

Newspaper nuked in council coup

by Andy Riga

LENNOXVILLE (CUP) — Bishop's University's student council changed the locks on the campus newspaper office Jan. 19, a day after impeaching the editor and taking control of the paper.

The council voted to impeach Elliott Soifer Jan 18, claiming he "mismanaged" *The Campus'* finances and ruled the paper without staff input. The council then named an "interim" replacement.

The Campus' entire editorial board and all but three of the staff members have resigned in support of Soifer.

The weekly *Campus* and the student council have been at loggerheads since the newspaper published a column criticizing the council's spending habits last November. At that time, the council threatened to cut the paper's financing.

Soifer, who has yet to be officially notified of the impeachment, said the council was embarrassed by the column and is now overstepping its authority to suppress further criticism.

Soifer said no one told him the council was discussing impeaching him. He only learned he had been fired when a *Campus* reporter covering the meeting called him the night of Jan. 18.

Council president Dean French said Soifer published potentially libelous material in *The Campus*, opening up the possibility of a lawsuit against the council.

"The impression was (also) made that the editor-in-chief was making divine editorial decisions by himself," French said. "In our opinion, student funds should not be given to a paper where one student is making all decisions."

The Campus had the column in question reviewed by a lawyer who said it did not contain libelous statements, Soifer said. The paper has run two apologies for inaccuracies in the column, one in the subsequent issue and another in the last issue, Jan. 18.

Soifer said the allegations of autocratic rule at *The Campus* — which is editorially independent — surprise him because "the paper has always been run democratically."

The fact that the staff has stuck

together since the impeachment proves this, according to Soifer, who was elected editor by staff members last February.

"*The Campus'* staff is not stupid. I think (the council isn't) giving the staff much credit. If I was doing something wrong, the staff would have done something about it."

"They were just looking for a reason to get rid of me," Soifer said.

The staff is putting out an underground paper under the name *The Independent* — and will continue to fight until *The Campus* becomes financially and editorially autonomous, Soifer said.

Campus staffers are preparing a campaign to have the council impeachment decision revoked, including another edition of the *Independent* and a petition drive.

The council has announced that it will continue to publish *The Campus*. French said a new editor will be elected within weeks.

The opinion piece that sparked the controversy appeared on Nov. 16. Written by staff member Jiri Tucker, it criticizes the council for making some unwise pur-



The Independent goes where council said they couldn't

chases and calls the student pub staff "deceptive."

The *Campus'* constitution has provisions for impeaching editors — a two-thirds majority vote of staff members. The student council's constitution says the council is only responsible for the

financial management of *The Campus*.

"The council constitution doesn't say the council can't impeach the editor," French said. "We interpret that to mean we can."

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Afro-Canadians urge Marshall report watchdog

by Juanita Smith

The Afro-Canadian Caucus of Nova Scotia "applauded and welcomed" the release of the Marshall report yesterday. At an official press conference on Agricola Street, the Caucus called it "a step in the right direction".

However, Caucus president Yvonne Atwell added that they "will not be fully satisfied unless and until the government . . . takes swift and immediate action to implement the recommendations of the commissions."

Among the commission's recommendations was the formation of a cabinet committee on race relations, which would meet

regularly with representatives of minority groups. While Atwell said the caucus supports this action, she pointed out that this would still leave decision-making in government hands.

The Caucus' proposed solution is the creation of a special committee, comprised mainly of blacks and Micmacs and chaired by either the Attorney-General or the Solicitor-General. This committee would monitor the implementation of the Royal Commission's recommendations, as well as deal with matters of criminal justice concerning visible minorities.

The Caucus suggested that the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission change its policy to

include public disclosure of all complaints.

The Caucus also made suggestions concerning victims and violations. A complainant, they said, should have the right to sue for damages, and prosecution of anyone allegedly violating the Human Rights Act should be possible without the prior consent of the Attorney-General. Also, victims' legal costs should be the burden of anyone found guilty of acts of discrimination, the caucus suggested.

Although the caucus is not expecting the eradication of prejudice, it said there are signs that society is moving in the right direction. The caucus said the report on Donald Marshall is the

first time the government has admitted the existence of racial discrimination in the justice system.

The furor created by the Marshall case has made the public aware of such goings-on, Atwell said, adding that it is politically a good time to clean discrimination out of the bureaucracy.

But Atwell said government action and policy will only help so much. Funding for better and more nearly equal education programs is needed, and not just in the initial stages, she said. Blacks and Native people must become a part of the judicial system more than they are now. The Human Rights Commission must also become "more open" to scrutiny.