

Indonesia

Under Fire

by Geoff Stone

Dalhousie's funding of an Indonesian government program came under criticism by the Nova Scotia NDP at their annual convention in August.

A motion at the convention

held from August 28 to 30, called for Dalhousie to disassociate itself from the Indonesian government, and to discontinue a CIDA program with the Indonesian government for environmental development.

Reasons for the motion included the continued geno-

cide in the small country of East Timor by the Indonesian army, and the thousands of human rights abuses perpetrated in Indonesia itself. Amnesty International has reported 200,000 Timorese deaths from the invasion and resulting famine, and the mass deportation of the Tim-

orese into concentration camps.

Because of a tightly controlled press, and because Canadian and other western countries profit from Indonesian trade, very little of the genocide has been reported.

Ross Shotten, an initiator of the resolution, said the main issue is that "this government (Indonesia) has done terrible things. (Dalhousie) University is involved with this government. And the question is: is this a bad thing?"

Owens said Canada and other developed countries have relationships with Indonesia which allow that country to continue its abuses. "Indonesia just plays all the western countries for suckers," he said.

Among the complaints voiced by the Dalhousie faculty is the recent visit of the Indonesian ambassador to Dalhousie. "What are the consequences of what Dalhousie is doing? The Ambassador was invited here. Would you do the same for South

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Shotten says Canada has been involved in Indonesia as a major trading partner. Amnesty International said Canada has consistently voted against resolutions criticizing the Indonesian government in the United Nations.

Bill Owens, a member of the department of medicine at Dalhousie, said while Dalhousie may wish to have development projects with countries such as Indonesia, the silence of the Dalhousie administration on human rights abuses in Indonesia is inexcusable.

Africa?" asked Shotten.

Dalhousie has invested \$180,000 in the five-year project, and has been a main recipient of the \$5 million recently invested in the project.

The Law School at Dalhousie recently voted on whether to discontinue its association with Indonesia. The vote lost by a small majority of law students.

But "a lot of law faculty were violently opposed to this program," said Shotten. "If the TV's had been in East Timor, the public would not accept it."



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