

Newfoundlanders secondary issue

Seal savers state stand

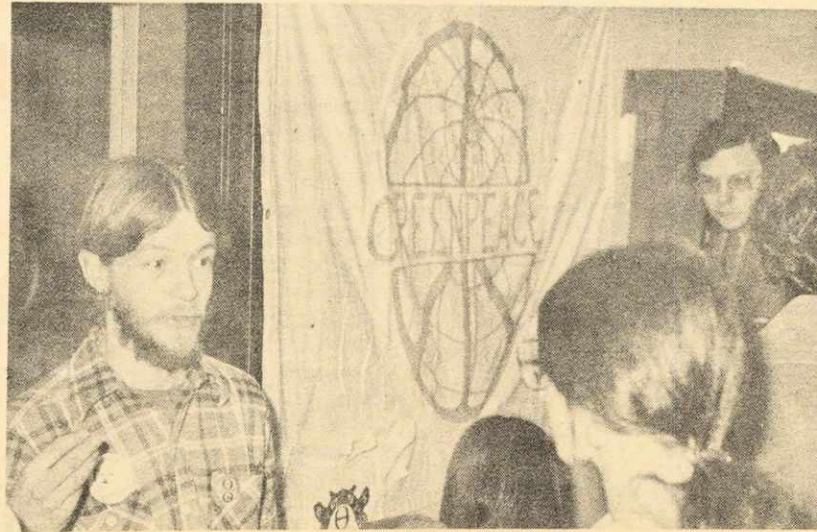
by Marc Allain

"We could take a real elitist attitude and say that the hunt has to be stopped at all costs because there just aren't going to be any seals left. But the situation is fairly complex and there are other considerations that have to be taken into account."

In an attempt to explain these other considerations and to clarify their position on the seal hunt members of the Greenpeace foundation held a public information session in Halifax last week.

The focus of the Greenpeace presentation was on the preservation of the species and ecological conservation. As a result the cruelty issue was consciously downplayed. "It's not the point of our campaign although a lot of individuals in the movement personally feel it's an important issue. What we're concentrating on is the question of the harp seal's extinction and whether or not the hunt is leading to the eradication of the species."

The quota for this year's hunt which begins on March 10, has been set at 170,000 seals, an increase of 10,000 over last year. Michael Monolson, spokesperson for the group, said he was not convinced that there was sufficient evidence to suggest that the present seal stocks could support



Dal Photo / Simkins

this rate of exploitation. "It's not that we're saying our scientists are 100% right and that their scientists are 100% wrong. What we're saying is that there is insufficient scientific evidence to responsibly state where the harp seal population stands."

Monolson emphasized that Greenpeace's main objective was to have a six year moratorium placed on the hunt to allow for proper study of the present state of the seal population.

"If the government was as committed to ecological management as it says it is then there

would be no question that it would suspend the hunt until the proper research was completed," Monolson said.

As could be expected considerable discussion focussed on the economic aspects of the hunt. It was pointed out that the sealing industry was completely dominated by Norwegian interests and that Canadian involvement was restricted to providing labour for the extraction of the raw resource.

The Greenpeace representatives however were accused of not putting the importance of the hunt

to the individual sealer in its proper perspective. Monolson in fact quoted statistics that put the average earnings for the Newfoundland sealer at \$120.

"You'd have to be terribly naive to think that anyone would spend three weeks on the ice floes for a hundred and twenty bucks," a seal hunt sympathizer commented. He added that many Newfoundlanders involved in the hunt earn between \$3000 and \$5000 for their three weeks labour and that for many this constitutes a major portion of their annual income.

Monolson admitted that the figure was distorted because it was based on the total number of licences issued and that over half of these went to individuals seeking to protect their unemployment insurance claims rather than to participate in the hunt.

He expressed concern over the plight of the individual involved and tried to dispell the notion that Greenpeace initiatives were diametrically opposed to the interests of the seal hunters. "If there is a possibility of the species being extinct in 15 years then where will that leave the sealer?" he asked.

"Conservation is the main focus of our campaign. If it can be proven beyond all doubt that the species is not being threatened with extinction then we can deal with the question of the hunt and quotas."

Diversionsary Gazette

To the Gazette:

For several months, the **Gazette** has carried articles on the question of Chile and South Africa to promote such diversionary "issues" as "Dal investments in South Africa". Accordingly, students, staff and faculty should "act now" and "put pressure" on the "administration" to pull investments out of so-called "socially irresponsible" corporations which "extract their profits at the expense of the most elementary human rights"—"Canadian businesses (which) profit from apartheid". Dangerous illusions, harmful to the interests of the students, are being sown about the nature of the Canadian state and the university to suggest that they can take a "progressive" stand, while these opportunist articles accuse the students of "complicity" in exploitation. They are blind to the resistance of the Chilean and Azanian people while promoting in a disguised form the hypocritical "human rights" campaign of the Carter administration by squandering the money of the students.

We make the following points to repudiate this unprincipled propaganda:

1. The fact that it is the Investment Committee of the Board of Governors, not the "administration", which is in charge of these investments, is hidden or ignored. These are big finance capitalists representing foreign, chiefly U.S., and native monopoly capital. Instead, it is suggested that the money-bags of Canada and the USA can act as "humanitarians" by denying that the Dal B.O.G. and the monopoly owners are the same handful of the rich.

2. The "issue" of "Dal investments" is promoted to push the opportunist theory of "Canadian imperialism" and exonerate U.S. imperialism which all-sidedly dominates Canada and props up the racist and fascist Vorster regime. This line contemptuously reduces the struggle of the Azanian and Chilean people into a struggle against the so-called Canadian imperialism / companies. Yet, facts show that the controlling interest in both Falconbridge and Alcan are held by Superior Oil of Texas and the Mellon families respectively, and their exports are massively subsidized by the Export Development Corp. Noranda is entangled in the web of international, chiefly U.S., finance capital. Rockefeller has been investing in the Royal Bank since 1902. Canada is dom-

inated by U.S. imperialism.

3. Opportunism does not investigate a thing-in-itself, such as Dal investments, because reality does not fit dogma. There is a quite selective sampling of the investments and no homework to show that Dalhousie has direct investments in U.S. common stock of the largest U.S. companies in South Africa amounting to well over \$2-million. Instead, \$27,650 worth of stocks in Falconbridge and \$16,575 in Alcan are dug up to fit the pre-conceived "issue" of Canadian imperialism which is foisted on the students in the packaged form of "Dal investments are the issue."

Underneath the radical pose of attacking "business", the practical effect is:

1. Promotion of the strength and invincibility of the fascists, e.g., "the most brutal dictatorship of our times" (Chile) and "the strength of the repressive machinery of the South African state could not have been clearer." (S. Africa expects a white Christmas.)

2. No question of building unity of the students with the Chilean and Azanian struggles: no call is given in any of these articles to support the mass uprisings and popular resistance. Instead, sup-

pression of news about resistance which shows how inherently weak these regimes are, despite their temporary "strength", and how fascism can be defeated. For example, the section of an article submitted by DSM to popularize the tour of the Peoples Front of Chile detailing the heroic resistance of the Chilean people to the Junta including the stoning of Pinochet was cut "for lack of space" and no reporter sent to the meeting "because of exams".

3. Implicit call for "unity" with the university capitalists, "socially responsible" corporations and critical support for the government of Trudeau which hypocritically opposes but actually supports the fascist regimes of Chile and South Africa.

4. Absolutely no mention of U.S. imperialism and its reactionary position in the struggles of the Azanian and Chilean people and the vast neo-colonial empire of the two superpowers. Silence on Soviet social imperialism waiting in the wings and piously calling for "national liberation".

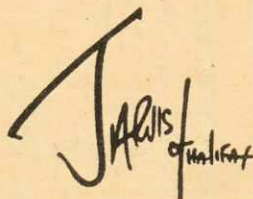
5. Repetition of Carter's demagoguery of "human rights" as political deception to mask the true interests of the imperialist superpowers.

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