan. In Regina, over 100 stood outside the legislature. The largest demo took place in Prince Albert where 500 picketed the city's Indian Affairs office;

- Over 300 people, bussed in from Kamloops (300 miles away) and Squamish rallied in downtown Vancouver. Noted geneticist and University of British Columbia professor David Suzuki spoke. Protestors also gathered in the northern B.C. town of Terrace.

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