

The human rights movement is not token

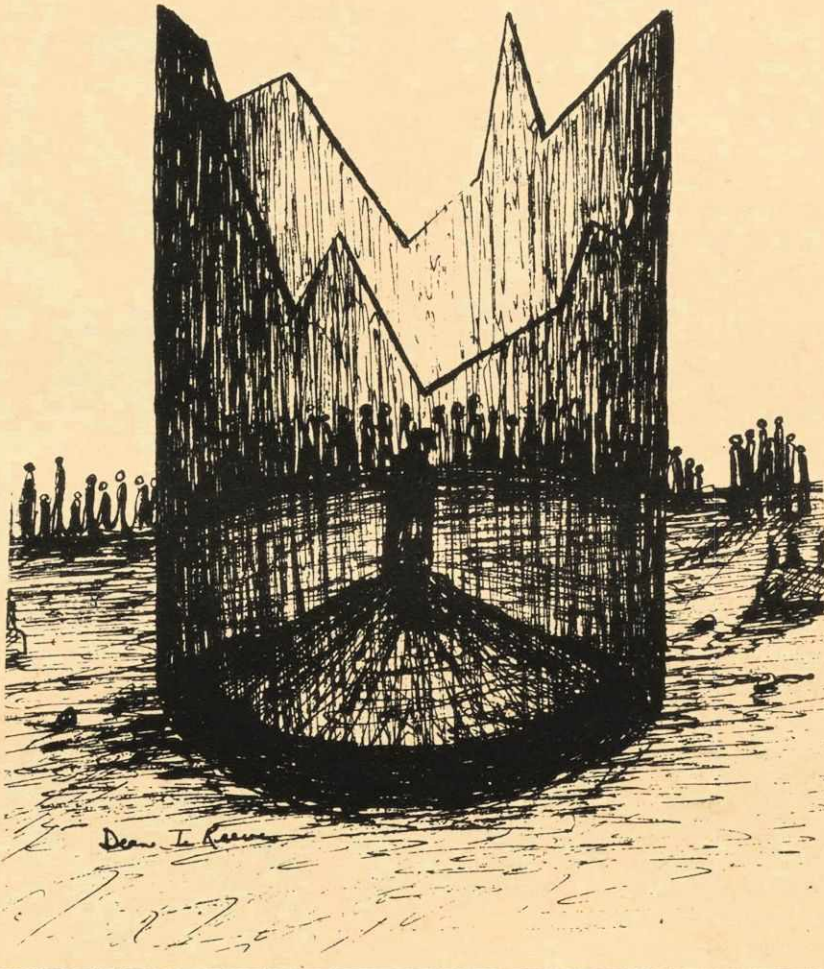
by Patrica Aikens

Last Friday at the Education House on Oxford St. Amnesty International held a lecture on minority rights in Canada. The guest speaker at the very informal gathering was Mr. Duncan McNab of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. Mr. McNab gave a brief history of Amnesty International and the N.S. Human Rights Commission, then went on to discuss minority rights in Canada.

According to Mr. McNab those minorities which should seek protection are those based on race, creed, color, and ethnic origin. The unemployed, the handicapped, and those over 40 could also be classified as minorities because they're frequently discriminated against. He feels the unemployed form quite an important minority because any one of us, could at any time, be unemployed.

"Movements such as the Human Rights are not tokens, but are reflections of the constructive criticism of society," says Mr. McNab. The slogan, "Human Rights is Everybody's Business" has been adopted because "...you never know when it will be your turn."

Minorities based on color are those most often discriminated against, says McNab. There are an



estimated 30,000 blacks in N.S. and Premier Regan has called them, "The invisible minority against the upper echelon of the outside world." Black regions in this province are segregated from the white areas, their facilities are poor, and unemployment is high.

Society has discriminated against many minorities and the reasons for such discrimination are thought to be invalid. It was because of this that the Human Rights Commission was formed. The Commission handles discrimination cases in the areas of, race, religion, creed, color, sex, age (over 40), and the physical handicapped. The N.S. Human Rights Commission has a mandate to take all steps possible to insure equality in these areas.

The meeting itself was very informal - perhaps too informal. 12:30 is a very inconvenient time to hold a lecture especially when the subject under discussion is of such relevance and controversy. People were continuously walking in and out and thus disrupting the speaker. As for Mr. McNab, he is not a public speaker and his speech lacked the necessary vitality and impetus to retain the audiences interest. Such an important topic, as minority rights in Canada, deserves more than an hour long meeting in a small room, at a very inconvenient time of day.

U de M students may resume protest soon

FREDERICTON (CUP) ---- Although none of their demands have been implemented New Brunswick students have discontinued ~~the~~ protest for an improved student aid program.

About 600 Universite de Moncton students who were the main core of the protest returned to their campus February Tenth (10) after they were asked to leave their temporary accommodations in a church hall.

The students entered the church hall after they were forced to end their 12 day occupation of the Centennial Building February 8 when city police read the riot act and evicted them.

Before leaving, Fredericton student leaders signed an agreement with the provincial government calling for one government and one student representative and another person chosen by those two to begin negotiations February 15 on student aid changes.

The agreement signed by Premier Richard Hatfield, Youth Minister Jean-Pierre Ouellet and student leaders made no mention of earlier government offers.

An offer made earlier would have established an input committee

with representatives from all provincial universities and colleges and mentioned increased funding for the program.

The decision to end picketing came after a two-hour meeting of all students involved in the occupation. Although many felt the protest would decrease support from the general public.

Catholic and Anglican clergy urged students to carefully consider their decision and the repercussion of a continued demonstration.

U de M student negotiator Gilles Beaulieu said "This was a very hard decision for the students to make."

"I think there was a lot of emotion at the meeting," he said, "and students had to consider what was emotion and what was reason."

Many of the students returning to the U de M campus felt they would be back to protest again. Giving up now would be a sign of defeat, according to many students.

Student union leaders at the University of New Brunswick and St. Thomas University are attempting to raise support for the campaign on those campuses while

the U de M students have been meeting in mass rallies to discuss future strategy.

Students at UNB and St. Thomas

have been criticised for their lack of support for the Moncton students; and Mount Allison gave no support to the campaign.

New NUS newspaper

OTTAWA (CUP) ---- Students across Canada will soon see a new national newspaper, the **Student Advocate**, appear on their campuses, if their student council decides to buy copies.

The new newspaper isn't a slick advertising rag devoted to lining entrepreneurial pockets. In fact, it won't even carry ads, and will depend on individual student council co-operation for distribution.

The national student journal is a joint project of the National Union of Students and the regional and provincial student organizations, the only joint project which has yet resulted from recent talks between those organizations aimed at getting them together.

According to NUS executive-secretary Dan O'Connor, the focus of the first issue of the **Student Advocate** will focus on recent student mobilizations against financial cut-backs and student aid policies, and on the activities of NUS and the other student organizations across the country.

O'Connor said that, at least for the remainder of this academic year, student unions will have to buy the four-page tabloid in bulk for distribution on their campus. Next year a more direct distribution method may be developed.

The **Student Advocate** will appear simultaneously in a French edition, called **Le Partisan Etudiant**, at francophone and bilingual campuses.

Student Union Election:

Pharmacy

Engineering

Health Professions

Dentistry

Nominations
Re-opened
Nominations Close -
Friday
February 13th 5:00