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B-GLAD shuns request for financial records

BY ANDREW SIMPSON

The Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) Council has directed Treasurer Bret Leech to seize the financial records of the Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Association of Dalhousie (B-GLAD).

On Nov. 28, 1995, the Finance Committee announced its intention to audit five separate 'A' societies. The financial records of B-GLAD, Dalhousie Christian Fellowship, Frontier College, the Gazette, and Judo were all

requested.

B-GLAD is the only society that has yet to submit its records.

Josef Tratnik, B-GLAD Chair and council representative, has not been present at a council meeting since the Finance Committee requested B-GLAD's financial records.

"I have spoken to Joe, sent them [B-GLAD] one hand-written letter, three official letters, and council has now asked me to seize their books," said Leech. "There is really no way for me to physi-

Society claims records are missing

cally seize the books, but I think what council meant is that I should continue pursuing the matter."

Tratnik explained that both B-GLAD and its financial records are in disarray.

"When I returned this September, I found our office had been used by other people, and I'd say anywhere between \$1,000 and

\$2,000 worth of stuff was missing," said Tratnik.

Tratnik claimed that among the missing articles were B-GLAD's ledger and most of their receipts.

"I never got around to investigating B-GLAD's finances; it's just something I've been putting off," said Tratnik. "It will get done, but I don't know if I can account for

all of the money because of what is missing."

Societies are expected to record how they spend the money they are granted, but there are very few ways to keep them accountable, said Leech.

"We have tried to bring order to the process and make the societies more responsible, even before they receive their funds," said Leech.

Leech explained that every organization requesting funding must apply for a grant. The application is reviewed by a Grants Committee, which then makes recommendations to Council. Council then votes on the committee's recommendations.

Societies now receive their grants in two instalments, one in each term. The second instalment can be withheld until the society can provide its financial records for monies spent in the first term.

In 1994/95, B-GLAD applied for \$5,000 and was granted \$3,004.64.

The first term's instalment has been accounted for, but the spending of the funds granted in the second term — about \$1,000 — has yet to be explained.

"Joe was on the Grants Committee and was a councillor last year. He should know how all this works," said Leech. "A lot of people think an audit is scary, but it's just a matter of verifying what you've done."

Leech said Council has several options should B-GLAD continue to withhold their records, but he wanted to discuss future procedures with council before making them public.

In a related issue, council has voted to stop paying B-GLAD's phone bill, but Tratnik said he was going to tell council to have it unhooked anyway.

"B-GLAD isn't really active this semester; nobody was coming to the meetings," said Tratnik. "Because of a full load of classes and the problems in September, I'm not really involved anymore... maybe someone else will pick it up again next year."

B-GLAD did not apply for a grant this year.

Day of Action inaction

BY JOHN CULLEN

Berkeley in the '60s we ain't.

This was quite apparent in the University of King's College quadrangle this past Wednesday, Feb. 7, as metro Halifax could only muster a handful of supporters for its part in the Nationwide Action Day rally.

The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) and the International Socialists (IS) hosted the demonstration to gain support for the opposition of the new Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST). The CHST amalgamates two previously existing federal government provincial transfer payments, and is expected to result in drastically reduced funding in the social services sector, which includes welfare, health, and post-secondary education.

While King's quadrangle played host to a mere 30 people — half of which were media — the speakers did not seem daunted by the lack of enthusiasm. Stephen Ellis, the IS representative, felt that this was a stepping stone towards forming a cohesive movement against the government's latest tactics to reduce spending.

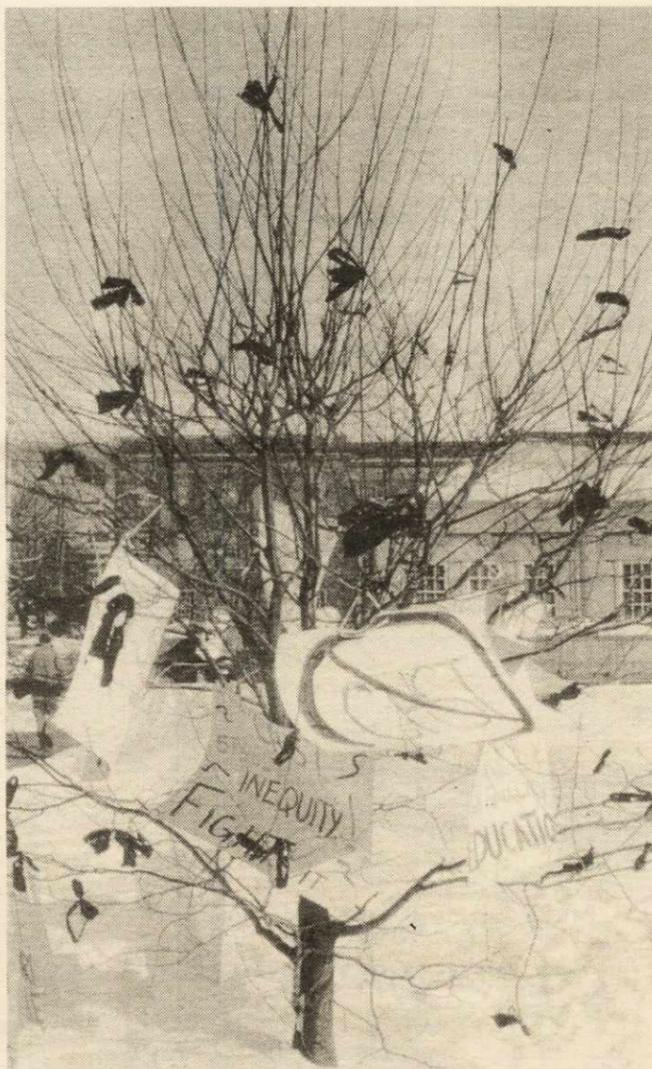
"Numbers aren't as important as getting the message out," he said.

In response to the government's plan, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has published its own budget proposals. Ellis said this framework targets other sources of money rather than cutting back on social services.

"It's basically saying 'look, the money's there if you want it, you just have to have the political will to access it,'" said Ellis.

The alternative budget is aimed at closing 30-35 million dollars worth of tax loopholes and imposing a 'wealth' tax that other countries currently enforce.

The popularity of these rallies seem to be dwindling. Last January, 1,500 Halifax students joined in the protest, while this year's protest was centred around a tree in the quad that had been decorated with black ribbons and posters, some of which read, "Heck, I don't need an education...I can always sell drugs."



GAZETTE PHOTO BY DANIELLE BOUDREAU

Black ribbons mark CFS' message to axe-wielding bureaucrats.

Report calls Ontario justice system racist

BY MICHELA PASQUALI

TORONTO (CUP) — Justice is not blind, according to a recent report on systemic racism in the Ontario criminal justice system.

The report, commissioned in 1992 by the former NDP provincial government, found that blacks and other minorities are more likely to be stopped by police than whites.

The commission also found five times as many black men were sent to prison in 1992-93 than white men, and seven times as many black women were imprisoned than white women.

As well, the report says while whites are jailed at the same rate before trial as after sentencing, black people are imprisoned before trial at twice the rate than after sentencing.

— FEATURE —

While whites are jailed at the same rate before trial as after sentencing, black people are imprisoned before trial at twice the rate than after sentencing.

Phillip Pike, acting executive director of the African Canadian Legal Clinic, says the number of pretrial incarcerations are shocking.

But overall, he says the report's findings are not a great surprise.

"It's really just a confirmation and a quantification," he said. "Many people in the community experienced it or know about it anecdotally."

Peter Brauti, president of the U of T Student Law Association, agrees.

"I don't think that there is anything in the report that's a shocker," he said. "There was no real surprise to it. There are certain groups that receive bail more often than others."

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