

Nazis on the rise?

MONTREAL (CUP)—A gang of about 20 fascist skinheads assaulted six black, gay and Arab individuals in Montreal on Jan. 12.

Mohammed Achouri, an Arab Montrealer, is recovering from severe bruises and a punctured lung from the attack. Six assailants were arrested and are due to appear in court this week.

The number of racist and homophobic attacks in Montreal has increased in recent months, according to Alain Dufour of Ligue anti-fasciste mondiale (LAM) which compiles statistics on hate crime.

LAM recently disbanded its protection committee which patrolled downtown areas where racist skinhead attacks were feared.

"There had been a balance of power," said Dufour. "Now the Nazis have started patrolling again."

LAM has no plans to re-establish the protection committee as it waits for proposed action by the Montreal police and the Quebec Public Security Ministry.

Last September, then Public Security Minister Sam Elkas promised to develop a proposal for youth crime protection and a provincial committee on intercultural and race relations. No such proposal has been initiated to date.

LGAY status

TORONTO (CUP)—York University took a significant step out of the sexual backwoods last month as its 20-year-old lesbian and gay student group was finally granted official recognition and funding from the central student government.

"It was a pretty tough thing to do," said Dan Mahoney, secretary for the Lesbian and Gay Alliance at York (LGAY). "We had to get through two hearings. The first was very disappointing — we were at the end of the agenda."

At a Dec. 12 meeting, the York Federation of Students finally approved LGAY's request for official service status and granted them \$2,000 in funds for the remainder of the academic year.

LGAY has previously existed as a club and has lacked the resources to adequately serve York's large gay and lesbian communities.

"We need funding and recognition so we can be more visible," said LGAY chair Tina Mongillo. "We don't want to be accepted by everyone, we just want to be visible."

Mongillo said LGAY will use the funds to provide lesbians and gays with social events, support services, liaisons with other campuses, guest speakers, defence against homophobic violence and media materials on homosexual issues.

The Alliance has also been granted a large room in the Student Centre, due to open before the end of this term. This room will probably feature a lounge for lesbian and gay students, a library and a permanent telephone hotline as well as volunteer support staff.

Turtle Island talks

MONTREAL (CUP)—This week, for the first time, Europeans came to Turtle Island to listen — and First Nations told them they have a lot of catching up to do.

Four members of the European Parliament's fact-finding commission arrived in Turtle Island ("North America") on Jan. 13 to investigate First Nations/Canadian relations. The delegates spent two days at Kahnawake, where they heard testimony from over ten First Nations. Most media have reported the delegation's greetings, but ignored the First Nations' messages to the Europeans.

The delegates were invited by the Assembly of First Nations, Ottawa and Quebec in the hope of "gaining another perspective," said Ken Deer, a Kahnawake representative.

The European Parliament formed the commission last fall in response to the crisis at Oka, which raised "a lot of interest in Europe in how Canada copes with its native questions," according to Gijs de Vries, head of the delegation.

Kahnawake representative Francis Boots quickly him: "It's the other way around. It is the First Nations who have had to cope with the invasion of European descendants."

GST credit woes

by Karen Hill

TORONTO (CUP)—While GST refund cheques are acting as a lubricant for the new federal tax, students are still getting screwed.

In order to claim the entire supplementary credit, a person's net income must be between \$11,169 and \$24,800.

Caryn Duncan, researcher for the Canadian Federation of Students, said that proviso effectively excludes most students from claiming a refund.

Every adult is entitled to an annual credit of \$190, and a \$100 supplementary credit is available to single adults maintaining their own household. A person must have a net income of at least \$6,169 to be eligible for the second credit, which doesn't reach its \$100 value until net income hit \$11,169.

"It discriminates against people who live on a very low fixed income, and that includes students," she said. "We think that's a weakness in the system."

According to CFS's brief to a federal senate committee, only 22 per cent of post-secondary students make more than \$10,000 annually. As a result, the majority of Canadian students are ineligible to claim the full supplementary credit.

That was deliberate, said Cheryl Boon, advocacy researcher for the national Anti-Poverty Organization.

"It was intended to exclude students," she said. "We tried to explain [to the government] that not all students are supported by middle-income families."

But according to the government, students making less than \$6,000 are being supported by their parents, and don't need the credit.

"Most students under that level wouldn't be supporting themselves," said Rick Doyon, a Ministry of Finance official [senior communications officer]. "[The government] believes that most students under that level would be supported by their parents."

CFS studies have shown that about half of all Canadian full-time undergraduate students depend on government loans to finance their education.

"Credits are structured to discriminate against particular groups and students happen to be one of them," said Duncan. "[The government] very narrowly defined the groups that they want to receive the credits."

And Barry George, an analyst with the Canadian Council on Social Development, said that definition excludes the poor.

"The credit is not sufficient," he said.

"These kinds of taxes tend to be quite regressive," he said. "People with lower incomes pay a greater proportion of their earnings in tax."

"The government does not want to build in protection for poorer people," he added. "What's happened with the Mulroney regime is that they're cutting away at everything that leads to equality."

Students are now paying GST on previously untaxed items such as books and magazines, utilities, take-out food and single portion groceries.

Micmac friendship ctr to host Mohawk benefit

by Chris Lambie

The Committee in Solidarity with Aboriginal People will hold a benefit to support the Mohawk defense fund this Saturday, January 26th (8:00 p.m.) at the Micmac Native Friendship Centre in Halifax.

The Committee is a group of non-natives who have voiced their concern over the plight of Canada's aboriginal people. Their past actions include a peace camp on the Halifax commons and a demonstration at the Halifax Parade Grounds, both in protest to Canadian Military intervention at Oka, Quebec.

Chief Dan Paul, executive director of the Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs, says "in the past there have been so few non-Indian organizations that wanted to get involved with aboriginal issues that, if its done in a positive manner, [he's] all for it." The event, however, is not sponsored or supported by the Micmac Centre.

Tom Paul, a member of the Eskisone band of Nova Scotia, will be the guest speaker for the event. He will speak about his own experiences behind the barrier erected at Kanesatake last summer.

Tom Paul and a number of other Micmacs travelled to Quebec during the Oka crisis. They went to give their support to Mohawk warriors who had barricaded access to the Mercier bridge in response to major discrepancies in land claim settlements between the Mohawks and both Provincial and Federal governments.

will not accept them," but he emphasizes that violence is not the answer.

A spokesman from the Union of Nova Scotian Indians also says "Micmac leadership has never publicly supported violence." He notes that less than one percent of Nova Scotia's nine thousand Micmacs advocate a warrior soci-

"Micmac leadership has never publicly supported violence"

While many Micmacs quietly applauded Mohawk actions over the summer, Chief Dan Paul says there is no tradition of any warrior society among the Micmac.

He says "a system that has persecuted [native indians] simply for being of a different race" is very frustrating. He adds that aboriginal students "still have to accommodate themselves to a society that

ety of any kind. He says, "any group that advocates the use of force and violence is violating Micmac peace and friendship treaties."

The benefit will include auctions and door prizes as well as entertainment in the form of a band from South Africa.