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Irving refuses to pay clean up bill

BY MARK REYNOLDS

Irving gas stations across the Maritimes were picketed over the weekend for their failure to pay for the clean up of the Irving Whale.

The protesters were demanding that the multi-billion dollar corporation pay the full cost of the recovery of the oil barge that sank off Prince Edward Island in 1970.

The barge, which contained 4,200 tonnes of Bunker C heating oil and 8,000 kilograms of PCBs was en route to Bathurst, New Brunswick when it sank in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The barge was raised by the Coast Guard in 1996 at a cost of \$42-million, a cost Irving has refused to pay.

The federal government has filed a statement of claim against Irving for the costs of the recovery operation, after out of court negotiations failed.

"Our position is that they are liable, it was their responsibility, it was their boat," said Michael Turner, deputy Commissioner of the Coast Guard.

The Irving Corporation has filed a statement of defence in federal court. In a public statement they claimed the government took an unnecessary risk in raising the

barge, and should have left it where it was.

"The majority of expenditures and costs incurred by the Crown were excessive, unwarranted and resulted from errors and bad judgement on the part of government officials," the company said in a statement issued last week. (source: CP)

"That isn't relevant," said Aaron Koleszar, organizer of the weekend's protests. "They made the mess and it was their responsibility to clean it up...the government could have handled things better, but something needed to be done."

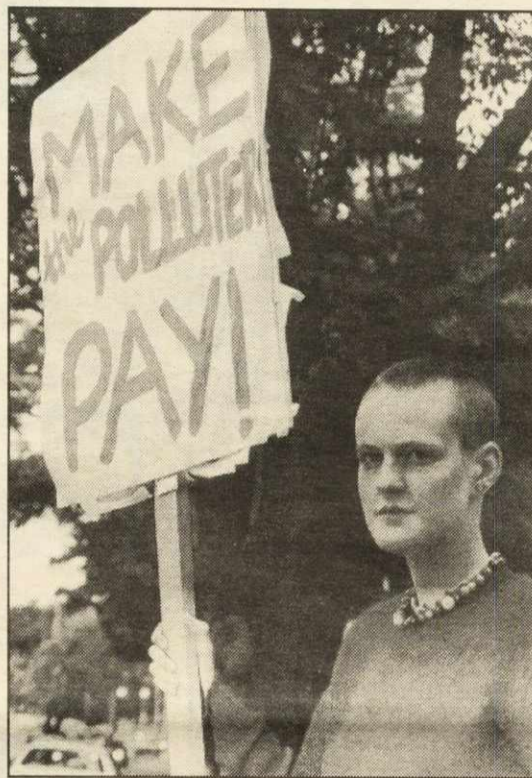
"Irving does a lot to exploit people and the environment, this [\$42-million cost] is one thing that really draws people together."

"We wanted to raise awareness of corporate rule," said Koleszar.

He went on to say

that the costs of raising the Irving Whale are not the only ones.

"There are still PCBs down there, which Irving didn't tell the government about until 1995, though they legally had to...they should take responsibility for their own mess."



Hannah Jickling protests in front of the Robie St. Irving station. Photo by Ryan Lash

These sentiments were echoed at the protest in Halifax, which took place on Saturday Oct. 4, on Robie Street near Cunard.

"They make a mess and like a little child they're refusing to clean it up," said protestor Shannon Lynch. "It's just an example of how

little they care about people or the environment."

Waving signs that read "Make the polluter pay", "Boycott Irving", and "End Corporate Rule", the handful of protesters reported a

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Zero tuition?

BY LILLI JU

One week after the Canadian Federation of Students released its report, "Strategy for Change", student organizations remain divided on two issues: is zero tuition possible and is it what students really want?

According to the national director of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA), the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) has not addressed what students really want.

"The CFS is feeling the pulse of students as accurately as the Pepsi Clear executive," says Hoops Harrison.

"Their [CFS's] report calls for across the board abolishment of tuition. What we need are realistic ways to address the immediate student debt crisis — over 50 per cent of Canadian students have some debt. I doubt that CFS will be successful in achieving zero tuition, especially given our country's current financial situation."

Brad Lavigne, national chairperson of CFS, disagrees.

"There will be those who will be cynical and say that nothing can be done. There are also those who said that nothing could be done in areas where we've achieved success," said Lavigne, citing the January 25, 1995 "Day of Action" demonstration which resulted in a tuition freeze in Quebec, and CFS's effort in British Columbia to help maintain the "second lowest tuition rates in Canada".

"You're not going to win if you start off with that lost mentality," adds Lavigne. "If we get tuition fee freezes in a couple of provinces because of this document, then we are steps ahead of where we were before this document was released."

CFS's report states that zero tuition can be achieved by implementing a long-term funding formula paid for by a taxation

system on the wealthy and the elimination of tax loopholes and deferrals.

"If we collected a tenth of the deferred taxes from profitable corporations, we'd have \$4-billion. That would be enough to abolish tuition fees with money left over," said Lavigne. This theory is based on the federation's \$2.2-billion estimate of total "user fees" (which includes tuition, auxiliary and ancillary fees) paid by Canadian students in one year. CASA's "user fees" estimate is closer to \$4-billion. Lavigne also cites a Royal Bank report which states that Canada will enjoy a \$250-billion surplus in the year 2000/2001 as a source of funds.

"We're one of the most wealthiest countries in the world," says Lavigne. "Is that [zero tuition] impossible? I don't think so."

CFS believes that its "zero tuition" stance represents the "long-standing view of the student movement since the 1930s".

Amy Cole, chair of the Nova Scotia Component of CFS and president of University of King's College Student Union, agrees with this sentiment.

"I think what people have to keep in mind is that although zero tuition is definitely the goal of CFS, it is not the first thing on its lobbying agenda," says Cole. "It will take years to obtain it, as did universal health care."

Not all members of CFS are as optimistic about a call for zero tuition. Dale Kirby, Chair of the Newfoundland Component of CFS, states that although "we support the actions of our affiliates and we're clapping them on in the fight", the contingent feels that this document does not represent their perspective on post-secondary education issues in Newfoundland.

"We didn't ask for free tuition. We are asking for a tuition freeze

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More credit card fraud

BY SHELLEY ROBINSON

For nine Dalhousie professors, it might be easier to get a phony credit card than to find out how one was fraudulently obtained using their personal information.

Within the past year and a half, two history professors, as well as seven of the 14 professors in the political science department, have had their names, salaries, social insurance numbers — and in some cases their birth date — used to apply for fraudulent credit cards.

The type of information used on the phony applications, and the concentration within departments raised concerns about the security of university personnel information.

"In at least a couple of the cases they were able to provide very precise information with regards to salary and social insurance numbers," said David Cameron, chair of the political science department and one of the professors whose name was used on fraudulent cards.

"The fact that seven of the members of [the political science] department

were hit by similar kind of frauds suggests...that there's some common element," he said.

As well as fraudulently applying for brand new cards, existing cards had fake supplementary names added, and the address changed to a post office box.

Cameron found out about the supplementary cards under his name last December when the companies called asking for payment. Balances exceeded \$3,000 at Sears and \$2,000 at Eaton's.

Sears, Eaton's, Bank of Montreal, Mastercard and Canadian Tire all received fraudulent applications. And all the credit card companies involved have taken responsibility for any fraudulent charges accumulated on the cards.

Cameron says he brought up the string of fraudulent cards to both the Halifax police, and Dalhousie Chief of Security Sandy MacDonald. Although wary to assign blame, Cameron says he is most concerned about the inaction.

"I want to emphasize that [the political science department is] not pointing fingers anywhere in the university as the source or cause of the leaked information. We are, however,

frustrated that there has been no resolution of a case that, at least to us, involved quite serious fraud," Cameron said.

"Undoubtedly there are multiple sources [for obtaining personal information]...[but] nothing has changed in the security system. Whether it could happen again is anybody's guess — and that's the concern."

Dalhousie Chief of Security Sandy MacDonald had no comment at this time.

Like the university before them, The Halifax Police Department says there isn't enough evidence either way.

"I can't sit here and say they're getting that information from Dalhousie," said Sergeant Darrell Downey, who is in charge of the fraud division. "The bottom line is you have no suspect, you have no way of identifying the source or the means by which they perpetrated the crime, so the investigation has to be suspended until something materializes."

Dalhousie vp finance Brian Mason also had no comment at this time.

Pre-packaged ponderance

"If you say 'cunt' or 'cocksucker', what you say influences the way you think, the way you act, not the other way around."

— David Mamet (see story page 12)

NATIONAL NEWS

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