

Larger issues lost in the shuffle

...cont'd from previous page: "CANADIAN"

Kim Goldberg, a freelance journalist who writes for many alternative and mainstream publications in British Columbia, agreed with Winter's analysis.

"The emphasis on 'bread and circuses' issues in the media makes us unable to think as individuals," she said. "The media don't show the larger reasons behind events. We get famines, blockades, even 'ethnic cleansing' presented as isolated events, with no larger structural explanations," she said.

In this environment, news becomes "a fistful of sand thrown in your eyes, isolated particles with no context or analysis."

As well, the creation of the deficit hysteria, in Goldberg's view, has been "part of a red herring-like strategy to keep people distracted." Goldberg added that this

obsession over the deficit in the mainstream media has served the purposes of certain sectors in business and finance.

"It serves the corporate interest by providing the deficit as a pretext for slashing government social programmes. Less social programmes mean a more desperate, and less united, work force to bargain with employers," she said.

The cause of the omissions of the stories in the recent Project Censored Canada list are not only due to corporate control of newspapers and other media, but also due to the way journalists are taught and carry out their duties, according to Goldberg.

"Emerging reporters are not encouraged to show any investigative zeal" either in journalism schools or in newspapers, according to Goldberg.



GAZETTE PHOTO BY DANIELLE BOUDREAU

"They are not taught that they should question all institutions of power: governmental, corporate, religious," she said.

Although the corporate agenda has influenced journalists, they are also at fault for not "constantly probing and doubting information from all power

sources," she said.

"Why are all the experts quoted in mainstream papers from business, government, or academia? Statements are sometimes regurgitated without question, and journalists have become glorified stenographers," said Goldberg.

Project Censored's top ten list for 1995

1. **Cleaning up after Atomic Energy of Canada, Ltd.** Almost \$300 million is required to clean up old nuclear facilities - a fact that is not represented in the financial statements of the Crown corporation.

2. **Canada's own free trade deal** The Inter-Provincial Trade Agreement — signed in 1994 to eliminate barriers to trade between provinces — may reduce the provinces' ability to legislate standards for labour practices and the environment.

3. **South battles GATT over patenting** Under the Global Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), plant extracts and their genetic code can be patented by northern multinationals, thus leading to concern that the intellectual property of indigenous peoples and other southern agricultural workers, might one day be put at risk.

4. **Professional and corporate crime** The public and media fascination and obsession with violent crime has caused a lack of concern over non-violent crime by professionals and corporations which may be costing Canada billions of dollars.

5. **Tobacco companies and cigarette smuggling** Although the 'smuggling' of cigarettes by aboriginal communities has attracted much media attention, the complicity of large cigarette companies in the smuggling racket went under-reported.

6. **Reducing interest rates to reduce the debt** Interest payments on the federal debt have soared to almost \$40 billion each year, and the main beneficiaries are the banks. An alternative plan for deficit reduction — low interest loans provided by the Bank of Canada would relieve calls for spending cuts but has received scant media attention.

7. **The Canadian Wildlife Federation hides its hunting connection** The Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF), which claims to be Canada's greatest protector of wildlife, is run mostly by people who kill animals for sport. But from the way it publicises itself, few non-hunters who support its fundraising efforts are likely to know this.

8. **The World Bank funds forced resettlement** The World Bank, with financial backing from donor nations like Canada, is funding development projects that will force millions of people off of their land to make way for the building of over 100 hydroelectric dams.

9. **Is fish farming a biological time bomb?** Canada could risk environmental disaster if it does not impose more stringent controls on its fish farming industry. Critics worry that Atlantic salmon could escape from their Pacific pens and contaminate indigenous stocks.

10. **Chiapas and NAFTA** When the Zapatista rebellion began in 1994, it was in direct protest to the North American Free Trade Agreement, which threatens to destroy their way of life. But Mexican and Canadian authorities moved quickly to separate the two issues, as well as denying any link between trade and human rights concerns.

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Puffing outlawed in Green Room

BY JOHN CULLEN

The Green Room will be the Grey Room no more.

With smokers migrating there from the now smoke-free cafeteria to light up, the atmosphere of the Green Room became increasingly hazy. Last week, the Safety Office informed the Dalhousie Student Union (DSU) council that the Green Room was not properly equipped to handle the increased volume of smoke, so it is now off-limits to smokers.

The Green Room and the fourth floor of the Student Union Building (SUB) share the same ventilation system. The increased amount of smoke from the Green Room introduced to offices on the fourth floor could have led to a violation of the Department of Labour's Occupational Health standards.

"The Green Room's air is partially recycled throughout the fourth floor and was creating an intolerable atmosphere for staff workers," said Bill Louch of the Safety Office.

Smokers have been told to get their fix in the Grawood Lounge or the Corner Pocket, the only two smok-



ing areas left in the SUB since the new policy was introduced on January 7. This is the last straw for some students who feel there is no longer a place that accommodates smoking and bringing your own food.

"Fine, take away the Green Room, but give us back the cafeteria," said a Psychology student who wanted to be identified only as Rob.

Rob could get his wish. Thursday, Jan. 25 is the DSU's Annual General Meeting. In lieu of the recent events, council is putting forth an amendment to re-designate the cafeteria as a smoking environment.

Lilli Ju, the council's Executive VP, expects a large turnout of smokers at the meeting to voice their opinions on the new smoking regulations. Meanwhile, many smokers are braving the cold weather until the current policy is amended.