

# Dodging bullets: new premier under fire

BY DANIEL CLARK

Nova Scotia's new Premier, Russell MacLellan, has nine months to convince 900,000 people that he is tough on crime, a producer of jobs, and an education leader — or he'll be out of a job.

MacLellan has been criticized by his opponents, namely Progressive Conservative and leader of the opposition John Hamm, for not calling a provincial election immediately after his appointment as leader of the Nova Scotia Liberals.

"I don't think that's fair," MacLellan said in response.

"Not to us nor the people of this province. We are a new and a different government, we need and deserve time to develop a track record that we can be judged on. How can the voters be asked to make a judgement on a government that they know nothing about?"

MacLellan has been saddled with the pressure of following an unpopular government. His predecessor, John Savage, had been languishing in the popularity polls until his resignation last April. MacLellan has since been compared to former Prime Minister Kim Campbell who was also given the task of saving a sinking ship.

"This is a first for me. I've never been compared to Kim Campbell before. However, I can't be worried about the ghosts of governments past. Our goal is to distinguish ourselves as a new government, and have the people vote for us on our own right."

The new Premier appears to recognize the importance of

universities to the welfare of the province, but he says that Nova Scotia is a cash strapped province, and therefore his attitude towards education seems passive in nature.

"We have a strong commitment to university education. We know just how important universities are to this province. They are not just a part of the education system, but they are institutions who employ thousands of workers and contribute millions to the economy. We are working with the universities to help them keep their tuition down. We want to be partners in education."

Nova Scotia universities receive less money from the Canadian Health and Social Transfer (CHST) than any other province. The CHST is the federal government program which makes transfer payments to the provinces to help pay for health, education, and welfare. How the transfer is distributed within the province is determined by the provincial government.

MacLellan explained that it is not a lack of commitment that has led Nova Scotia to spend less per capita on university students, but the province's unique situation.

"The problem with the CHST and education is that the amount we receive is based on population. In most provinces the average number of out-of-province university students is 7%, in Nova Scotia 25% of students are from out-of-province."

"I have entered into a discussion with the Prime Minister about this. The factors by which the

CHST is determined must be changed," MacLellan continued.

University students contribute an estimated \$350,000,000 to the economy of the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). In comparison, students only contribute some \$175,000,000 to the remainder of the province. This problem is emblematic of Nova Scotia's economy as a whole.

"There are effectively two economies in Nova Scotia. HRM and everywhere else. We have to stop focusing all our attention on HRM, it is doing well. I would even say booming. The rest of the province needs infrastructure or we will start to see some of the small towns which are Nova Scotia's heart, disappear."

"Take Cape Breton for example. They have one of the highest unemployment rates in the country. People are leaving at an alarming rate. What is needed in Cape Breton is simple: jobs. Without them the economy of that area will collapse in a matter of a few years."

With a declining population, growing social problems and the highest tuition in the country, the new Premier feels the need to speak directly to students.

"I want students to think that this government is working with the universities and is addressing their concerns. I want there to be results for every student to point to. I was a student once, and I know how sceptical they are. We don't want them to have to take a leap of faith when they vote for us, we want them to be able to look at what we've done."

After being asked what he wanted his leadership to be remembered for, MacLellan paused and thought.

"I would want my leadership to be remembered for leaving the

province in better shape than when we got here. If citizens can honestly say that things are better now than when I came to power, I will be happy. That is the only way to judge a government."

## Shinerama

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Dean Nougler, are confident that with this week's final event, the \$25,000 total will be confirmed. The blitz crew will "clown around" the city offering free face painting to children. The event is on Saturday and is sponsored by the city of Halifax.

Craig said that the blitz crew were little short of a phenomenon this year. Over the summer they raised more than \$5,000 in a number of events. These benefits included bar hops around the city to sell suckers, the first of which raised over \$1,000 in five hours.

Two appearances by the blitz crew on Breakfast Television resulted in a macarena with BT host Scott Boyd. The crew also played pool with Live at Five's Steve Weagle, and held a benefit concert at Reflections Cabaret. As well, there were innumerable face painting excursions, barbecues, and a campus challenge to the faculty to dress casually which raised over \$600.

The blitz crew itself consisted of forty members to start, and ended with fifty. Craig added that this unbelievably successful group was followed by the most enthusiastic first year participants in Dal history. Although participation was voluntary and frosh could quit at anytime, one overzealous Shinerama group continued fundraising and was collected by its frosh leaders at 5 p.m.

The success of this year's Shinerama remains unmatched in Eastern

Canada.

"Everything that could have gone right, went right," said Craig, who felt a deep sense of satisfaction with this the event's outcome.

Likewise, many students came away with smiles and high spirits.

"It was crazy and it was for a good cause," said first year student,

Alison Digout, as she returned from "shining".

Sixty-six universities across Canada participate yearly in Shinerama and while Ontario remains consistently number one, Dalhousie leads Eastern Canada by thousands of dollars. The fund raiser supports the Canadian Cystic Fibrosis Foundation which is responsible for nearly all research done on CF. Canada is also the leading country in CF research.

The disease itself is genetic and recessive. When two parents — both carrying the CF gene — have a child, there is a 25 per cent chance that their child will have CF.

"A child with Cystic Fibrosis is literally handed a death card at birth," says Craig, explaining her deep involvement with this cause. "There is no cure."

Children with CF slowly starve and suffocate as mucus lines both their lungs and intestinal walls. They can neither breathe comfortably or digest food of any kind. At a conference in Toronto, both Craig and Tam tried breathing through a straw for one minute to experience what breathing is like for a CF sufferer. Craig described the experience as horrible — she turned blue.

On a brighter note, research in the field has led to dramatic improvements. The life expectancy of a child with CF has increased from twelve years of age to thirty. This is due to advancements like nutrient rich diets and intense physiotherapy.

So, while the number of reasons compelling both blitz crew and frosh to participate in this event differed; the enthusiasm did not. The result was a breathtaking success. In the hectic and somewhat criticised week of frosh initiation, Shinerama provided a means to prove what Dal, and team effort are really made of.

## The Coast: sex & drugs

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included in the pamphlet.

"Dan Savage does sex advice for a living, he's...basically an expert in the field, and as a gay man he's very much...up to date on all the research on HIV...like he says, girls that sleep exclusively with other girls, there's no male contact at all, these women are not at risk for passing AIDS along."

Nancy Hunter, coordinator of the women and AIDS project for the AIDS coalition, disagrees.

"To say that girls who sleep with other girls are simply not at

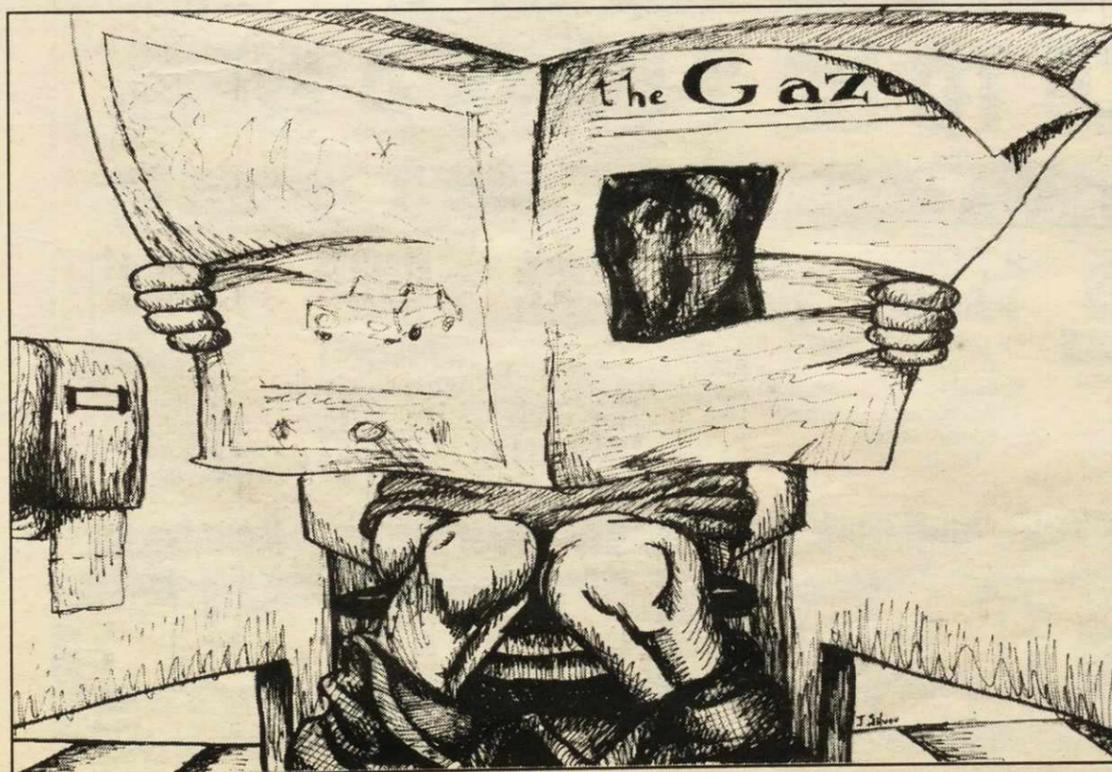
risk, is focussing on a group instead of behaviours...for example woman to woman oral sex is a low-risk activity, a low risk, not a no risk...there is a difference," said Hunter.

The pamphlets were slated for frosh packs at The University of King's College, the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD), and St. Mary's University. While representatives from King's College and NSCAD could not be reached for comment, Dalhousie wasn't the only university to snub the pamphlets.

The Saint Mary's University Student Association (SMUSA) also refused to include them with their frosh packs.

The SMUSA executive shredded the pamphlets because they found them distasteful and inappropriate for first year students.

SMUSA operations manager Rob Finn said, "It's all about drugs...you'll be introduced to in your first few years of college...and all about sex. And not just sex, but explicit sex and anal sex and all this stuff."



## Collective talks begin

BY MARK REYNOLDS

Faculty members at Dalhousie will push administration for a better deal after enduring a four year negotiation freeze under their current collective agreement.

The Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) and the university administration have begun negotiating a new collective agreement. Their current collective agreement expires on 1 November 1997.

As an attempt to save money, the agreement negotiated between the DFA and the administration in 1991 was frozen in 1993. This is the first time since then (1993) that faculty members will be able to negotiate for pay increases and other benefits with the university administration.

"We are exchanging proposals Wednesday [Sept. 10] and will be negotiating Mondays and Wednesdays," said Michael Cross, chief negotiator for the DFA.

The university administration has already budgeted for a two per cent wage increase for faculty in this year's budget. Cross says that the faculty association hopes to achieve more than that.

"We're planning on going for more...we've had a wage freeze and a roll-back...our wages are considerably lower than they were in '91 in real dollars."

Bryan Mason, Vice-President Finance and Administration at Dalhousie and the negotiator for the administration, would not comment on his position going into the negotiations.

"We'll be taking it step by step...I don't agree with negotiating publicly or in the media; it just leads to bad labor relations," Mason said.

However, Mason did say that the two per cent figure is not flexible.

"That's the money we have to spend for the current year...to spend more would involve cuts elsewhere."