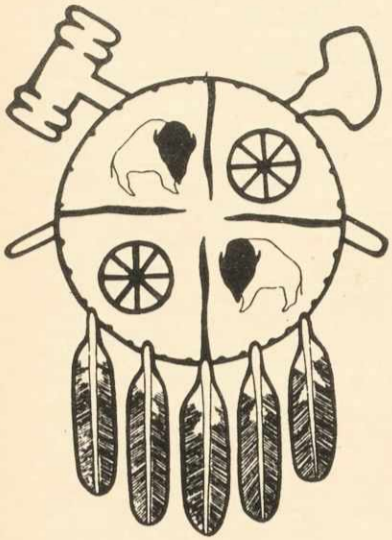


# Feds' cuts threaten natives

by Belinda MacFadyen

Native Indian post-secondary students across Canada are gearing up for a fight.



On March 22nd, students and their supporters will stage rallies, marches, sit-ins and fasts in communities both on and off reserves to protest proposed changes to the federal Post-Secondary Edu-

cation Assistance Program. A letter-writing campaign to Members of Parliament and Pierre Cadieux, the Minister of Indian Affairs, is already underway.

The students say education is an aboriginal right and the new policy will deny Indian peoples access to post-secondary education.

The program, as originally formulated in 1977, provided 384 student weeks of financial assistance for all registered Indian and Inuit students accepted into a post-secondary institution. In 1980, assistance was reduced to 280 student weeks. The latest policy slated to take effect April 1st, proposes to reduce the number of weeks to 192.

Theresa Muse of the Dalhousie Aboriginal Association says the reduction in the number of weeks of eligible assistance will make it more difficult for many Indian students to complete their programs of study. As well, Indian students are concerned that the reduction in student weeks will prevent many of them from enter-

ing professional degree programs.

Further limits to access to education will mean increased dependence on the federal government. Independence and self-reliance, the ultimate objectives of self-government will be more difficult to achieve.

The federal government is also proposing to reduce the amount of assistance available to single students with dependents. While Dalhousie university has recently agreed to extend the preparation year program for Black and Native students for a year, members of the Dalhousie Aboriginal Association are also con-

cerned about the eventual phasing out of the program.

Financial restraint is the federal government's obvious motive for seeking to reduce the assistance available under the program. The number of Indian students attending Canadian universities has increased dramatically, from 3,500 in 1977 to over 13,000 in 1987. In that period, the program's budget grew from \$8 million to \$94 million.

Jean Knockwood, a Native Education Counsellor at Dalhousie, says education is an aboriginal right to which her people are entitled. Knockwood says that before the arrival of Europeans to

North America, Indian peoples had developed distinct societies, including a system of education. Because their distinct society was destroyed, Indian peoples say that the education of Indian peoples is the fiduciary responsibility of the federal government.

*Native students and their supporters should assemble at the Dalhousie Student Union Building at 1pm on March 22nd. The protest march will begin at 2pm. It will finish at the Grand Parade Square. Speakers will include Alexa McDonough and Danny Paul of the Confederacy of Mainland MicMacs.*

## Native leader supports protest

by Maureen Googoo

The National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, George Erasmus, visited the Dalhousie campus on Monday, March 13 to talk to the Native students on campus on certain issues important to the Native people of Canada.

In an interview, Erasmus commented on issues such as the department of Indian Affairs' proposed Post-Secondary Education Policy and the Meech Lake Accord.

### Post-Secondary Policy

Erasmus explained that the department of Indian Affairs policy to cut back on student week allocations and financial funding will have disastrous effects on Native peoples across Canada if implemented on as scheduled on April 1, 1989.

"If we don't educate our people to become fully employed, they'll remain on welfare for the rest of their lives," said Erasmus. He said that the cutbacks do not make any logical sense.

### Student Participation

Erasmus expressed the need for student participation to protest against the policy because they can put the pressure on the federal government to re-examine the policy and allow aboriginal involvement in drafting a new and more logical policy.

### The Meech Lake Accord

Erasmus gave many reasons as to why the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is against the Meech Lake Accord. AFN agrees with the premiers that the whole agreement should be amended before it is ratified.

Erasmus explained that AFN is "appalled by the concept that the English and French languages should be recognized as major,

prominent characteristics of Canada without giving similar treatment to the cultures of first nations."

Erasmus also explained that the agreement is set up in such a way in that it would allow the provinces to be responsible to Native people and not the government.

"We feel that our relationship should be with the federal government and not the provincial government," said Erasmus.

Another area of the accord that the AFN disagrees with is the formula one has to go through to create a new province. He suggested that it is a racist kind of approach because the native people make up the majority of the

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"No talk, we walk" — new logo for Halifax's light rock CJ/C100.

## Lockout screws staff

by Ellen Reynolds

Thirty-two CJCH/C100 employees were selectively locked out by management February 15 in the midst of negotiations for a new contract. The announcers, news people, producers, clerical and support staff, members of the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (NABET) Local 920, have filed a charge with the Canada Labour Relations Board against the Toronto-based CHUM management for the selective lockout.

According to Geoff Banks, Vice-President of Local 920, on the day of the lock-out two letters were distributed by the management. Those who were active in the union got one letter informing them of the lock-out; others got a "sweetheart letter", which contained a third paragraph offering to allow employees back under certain conditions, says Banks.

The Canada Labour Relations Board held the hearing Monday, March 13, but there has been no decision as of Wednesday. NABET's demands include paid maternity leave, wage parity with other CHUM stations, vacations and time off between shifts.

The lock-out occurred during negotiations of the supplemental U.I. program for paid maternity leave, a program which would cost the station 1/4 of 1 per cent of its payroll to increase maternity leave from 60 per cent to 95 per cent of wages.

"We even offered to pay for it ourselves and do the paperwork," says Banks, "but management refused."

Bill Bodnarchuk, station manager, was unavailable for comment.

"They (management) haven't talked to anyone since they locked us out," says Banks.

Of the 32 locked out, approximately half are women. The average salary for women is \$18,000, \$6,500 lower than the average for men. One woman, says Banks, who has been an accounting clerk

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## DFA benefits clause faces revisions, gov't obstacles

# Same-sex clause delayed

by Alison Auld

The Collective Agreement between the Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) and the Administration, ratified last fall, includes a new clause which entitles same-sex partners of DFA members to receive Pension Plan benefits.

But the implementation of this clause has been delayed because the agreement has not yet been officially signed by the DFA and the Board of Governors.

Paul Huber, a professor of Economics and the DFA representative on Dalhousie's Pension Committee, says that if Dalhousie's proposals are not in accordance with provincial laws and federal regulations with regards to spousal benefits, revisions will have to be made to the agreement.

He says that if what the DFA and the Administration propose "is not inconsistent with the definition of spouse by federal legislation", the agreement will be implemented.

But Huber suspects that there will be "problems" with Revenue Canada, as Pension Plans are subject to both Provincial and Federal law.

Revenue Canada's Roger Levett says that in a trial case concerning same-sex benefits Revenue Canada did not approve a similar clause. He says that while his department has not yet been approached by Dalhousie, Revenue Canada "would probably say no (to the Clause), but that that opinion is not binding."

In a separate case, Acadia University professors won same-sex benefits in an out-of-court settle-

ment with Acadia's insurance company in 1987. Acadia University Faculty Association representative Steve Enman says his union has only a "non-discrimination" clause.

The original DFA clause, which stated that the eligible spouse would be of the opposite sex, was revised to include same-sex partners in the definition of "spouse". Article 32, Clause 320D, states that "any definition of spouse in the plan shall include of the same sex with whom the member has been cohabiting for at least one year in a conjugal relationship".

Graham Morgan, a professor of Sociology and chief negotiator for the DFA, says that the two groups are "going backwards and

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