



Caroline Zayid and Ian McCarthy

Case dismissed

by PAT SAVAGE and TOBY SANGER

DSU president-elect Caroline Zayid and vice-president-elect Ian McCarthy can finally start smiling. In a surprisingly brief elections committee hearing last night, allegations that they campaigned illegally were dropped and the case against them dismissed.

In a joint submission from defeated candidates Robert Power/Jonathan Tarlton and Dean Dolan/Joe Morrison, the Zayid and McCarthy team were accused of not removing their campaign materials and distributing campaign materials after

the deadline. It was also alleged that phone calls and other personal contacts were made after the campaign ended with the intention of influencing voters.

After a six-hour procedural meeting last Saturday, the elections committee was prepared for a late evening Wednesday night. The council chambers were booked from 7 pm to 1 am, but in an unexpected move, one of the defeated candidates' lawyers, Maureen Turner, announced that "in the best interests of the DSU," the allegations were being withdrawn.

Zayid/McCarthy's lawyer Tim Hill then moved dismissal and the meeting was over by 7:45 pm,

leaving the 35 onlookers deflated and in the dark about the agreement reached behind closed doors.

Asked why they dropped the charges, Power and Tarlton declined comment. Dean Dolan said, "personally, I felt very uncomfortable going any further with this."

Zayid, a second-year law student, couldn't hide her sense of relief. "We think it's great that the election got decided by the voters and not a bunch of lawyers."

Zayid and McCarthy start collecting their inflation-adjusted honoraria on May 1st.

Natives seek self-rule.

by TOM MCNEILL

Federal and provincial government representatives meet with native leaders in Ottawa today and tomorrow for a constitutional conference on aboriginal self-government.

Native self-government encompasses many areas, including land, education, health, economic responsibilities, housing, law enforcement and culture.

As some native leaders see it, self-government would be "third-order government", with the same status as federal and provincial governments.

The federal and provincial governments see self-government as being municipal, according to Dalhousie native studies instructor Allen Angeconeb.

Angeconeb says the federal and provincial governments would never agree to native peoples' definition of self-government, and native people would never agree to what the federal and provincial governments have in mind.

The process for amending the constitution requires the support of the federal government and seven provinces with fifty per cent of the population.

Angeconeb says history is important when looking at aboriginal rights and self-government. He doesn't think the

federal and provincial governments are committed to aboriginal rights, and says acceptance of native self-government depends on federal and provincial government flexibility.

The four national native organizations represented at the constitutional conference are the Assembly of First Nations, Native Council of Canada, Metis National Council and Inuit Committee on National Issues.

Native groups want unconditional recognition of self-government in the constitution. They don't want self-government to depend on further talks with provincial officials.

The Indian Act has put natives in a dependent situation with many aspects of life controlled by the government. The act has caused suffering for native people. One in five native children finished high school, and the suicide rate among native people is almost three times the national average.

Government policy has resulted in native people having the highest rate of infant mortality, alcoholism, imprisonment, poverty and unemployment in Canada.

Viola Robinson, president of the Native Council in Nova Scotia, will be attending the Ottawa conference. Robinson represents non-status natives, natives not on

reserves, and Metis.

The basic issue of the conference is power — power that the federal and provincial governments, with their vested interests, appear unwilling to share.

On November 21, 1985, the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously ruled that the treaty of 1752 between the Micmac people and the crown is still valid. This puts the Micmacs in a unique position, making them the only native group with a pre-Confederation treaty upheld by the Supreme Court.

Cathy Martin, co-ordinator of the Micmac Careers Project at Henson College, says, "I'm not optimistic that solutions will come up over the next couple of days."

Martin says accomplishments over the last three years have been non-native public awareness, the fact that native groups were given a forum to speak, and that these groups got to sit down with the government to discuss self-government.

If aboriginal self-government is accepted at the conference, "people will be elated," says Martin.

Referring to the conference, Allen Angeconeb says he is "not optimistic at all." He says the federal government has not lived up to its responsibilities.

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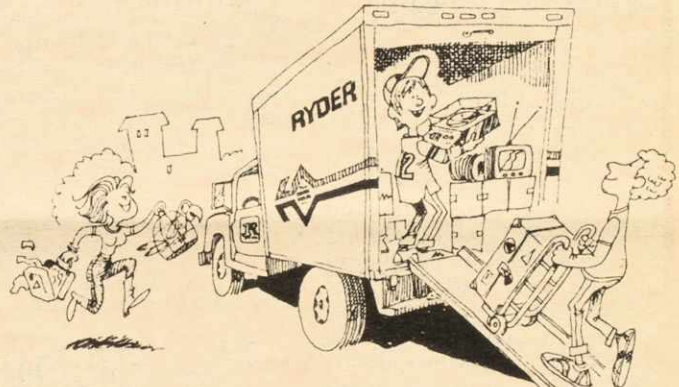
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