

Making the Connections

Ending Development Change in the world as we know it

BY JIM DELANEY

Last Friday I filled out an application for an internship in one of a number of "fast developing countries."

Content at my new-found possibility for employment, I later dropped by the Grad House for a beer. When I asked why the place was so crowded (I had to wait five minutes at the bar), I was reminded that there was an East Timor benefit that night. I had forgotten about the event, but was glad that I could be there for a few minutes; Indonesia's horrific human rights abuses in East Timor have become a matter of growing concern.

When I finally sat down with my beer, I glanced back at my application: "Check box 1 for Indonesia." Fast developing indeed.

The idea of development has not

always had the same power that it does today. There was once a time when it was a simple word, a term used to denote evolution, growth and change. Today, development is one of the overruling concepts of our world. It defines relations between countries, and the policies of whole regions. Indeed, development dominates the lives of most of the earth's people.

The modern meaning of the term development originated soon after the Second World War. US President Truman's oft-quoted speech helped to popularize the use of the word:

"We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas."

This idea was unprecedented in the political world that preceded the War; what followed was a time of great hope for the world. Modernization was the fashion of the day, and people looked forward to the time when traditional societies would join the modern world in a market economy. The measurement of development was almost solely restricted to the growth in the monetary wealth of countries, and it was assumed that as traditional societies grew in wealth they would shed much of their supposedly backward behaviour.

As times changed, so did development. The 1960s and 70s saw increased spending from many donor countries, and the creation of the basic needs approach to development. Development then became a matter of securing basic health, education, and safety for people so that progress could proceed. While this was a small divergence from the original path, the idea of development remained.

Reaganomics and trickle-down economics in the 1980s led to what is now referred to as the lost decade of development. The reality of debt hit many countries hard, and the adjustment programs imposed by many international institutions forced countries to scale back on social spending; much of the underdeveloped South began to slip backwards. By the end of the 80s, underdeveloped countries were only contributing 15 per cent of the world's economy. Development had clearly failed in much of the world.

The failure of development, along with mounting environmental problems, has created an atmosphere of antagonism to the very idea of progress. Today's favourite claim is that development is Western-centric and the end result of over five hundred years of colonialism — a form of neocolonialism.

This assertion does hold a lot of weight. It is undeniable that development has been obnoxious in its approach to the many cultures of the world. It must be asked, however, whether this is the fault of development or a problem stemming from how development has been used.

There are few ways to truly define development, especially if one is to make an attempt at a concrete meaning. Try to have some fun with the word: "developing hatred", "developing poverty", or the "de-

velopment of indifference." Development lends itself to whatever interpretations are thrust upon it. These interpretations are all too often decided upon by those who would see development as a linear progression or a tangible thing. Hence, development is most often outlined by those who think that they are developed. This simple fact has not changed since the day that Truman bastardized the word and changed the world in the process.

Development has, however, evolved to deal with the challenges that it has encountered. Ideas such as human development, gender and development, sustainable development, and appropriate technology have attempted to make development more user-friendly. Development is attempting to break from its linear past.

The examples of Indonesia, China, and many of the other fast developing countries, however, shows an awful truth: development does not necessarily create harmony. Even when states achieve development's primary goal — economic growth — they do not necessarily achieve justice, peace, or any of the factors of life that people value.

Development has become, more than ever, a process of quantifying and categorizing the world. Development imposes numbers where there should be ideas, and only uses ideas when there should be emotions. There are very few poets working for the World Bank.

Those who pursue and promote development often avoid the question that lies at the heart of their cause: "What is development?" Or, put more simply, "What does it mean to be developed?" I do not claim to have an answer to this question. The confusion of four years spent studying development — a virtual non-thing — has led me to believe that it does not exist. Defining the term is the most feared task of most students and practitioners of development. Inevitably one is forced to wonder how you can pursue or advocate that which you do not understand?

It was once argued to me — albeit over a few beers — that the idea of development is merely a diversion. It is a way to turn our heads from the need for meaning in our own societies or lives, or in the world as a whole. The current crisis in the supposedly developed world — which includes Canada — has been met with the assumption that happiness can only come with another visit to the boutique, the bar, or the bank machine.

It is easy to create wealth, as can be seen in Indonesia and the fast developing countries of the world. It is much more difficult to develop peace, justice, and meaning, especially in a world which values little but development and growth.

If development is to come to an end — as well it should — then it must be replaced with something. Solidarity perhaps? Or maybe simply change and evolution. Change is not always forward, and progress is not inevitable, but change must remain the focus of those who are interested in social justice and harmony.

That, of course, leads to yet another question: "What is change anyway?"

Sale of CANDUs to China questioned

BY MARK RATNER

MONTREAL (CUP) — Despite the possible creation of 8,000 jobs in Quebec alone, critics oppose the sale of the CANDU nuclear reactors to China because of the unseen costs that may accompany their sale.



The deal, which will bring a reported \$1.5 billion into Canada, took 2 years to negotiate. In order to persuade China to buy the reactors, the federal government agreed to loan China the money to pay for their purchase.

Prime Minister Jean Chretien applauded the sale. "Some people don't like nuclear energy, but for me, I like it," he said. "In Canada, we have never had an accident. It's effective. It's not polluting."

However, environmental groups have expressed outrage over the Canadian Government's continuing endorsement of nuclear energy. "It is the most expensive and most dangerous form of electricity," said Steve Shallhorn, campaign director for Greenpeace Canada.

Shallhorn said the use of CANDU reactors involves the same safety risks that caused the devastating nuclear meltdowns at the Chernobyl and Three Mile Island

nuclear energy plants.

"They are the same reactors — there isn't any particular new design. We are just lucky that we have yet to have a serious accident in Canada," Shallhorn said.

He added that he worries the sale of nuclear reactors to China will aid China's ability to produce nuclear weapons. Nuclear reactors produce plutonium, which is the main component of nuclear weapons.

"China is the world's fourth largest holder of weapons," said Shallhorn.

Dave Martin, research director for the Nuclear Awareness program, echoed Shallhorn's concerns over the viability of nuclear energy.

"Fundamentally, nuclear power is a flawed technology. It is polluting and expensive," Martin said. He also said that a main problem with the CANDU reactors is they are often sold to "countries with severe human rights violations."

Human rights issues are a main concern of Canada's dealings with China. "The human rights situation [in China] is not improving," said Carole Channer of Amnesty International Canada.

She said Amnesty International documented 1,000 executions in China within a three month period in 1996. China is also known to actively persecute political dissidents.

"There is repression of any [dis-

senting] cultural, religious or ethnic sentiment," said Channer.

However, she makes it clear that Amnesty International does not take a position regarding international trade boycotts. "We are not opposed to trade with China," explained Channer. "Amnesty's concern is of human rights violations."

Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL), the Crown Corporation that manufactures the CANDU reactors, refutes the claim that their reactors are unsafe.

"The world-class CANDU 6 reactor has an international reputation as one of the world's best and safest reactors," states the AECL's Internet site. The company says that, "International experts consistently rank CANDU 6 reactors in the world's top 10 for annual and lifetime performance and safety."

But for Martin, the AECL has little credibility because they have "a history of bribery and corruption." He points out that in 1994, an agent of the AECL was "arrested and jailed for paying bribes to South Korea."

Recently, a blow was struck against the CANDUs reputation for safety. In New Brunswick, a CANDU reactor recently sprung a leak. And the Globe and Mail reported earlier this month that a legislator "says there's new evidence of more serious problems that could shut down the plant for good."

International Development Week 1997

Calendar of Events:



All Week — Educational displays on Dalhousie's International Development Projects and Local Development Non-governmental Organizations in the Dal SUB Lobby.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3

- **Music**, 12-1 p.m. in the SUB lobby.
- **Cuisine from India** available in the Union Market of the SUB.
- **Nova Scotia Cuba Association Video** — *The Gringo in Mananaland*, 7:30 p.m., Room 234 of the A&A Building. Excerpts from classic Hollywood films let viewers make their own connections between media images, cultural perceptions of Latin America, and US foreign policy. Discussion to follow.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4

- **Mexican Music** by Sauidel Ramirez, 12-1 p.m. in the SUB lobby.
- **Cuisine from Mexico** in the Union Market of the SUB.
- **Brown Bag Lunch Talk — Community Participation and the Nicaraguan Election** with Meghan Smillie, 12:30 p.m., Room 224 of the SUB.
- **Panel Discussion — Universities and International Development Cooperation: Student Perspectives**, 4 p.m. in the Seminar Room, Lester Pearson International, 1321 Edward Street. Join the Master of Development Economics class for this panel discussion.
- **NSPIRG video** — *Manufacturing Consent*, 6:30 p.m., MachMechan Auditorium, Killam Library. Noam Chomsky explores the connections between media, advertising and the global economy.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

- **Music: African, Cuban, Haitian** derived World Beat, 12-1 p.m. in the SUB lobby.
- **Cuisine from China** in the Union Market of the SUB.
- **International Opportunities Day** — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Green Room, SUB. **Full schedule on this page.**
- **Centre for Foreign Policy Studies Seminar — Connecting with the World: Priorities for Canadian Internationalism** in the 21st Century, 12:30 p.m., Room 319 of the A&A. With Ian Smillie — a development consultant and writer — and Dr. Robert Fournier, Dalhousie associate vp (Research and International Affairs).
- **Talk — Relief Development and Peacekeeping: Perspectives on the International Red Cross** with Ian McAllister, 5:30 p.m. in the Seminar Room, Lester Pearson International, 1321 Edward Street. Join the Masters of Development Economics Class for talk and discussion.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6

- **International Folk Music** by Tania Trepanier and Angela Failler, 12-1:30 p.m. in the SUB lobby.
- **Cuisine from Jamaica** in the Union Market of the SUB.
- **Paint Crawl** — paint your picture or prose depicting international development issues, sponsored by the International Development Association, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Paint supplied — bring your ideas and creativity!
- **International Development Studies Seminar — Development as Practice: The Nuts and Bolts of Development Consulting**. With local consultants at 4:30 p.m. in the Multidisciplinary Centre, 1444 Seymour Street.

Dalhousie and King's Students

Want to go overseas to study, work or volunteer?

Don't Miss...International Opportunities Day

Wednesday, February 5 — 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Green Room, SUB

Agenda:

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| 10:00 a.m. | Project Accompaniment (PA) |
| 10:30 a.m. | Canadian Crossroads International (CCI) |
| 11:00 a.m. | Student Work Abroad Program (SWAP) |
| 11:30 a.m. | Youth Challenge International |
| 12:00 p.m. | Canada World Youth (CWY) |
| 12:30 p.m. | Nancy Hayter, Lester Pearson International — Study/Work International Fund (SWIF) (Financial assistance for overseas study, work and volunteer programs) and Commonwealth Universities Study Abroad Consortium (CUSAC) |
| 1:00 p.m. | Dr. Cynthia Neville, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences |
| 1:30 p.m. | Dr. Judy Guernsey, Faculty of Medicine |
| 2:00 p.m. | Charlene Milner, Faculty of Management |
| 2:30 p.m. | Melissa Ferguson, Registrar's Office |
| 3:00 p.m. | World University Service of Canada (WUSC) |
| 3:30 p.m. | Service Civil Canada |



International Opportunities Day is presented by Dalhousie's Lester Pearson International (LPI)

For more information, contact LPI at 494-2038