

Dept of Indian Affairs shirking it's responsibility

LETHBRIDGE (CUP) - The federal government is challenging the right of Canadian Treaty Indians to government-sponsored higher education. University and college education has always been considered a treaty right by Indians and the Department of Indian Affairs has been paying for it, but now that it is starting to cost money the Department wants to back down.

This is the view of Lynda Little Child, President of the University of Lethbridge Native Students Association.

More and more native people are reaching post-secondary levels of education each year. The Department of Indian Affairs sponsors Treaty Indian students for all educational expenses and away from home living expenses. At least, that is what the Department has been doing.

In the spring of 1975, the Department put out a "draft for discussion only" policy paper, the E-12 Circular, which proposed changes and new policy for the native higher education program.

The section of the paper which is the most controversial suggests that Indians should pay part of their educational costs. Fifteen percent of single student's gross earned income should pay part of education costs, is the policy suggested in the circular. The department would continue to finance the other 85 percent of the cost.

Little Child commented that 15 percent may not seem like much, but that if a precedent is set, this

percentage could be gradually increased. Indians view the government sponsoring of education as part of the treaty agreement and that there should be no division of educational expenses. The government is responsible for all of it.

According to Little Child, the E-12 Circular is one attempt by the government to gradually implement the 1969 White Paper on Indian Policy which was strongly protested by native people.

Chiefs from Indian bands throughout Alberta have written to Judd Buchanan, the Minister of Indian Affairs, protesting the E-12 Circular and they are of the opinion that post-secondary education is included as a right guaranteed by the treaties.

Little Child says the Minister responded by way of a form letter which stated the department did not view the Indian student financing program as a Treaty right. Rather, it is out of the generosity of the Department that the program exists, Buchanan claimed.

In fact, all the treaties made in Alberta, by which the Indian peoples signed away their rights to the land, have clauses about education directly between the clauses dealing with Winchester rifles and axes.

"Her Majesty agrees to maintain schools for instruction in such reserves hereby made, as to her Government, the Dominion of Canada may seem advisable, whenever the Indians of the reserve shall desire." This is part

of Treaty Six which in 1896 signed over most of Central Alberta from the Wood Cree and other tribes to the government.

Indians consider this treaty made one hundred years ago very important and binding still today.

"To the Indians of Canada, the treaties represent an Indian Magna Carta. The treaties are important to us because we entered into these negotiations with faith, with hope for a better life with honour," writes Harold Cardinal in his book *The Unjust Society*. He goes on to say the treaties have not been honoured but manipulated and changed by

government policy.

To Little Child the government's policy move against the university and college education program is an attempt to erode the treaty rights. To openly contravene the Treaties would not be a smart move for the federal government. It is the gradual change and erosion of the contracts which Indians fear.

When the E-12 Circular was put out in the spring of 1975, the government planned to make it Department policy by the fall of that year. Many native groups protested that there had not been enough consultation with Indians and consequently the implementa-

tion of a policy was deferred until April 1976.

Little Child said, "The government's actions have put us in a position of reaction, not consultation." In December of last year the National Indian Brotherhood Association selected a committee of 15 native students from across Canada to prepare a counter-proposal.

"The Treaty Indian feeling is that post-secondary education is a Treaty right for all the lands we have given up. It is paid for without history. We have a moral right to expect education in return", she said.

Alberta workers reject anti inflation program

EDMONTON (CPA-CUP) - The Alberta Federation of Labour and the provincial NDP have both slammed the province for signing an Anti-Inflation agreement with the federal government.

"Alberta workers will not accept the anti-inflation program", said Reg Baskin, president of the 100,000 member Federation of Labour.

"It has already been proven," he said, "that the anti-inflation program is nothing more than an attempt to freeze the wages of working men and women, while allowing the business community to increase its prices and profits without scrutiny."

Provincial NDP leader Grant

Notley said the anti-inflation program "will increase the inequality in the province and will force the ordinary citizen to pay the price of restraint."

Notley condemned the exclusion of provincial fees and charges and energy prices from the agreement.

Medicare premiums are up 11 percent, college and university tuition fees are expected to rise 25-40 percent, and nursing home charges and senior citizens' 'lodges' rents are also rising.

Natural gas rates are increasing dramatically, and telephone and power rates are going up.

Notley said the government's 11 percent ceiling on spending increases for social services, such as home care programs, is "creating havoc".

AFL president Baskin said the program is "patently unfair, grossly discriminatory, and work-

ing people will not accept it regardless of what the government says".

"Wages are easier to control because our employers are only too happy to hand negotiated increases to the federal government," he said.

"We have tried, through rational discussion and logical argument to convince the government that the federal program is unfair to working people, and that tactic has obviously failed."

The Federation will now have to look at other ways of bringing our case home to the premier that Alberta workers will not accept any program that allows the prices of the necessities of life to keep rising while their wages are frozen."

"The government will have to take full responsibility for its actions," Baskin warned.

Pre-Med Society welcomes members

Students contemplating involvement next year with the Pre-Medical and Pre-Dental Society can look forward to a varied and enjoyable social and academic experience, said past president Moe Latouche. The society annually assists the Red Cross in organization of two blood donor clinics on campus (one per term) as well as an SRC-supported trip (usually in February) to visit the medical Facilities at Dalhousie University in Halifax. In addition, a number of interesting guest lecturers each year make it easier and more responsible to pursue plans to enter the health professions; they are often able to supply frank insight into the actualities involved, rather than idealistic overviews. The society this year is especially indebted to Health Centre Director Dr. Robert Tingley, to Pre-Medical Advisor (Asst. Dean of Science) Dr. Sharon Bachinski, to Dr. Petrie (Anesthesiologist) and to last year's Society President Mr. Greg Lutz.

The society members engage also in a number of social functions Saturday 27, March 76 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Mactaquac Lodge will be held the final social gathering of the society, featuring the first-annual end-of-year Presentation-of-Awards to outstanding contributors within the society. Next year, it is hoped, will be a more successful one in terms of the

number of active members, and a considerable number of new activities (including visits to local hospitals and other health centres) are planned.

The society exists as a self-help student organization of students pursuing studies towards entry into Medical, Dental and Veterinary Medical Facilities. Although all students are welcome, experience has shown that only a small number of dedicated undergraduates actually get involved, said Latouche. There appears, however a healthy correlation between these interested students and those later successful in acceptance into professional studies in the health sciences.

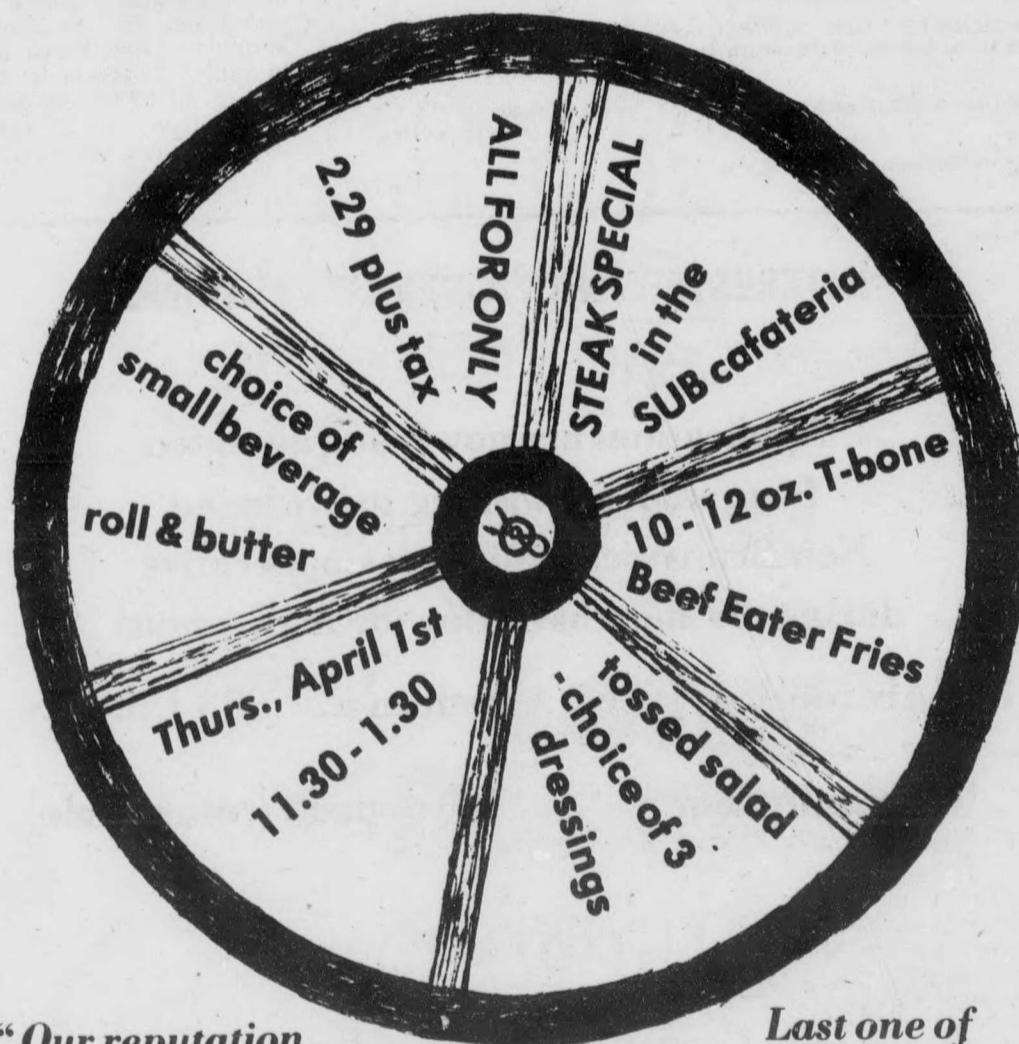
"Hope to see you next year!!!!" he said.

CHSC meets

The annual general meeting of the College Hill Social Club will be held Wednesday, March 31, in the club room. The bar closes at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting will review the past year's operation, elect new directors, review financial statements, and plan for the year ahead.

PONDER THIS ROSA !!



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Last one of the year!