

Rethinking development Picking up the pieces in the Caribbean

By RICK JANSON

When the U.S. marines landed in Grenada a year ago, not only did they eliminate the social progress the New Jewel Movement of Maurice Bishop had set in place, but they also seriously set back movements towards progressive social change throughout the Caribbean.

Oct. 25-28 academics and activists from the Caribbean and Atlantic Canada met at St. Mary's University to pick up the pieces and rethink development in the 1980's.

Dale Bisnauth of the Caribbean Council of Churches defined the nature of the problems facing the West Indies and called for a more human approach to development.

"The harsh reality is that despite the volume of Canadian aid to the Caribbean, the region remains as poor and depressed as it was three decades ago."

Bisnauth said that aid too often was tied to political motives on the part of Canada and the U.S. Such political motives include aid that is tied to Canadian contracts and jobs.

The political motives of people like former prime-minister John Diefenbaker—who saw aid as insurance against communism—were no longer acceptable, he said.

"Priority should be given to local, low cost projects" that used the resources found in the region, said Bisnauth. Aid should be targeted to areas where it would help eradicate impoverishment, not to aid the might of totalitarian regimes.

Robert Moore, past high commissioner of Guyana to Ottawa, said that countries in the Caribbean went from being colonies to client states after they gained independence after the second world war.

He said the search since then has been to make the gains of independence benefit the "broad masses of people at the bottom of society." Many West Indian countries have been trying to restructure their societies without the convulsions of the Cuban revolution.

"How dynamic and how far-reaching have those searches been," he said. "The Caribbean has been a kind of laboratory for the third world. It is extremely important for Canadians to look critically and thoughtfully at these mini-societies."

Keri Levitt, a McGill University professor, said "liberation has to be a triumph of politics over economics".

She blames the international banking community for much of the current economic dilemma facing the region.

"There is an intolerable and enormous injustice as greedy finance companies push countries into debt," she said. "There has been a brutal transfer of resources from the third world to rich countries."

In the last two years there has been a net transfer of \$50 billion from Latin American countries to the banks. Living standards of peoples have been slashed. There has been a reduction in real wages and salaries of 25 percent in Mexico in one year. In Jamaica and the Dominican Republic the situation has never been so bad—in some ways it's even worse than the '30's.

Cheddi Jaga, leader of the Guyanese opposition party, said the debt situation sharpened class struggle resulting in regimes building larger armies and using electoral fraud to keep a restless population in line.

"If you try and change they (the U.S.) send in the marines and the CIA. The International Monetary Fund insist you denationalize and put your country on a capitalist course," he said.

In order to win, Jagan says alliances have to be made with the socialist world and peace has to be made with the capitalist world.

"I've seen practically all the third

world leaders in Moscow," said Jagan. "If you don't build alliances you are out in a moment of crisis. Relationships have to be built in advance. It is a fact of our life."

James Petras, of the State University of New York, said there was a cycle of repetition in the Caribbean going back to the 50's and 60's when the U.S. frequently sent in the marines to control what it couldn't otherwise do economically.

Petras says the increased militarization of the region "is closing the options of peaceful social change" and "radicalizing more progressive social movements."

He predicts the economic boom in the U.S. will soon come to an end which will result in an increased effort by Washington to protect its interests.

A prolonged war in Central America involving U.S. troops will strengthen progressive groups elsewhere, in much the same way as Vietnam proved the impetus for social change during the early '70's, predicts Petras.

Development in Atlantic Canada paralleled discussions on the Caribbean. Looking at Atlantic Canada as a marginal region within an economic union, academics also focussed on human development through greater ties among organizations and communities dedicated to social change.

The four day conference was the first of its kind ever held in Canada. As a result resolutions lacked specific proposals for change, although links were made by progressive institutions in both countries. □

UNB council pres dismisses audit

FREDERICTON (CUP)—The student council president at the University of New Brunswick has dismissed a university audit of student union finances as an elaborate smokescreen shrouding the administration's attempt to shut down the union.

The university audit revealed that \$6,000 in "loose cash" was collecting dust in the office of Mark Slipp, student union building director. It found that a \$6,000 unauthorized loan from student union building funds was made to an on-campus youth group and that SUB management failed to draw up operating budgets for the past two years and renegotiate leases which expired in July.

John Bosnitch, council president for the past two and a half years, said the UNB administration ordered the audit to cover up its plans to discredit the union.

"The auditors found what the university wanted them to find," he said. "We aren't going to settle for it. We've called in our own auditors to assess their auditor's findings."

The university board of governors has asked the SUB's interim board of directors—appointed after university president James Downey dissolved the student union board, seized Bosnitch's keys and changed the locks on the SUB doors—to take control of all leases and the student union's bank accounts.

Although the fate of a student owned and operated convenience store in the SUB is uncertain, Bosnitch said the store is doing well. He said the student union planned to introduce a Canadian University Travel Service centre to the campus but the interim board refused to make space available, saying it will only negotiate with existing lessees.

Bosnitch said the students have run the SUB since its opening in 1968 and the administration fears a strong student influence on the SUB's board of directors.

"They are trying to take the student union building away from the students and put it in the hands of the administration," he said.

Bosnitch said the administration is also trying to destroy the student union's influence on campus and end his political career at UNB.

Bosnitch is running for reelection as president in November but faces impeachment proceedings, which he said has happened each fall since he was elected to office.

The board of governors has congratulated Downey for his actions against the student union.

Downey has instructed the interim board of directors to appoint a permanent board by December. Students now have no say in the building's operation. Meetings are closed and minutes kept confidential. □

Dalplex deficit surprises budget office

By ELIZABETH DONOVAN

An unexpected shortfall in revenue for Dalplex and initial confusion over the exact amount has promoted a change in the reporting structure.

Expected revenue for Dalplex fell \$259,876 short of actual revenue. Budgeted revenue was \$1,002,494 and actual revenue was only \$742,618.

"It was a surprise to the budget office that there was a shortfall in revenue," said John Graham, manager of university services.

Graham says the surprise was a result of the lack of communication between the liaison and Dalplex and Budget office.

Reporting structure last year was through the Academic Dean, then to the Budget office. Now the responsibility is turned over to John Graham.

Tony Martin, Acting Director of the Dalplex since June, agrees the problem was miscommunication, but says the communication lines are now open.

"The deficit was allowed to get out of hand, but we are making sure what we set as a target this year we will stick to it."

Geoff Martin, Board of Governors rep, says the decrease in the number of outside memberships and lack of continuity in marketing efforts contributed to the shortfall in Dalplex revenue. □

Dalplex has operated at a deficit every year since it was built in 1979.

Graham says the Dalplex is not expected to make a profit because it is an academic forum for Phys. Ed. students as well as providing recreation for 8,000 students.

At least one professor disagrees.

"If the Board of Governors were expecting Dalplex to operate at a deficit, why did they spend all that money when the faculty already know the library was deteriorating and needed improvements," says Tom Sinclair-Faulkner, Religious Studies prof at Dalhousie.

Geoff Martin says the decision to build Dalplex was made during a time when universities were expanding, both in property and enrolment.

"From an operational point of view the facility was built for 20,000 people. But with government cutbacks in education, the building has become more of a financial burden for the university," he says.

Tony Martin says the Dalplex is going to pare down expenses by charging for services that require a great deal of manpower. Towels and clothing are now no longer covered by membership fees.

Tony Martin says he does not want to increase revenue if it hurts students.

"It is a delicate balance to ensure accessibility to students and revenue to Dalplex," he says. □

Soviets wanted to talk peace, the press wanted to talk money

By MARY ELLEN JONES

Soviet delegates spoke about nuclear war, and the similarities between Soviet and Canadian students at a press conference Oct. 27.

"Peace" delegates from the USSR-Canada society of the Soviet Union arrived in Halifax Oct. 25 to spend eight days with members of the Association of the Atlantic Universities. The objective for this conference is to discuss peace strategies with colleagues from the Atlantic Provinces.

V.I. Dobrenkov, Pro-rector of Moscow State University, said, "All honest people just think of the dangers of nuclear war. Every honest person should do his or her best to improve understanding among nations."

"I am convinced that through a better knowledge of each other we will be able to eliminate these fears and misunderstandings to better understand each other," said Dobrenkov. "It is the responsibility of scholars to make universities work for peace. It is also their responsibility to make young people aware of the lethal dangers of nuclear war."

Dr. V.M. Pivovarov, Head of

the Institute of General Pedagogy at the USSR Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, talked about Russian students.

"The average Russian student wears jeans, is always on the move and occasionally misses university classes," he said.

"There are active newspapers on Russian university campuses and all departments have their special newspapers," said Pivovarov.

Dr. K. Ozmon, president of Saint Mary's University, answered questions about whether money for the conference will be well-spent, saying money was not an issue as far as he was concerned.

There was some concern over the conference not having an exact budget. Ozmon estimated the cost to be \$12,000, not including expenses which individual institutions will fund.

Organizers are enthusiastic about the conference.

"Hopefully, through the course of this conference, we will arrive at an understanding that we didn't have before," said Ozmon. "We are academics, we are not politicians. We don't determine the fate of our country. We have to exert pressure by other means." □