At Dalhousie

Students boycotting Bank of Commerce

by Tom Regan

Students at Dalhousie University have been asked to boycott the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce because of loans made to the government and industries of South Africa.

Bikash Roychoudhury, president of the International Students Association (ISA) at Dalhousie, will ask all members of the ISA to transfer their accounts to the local Credit Union. Roychoudhury is hoping that other students will follow suit once they have been made aware of the bank's willingness to make loans to South Africa.

"My main job is that of making the students aware of the situation which now exists. I'm not trying to force anyone to change their banks, but I'm hoping many will do so once they are made aware of the facts."

Mr. Roychoudhury said he has been getting a very good response from most students so far.

"I've been in contact with most of the incoming foreign students and many of them have agreed to transfer their accounts to the Credit Union. The biggest problem to overcome is the convenience of most of the bigger banks. It can be a problem for some students to either transfer funds or get transfers from home if there are no Credit Unions around. However, we students at Dalhousie are lucky because there is a Credit Union so close."

Roychoudhury wrote the Bank of Commerce on August 16 informing them that he was withdrawing his account because of the bank's dealings with South Africa. He received a two page letter from Mr. Wayne Levy, Manager, Business Development and Marketing Department of the Bank of Commerce.

Levy thanked Roychoudhury for his concern and told him that the question of loans to South Africa was being carefully considered by their executive management and board of directors. He said that the Bank of Commerce in no way supports the apartheid system in South Africa, and that lending activity does not in any way imply endorsement of any government or socio-political system.

Levy added the Bank of Commerce's role was that of financial intermediary and they believed that international commerce must be maintained on as broad a base as possible if there is to be any hope for significant social progress and enlightenment in countries with repressive governments.

Levy also said that he could not disclose any lending practises because of banker / client confidentiality.

Roychoudhury disagreed, saying, "Modern banking cannot be delinked from the humanist concept of the dignity of man and should not rely merely on the dignity of some men."

Roychoudhury also said that lending money to South Africa does not help the oppressed of the system, but aids the government to gain strength against international sanctions and gives them the financial backing to purchase instruments of oppression. At the same time, Roychoudhury said that relying on banker / client confidentiality might work in the confessional, but that a bank supplying money to a Hitlerian government, and not disclosing the nature of the transaction, merely strengthens its hands of oppression.

Roychoudhury hopes the boycott will be a success.

"I've already talked to the people at DAGS and they have agreed to withdraw their account. I'm also going to send a letter to President Hicks asking him to withdraw Dalhousie's accounts from the bank."

Rand formula

DFA-admin settlement soon

Negotiators for the Dalhousie administration were to present a single alternative to the RAND formula yesterday to the Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA), which may lead to a contract settlement between the two sides.

The RAND formula is used in labor negotiations when employees wish to remain outside union membership, but at the same time benefit from union negotiations. It involves the right of conscious against union security. Presently there are faculty members on campus that wish to remain outside the DFA, but because of the state of negotiations, will receive full benefits won by the union.

Dr. Michael Cross, DFA spokesperson, said "It (the RAND formula) has to resolve itself now."

"We can't go any further on it, we are at a crunch," he said. "It is something we have to have in the agreement."

Cross said more than 28 articles have been agreed on between the DFA negotiating team and the administration. There are about 6 articles left in contention, but Cross said most of these are settleable in short order.

One of the issues near settlement is salaries and salary increases. At present, the administration and DFA are one per cent apart from agreement. Neither side would comment on the percentage increase offered, but **the Gazette** has learned it is 21 per cent over 24 months.

The Gazette tried to reach vice-president Andrew MacKay, who heads the administration's negotiating team, for comment, but he was unavailable. In addition, Dr. David Cameron, of the Public Administration / Political Science department, said he would not comment on the status of negotiations.

Universities told to borrow from banks

OTTAWA (CUP)—Ontario universities, suffering from funding cutbacks made by the provincial government, have been told to borrow money from banks if they cannot make ends meet.

The Council of Ontario Universities announced September 10 that Laurentian and Carleton Universities may be forced to borrow from banks to cover large budget deficits this year.

Ontario Education Minister Bette Stephenson said there is no money available to assist the universities in financial trouble and said she had no objections to them borrowing money from banks to cover deficits.

"Why should I object to them going to the bank? They are autonomous financial institutions and can make whatever financial decisions they think necessary," she said.

Carleton Administrative President Albert Larose said the university will have a deficit of over one million dollars by the end of the current school year.

Larose blames the problem on insufficient government funding and the decline in enrollment, especially in the Arts and Science faculties. He said the university had tried to save money by cutting back in various areas, but had gone as far as it could.

"I dont know what the answer is," he said. "Something's got to give. It can't go on the way it is."

Stephenson denied the government has reduced funding to universities, but admits that government grants have not allowed the universities to keep pace with inflation.

Laurentian University President Henry Best said Laurentian currently has a debt of $500,000 and will have a debt of one million dollars by the end of the school year.

continued on page 19

Education eroding

NDP condemns cost sharing plan

Ed Broadbent gestures emphatically as he addresses audience at Mount St. Vincent on Tuesday. Dal Photo / Grandy

HALIFAX (CUP)—Ed Broadbent said he favoured a return to the pre-1976 federal-provincial cost sharing formula for post-secondary education to stop the continuing erosion of universities and colleges in Canada.

The NDP leader made the comment during a question and answer session following his Petro-Canada speech to 200 students at Mount St. Vincent University September 11.

According to the funding arrangement in effect since 1976 between the provinces and the federal government called the Established Programmes Financing (EPF), federal funds covering hospital insurance, medicine, and post-secondary education are transfered by tax points and cash grants to the provinces to pay for these "established" programs.

This was based on the understanding that the federal government has historically acted as a primary resource of funding for medical and post-secondary education.

The EPF replaced a cost sharing agreement for higher education that saw the federal government match dollar for dollar the amount spent by the provinces. The EPF is not conditional on government expenditures but is tied to the rate of growth in the Gross National Product. Consequently a provincial government is able to reduce its own expenditures from year to year without affecting the transfers from Ottawa.

The EPF surfaced as an issue during the last federal election campaign when doctors started opting out of provincial hospital insurance plans. In an effort to prove the federal government was not cutting back in medical funding, but that the provinces were reducing their funding comitment, then federal Liberal Health Minister Monique Begin called on Ontario's Progressive Conservative government to submit to an audit.

Broadbent also said the NDP was opposed to differential fees for visa students. British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland are the only provinces not to implement higher fees for foreign students.