

## Racism on rise

**MONTREAL (CUP)** — Racism is on the rise in Canada, according to a Canadian Human Rights Commission annual report released in March.

But according to Jane Kouka-Ganga, a Dawson College administrator and black community activist, the report is superficial.

"Everything is always in the study stage," she said. Kouka-Ganga criticized the report for not recommending concrete plans to solve Canada's racism problems. More government support and funding for community groups is essential, she said.

According to sections of the report on race, origin and religion, "We are far from immune to xenophobic attitudes and many Canadians are persuaded that we are entering stormy seas."

"Our findings show that racism and bigotry are alive and well in workplaces, schools, shops, government departments, banks, television companies, as well as in the streets and in the backrooms," the report reads.

But according to Kouka-Ganga, racism is not on the rise in Canada. "I don't think it could get any worse than it is now," she said.

Thirty per cent of the complaints of discrimination made to the Human Rights Commission last year were related to race, origin and religion.

Denis Langlois, spokesperson for La Ligue des Droits et Liberté, said increasing numbers of immigrants from third world countries are the targets of racism.

"The intensity (of racism) is stronger and people are more armed. Now racism has become violent," said Langlois.

## Donation queried

**OTTAWA (CUP)** — Carleton University's acceptance of a \$750,000 donation from the INCO corporation has raised some eyebrows about how the university raises its money.

Members of the campus Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG) say INCO's association with the Indonesian government calls the company's motives into question.

Indonesia has been criticized for its program of transmigration, seen as a threat to the residents of East Timor, a Pacific island territory invaded by Indonesia in 1975.

Kate Marshall, a member of OPIRG's board of directors, said INCO, because of its mass-scale dealings with Indonesia, has a great deal of influence on government policy. She also said the company's hesitancy to work to resolve the East Timor problem is effectively condoning the government's policy.

Rod Milne, an OPIRG volunteer, said Carleton students should be told about INCO's dealings with Indonesia.

"The problem with accepting the money without exposing the underside of INCO's dealings is that they appear to be a charitable, guiltless and benevolent organization when they really are not."

Pat O'Brien, a Carleton spokesperson, said virtually all corporate donors to the university probably have interests that not all members of the university community approve of.

"If you want to find a squeaky clean corporation, you're going to look a long time," he said.

## R&D money needed

**OTTAWA (CUP)** — The government of Canada should be more committed to funding research and scientific development, says the National Consortium of Scientific and Educational Societies.

The consortium held a lobby week in March for the sixth year in a row. Lobbyists from across Canada held a total of 89 meetings with MPs and upper civil servants concerned with research and development (R&D).

"The message is increasingly heard, I think," said Caroline Andrew, chair of the consortium, "but there are also increasing budgetary constraints."

This particular government has made more noises about R&D but there is a discrepancy between what is said and what is done, said Andrew.

Francois Rocher, a political science professor at Carleton University, was one of the 65 lobbyists.

"They share our views" that more R&D is necessary, he said of the government. However, he agreed the current tough economic times make it difficult for the government to commit money to science and research.

# Natives must fight

by **Monique Beaudin and Jeff Harrington**

**OTTAWA (CUP)** — Would you enrol in an education system that taught you your culture was extinct?

Most native students don't.

"The Canadian school system is seen as a tool of assimilation," says Martin Dunn, of the native Council of Canada.

The history, philosophy and even the value system taught in the Canadian education system all focus on French and British influences, though French and British-Canadians are a minority in Canada, he says.

"The curriculum is irrelevant to my experience and understanding of Canada," says Melodie Johnnie, a fourth-year student at the University of Winnipeg.

Johnnie, a commissioner for the Canadian Federation of Students' Aboriginal Students Constituency Group, says the material being taught at Canadian high schools, colleges and universities is racist and ethnocentric.

And other students say that while professors are often supportive, what little they do know of aboriginal cultures is usually gleaned from books written by non-natives.

"You're constantly on a pedestal, trying to educate people about who we are. It's tough - racism is tough," says Wendy Hull, a Micmac in her fourth year of political science at Dalhousie University in Halifax.

Before giving presentations in class, Hull always smudges the room with sweetgrass, a ceremonial plant. The ritual gives her strength and helps keep her mind focused. But her Contemporary Native Studies professor told her the sweetgrass ceremony isn't traditional to the Micmac people.

"I had to pull myself together - it was difficult," says Hull. "How can anyone be an expert on oral culture they tried to destroy?"

Dunn says that in order to retain their culture, natives who go on to college or university must fight assimilation.

"Only those who are very strong within themselves will survive the white education system," he says.

But to reach university with their spirit intact, aboriginal students must first face a treacherous obstacle course.

Past experiences with the Canadian education system - residential schools, for example - often deter them from continuing on to higher education, says Eric Hill, a second-year public administration student at Carleton University.

The church-run residential school took native children from their homes and taught them non-native philosophy and language. The students were forbidden to speak their native language or

follow their traditional beliefs.

"The older people who went to residential schools pass down stories to their children about their experience, and that stops some people from going to college or university," Hill says.

*It's a struggle even to finish high school*

Because most non-native teachers at the primary and secondary level know little about aboriginal culture, they often judge students - by their own standards - as shy, disinterested or stupid. As a result, many students are "streamed" into general or vocational programs, rather than the courses required for university.

"It's a struggle even to finish high school," says Melodie Johnnie.

And Martin Dunn points out that poor economic situations force many would-be students to get jobs as soon as they are old enough to work.

"They get jobs purely because it's an economic necessity," he says.

Johnnie echoes that statement. And she adds that besides high unemployment, a lot of native teens end up having children before they finish high school.

"When babies are having babies, they aren't going to have time to go to university," she says.

If they do have time and live on a reserve, then they have a big decision to make.

"There are no post-secondary institutions on reserves. For many students, then, going to university or college means moving away from home," says Sylvia Sioufi, a researcher for the Canadian Federation of Students.

"It's very expensive, and that discourages a lot of people."

Moving away also means forsaking the emotional and spiritual support of their community for the

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## Correction:

The DSU advertisement on page 2 of the Gazette last week, regarding the deadline for Frosh Squad and Frosh Committee, was incorrect. The deadline should have read April 5th, not February 5th. The Advertising Department of the Gazette wishes to apologise for any confusion caused.



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