

Dal heads for the hills

by Jessica Meijer

Dalhousie University has entered into a linkage project with Nepal with the goal of increasing the knowledge of the Nepalese working in areas related to development.

Project coordinator Paul Huber, of the Economics Department, recently returned from a visit to Nepal, and described the situation there. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world, with "great divisions in income — both class and regional." Environmental stresses also pose a problem for the country, as increased population pressures heighten deforestation trends, which in turn contribute to erosion.

Dalhousie involvement may well include many different faculties, but as Huber put it, "(the) Economics (department) is, you might say, the lead depart-

ment in the linkage arrangement." The School of Resource and Environmental Studies is a secondary player in the arrangement, while Dalhousie's Lester B. Pearson Institute for International Development supports the project by offering general supervision and expertise.

Why did Dalhousie choose Nepal (as opposed to other developing countries) for this development program?

Actually, the entire project developed "through a student initiative," Huber explained proudly.

Byasjee Poudel, employed by the ministry of finance in Nepal, came to study at Dalhousie in the early 1980s. While here he established contact with Ian McAllister — a "key person in development activities at Dal for 12-15 years" said Huber. At Poudel's urging, McAllister visited Nepal and soon Huber and Alasdair Sinclair (former

vice-president academic & research, and professor in the economics department) became involved.

After consultations with their counterparts in Nepal, a proposal for the linkage project was prepared. In May of this year approval was granted.

The Canadian International Development Agency funds most of the project, worth approximately \$1 million over five years.

The Centre for Economic Development and Administration (CEDA) in Nepal's only University, Tribhuvan, is the organization directly involved in Nepal. Dalhousie's theoretical and methodological skills coupled with CEDA's local knowledge should be able to provide a program that CEDA staff can offer to members of the government's civil service or consultants working for development agencies.

As with all new projects, there have been some initial administration difficulties; perhaps an unexpected one is the fact that "participants out there (in Nepal) do a lot of walking because of transportation difficulties." Nepal's conflict with India has placed severe restrictions on fuel consumption, making walking a necessity.

Currently the "initial visits to Nepal are heavily focusing on getting the project up and running. Later on we will get into the substance of the project."

Sinclair and Huber identified roughly 15 training packages that might reflect Nepal's areas of strength — areas that Dalhousie might be able to contribute to. These areas will soon be narrowed down; however "what will be done is not yet determined — this might evolve a little as we go along," acknowledged Huber.

The first Nepalese students are expected at Dalhousie next September.

CFS cruises the globe too

by Chris Lawson

OTTAWA (CUP) — The Canadian Federation of Students' new campaign poster looks a lot like something that once graced British campuses.

The poster, which lists Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's rhetoric on post-secondary education, compared with his record in bold yellow lettering, is forthright and unabashedly political.

Inspired by a recent National Union of Students (U.K.) campaign poster, it's one of a number of benefits Canada's student fed-

eration can reap from getting more involved with its counterparts in other countries, CFS's deputy chair Mairi Johnson says.

"You can get a lot of information, on an organizational level, and on a services level from other organizations," Johnson said.

"Sharing experiences is also a good way to be proactive Johnson added. "A lot of the students I talked to talked about the privileging and elitization of education in their countries."

As an example, she said Britain is using the Canadian model for student loans, and the UK's National Union of Students

could really use CFS's research.

"In Finland, the national students federation owns 80 per cent of student housing," she said. "It gives you a lot to think about."

Johnson has travelled to the 13th World Festival of Youth and Students in North Korea, visited the International Union of Students (IUS) headquarters in Prague as well as the UK students federation, and attended an all-European student federation meeting in Sweden.

"In the last few years the federation has more or less ignored the international student scene," former CFS deputy chair Jamie

Tate said. Tate started CFS back toward getting involved internationally.

For a while, it was difficult to get CFS's membership interested in happenings outside Canada, Johnson said. The federation's policy on international involvement remains unarticulated.

Going into the federation's 9th annual general meeting, she hopes to turn some of the last few months' momentum into something permanent.

Johnson wants the federation to establish an international affairs committee to establish international contacts, establish policy on international involvement and figure out how to pay for increased international involvement.

The committee would also look at several specific international student issue campaigns, such as the UN's international literacy year and the campaign to reopen Palestinian universities.

Still starving at home

by Padraic Brake

HALIFAX (CUP) — Nova Scotia's student federation says students on financial aid need \$2000 more per year in grants.

This is one of the Students' Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS) recommendations in its September report "Student Aid For the 1990s."

The SUNS recommendations are in response to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) report of the same name, published in February.

"We would like an increase in the bursary program because that is the only way the government is going to keep the debt load down for students," SUNS chair Lara Morris said.

Nova Scotia university students can get up to \$5360 in Canada Student Loans and provincial government bursaries.

A student living in residence at Acadia University in Wolfville,

N.S. will pay approximately \$5400 in tuition fees and residence fees alone. This does not cover books, travel costs or university-related incidental fees.

"The situation at Acadia is similar to other schools in the province because student aid is not keeping up with actual costs," said Dalhousie student council vice-president Terry Crawley.

The MPHEC recommended that the maximum student aid available to students be increased to \$7000.

"The MPHEC recommenda-

tions in the past have been acted upon in part by the New Brunswick government, but Nova Scotia has done very little," said Crawley.

He also said the committee hasn't changed its recommendations on financial aid in ten years.

The commission's figures used to determine students' costs of living are "years out of date" Crawley said.

"We are reaching the point where students from working class and lower middle class families will find higher education inaccessible," said Crawley.

Dalhousie Mature Students Association

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