

X marks the spot

A report of off-campus news

by Andrew MacPherson

He's really staying

Over the past few weeks there had been much talk on the status of our beloved Prime Minister. The print and electronic media played along with the game that had almost every Progressive Conservative MP a potential replacement for Brian Mulroney. Although Mr. Mulroney still has not made a statement to the effect that he is staying it appears that like the true political animal that he is, the Prime Minister will stay on to fight until he is defeated. The PC government must call an election before September when its five year term of office ends. Recent Gallup polls have shown that the Conservatives have managed to climb into second place for the first time in ages, which also points toward having an election very soon. As Canadians begin to consider their chores it is discouraging that this opportunity for new blood was lost. The current group of leaders on the federal scene has failed to capture the country's imagination as Bill Clinton did in the recent U.S. presidential election. With Mulroney's decision it appears the situation will not improve.

Clinton's First Test

When this issue of the X-Press comes out, Bill Clinton will have been in the White House for a brief two weeks and already he is being forced to make some very difficult decisions. Anytime when there is a change from a conservative oriented administration to a more liberal one, government policies tend to flip quickly. One of the more controversial of these policies which President Clinton must come to a decision on is whether or not to allow homosexuals into the military. When campaigning, Clinton made a pledge to allow gays into the U.S. Army. Now that he is in office, he is being faced with a great deal of opposition among the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other government components. Since imposing its ban on homosexuals in 1942, the US military has banished tens of thousands of men and women from the service, almost 1000 in 1991 alone. This has become a much larger problem for Clinton than he had originally thought it would be. He obviously did not take into account that while he could bring in his own administration the old military establishment would remain. Anti-gay sentiments run throughout the military from top to bottom and these

people will make it as difficult as possible to allow the President to allow this. It could prove to be an interesting test for the new president and administration.

Tragedy at Sea

Last weekend Nova Scotia was hit with a major tragedy at sea. Five crew members, including the captain, were killed when the trawler Cape Aspy went down out in the icy waters off Lunenburg. The boat was out fishing in the winter scallop season which runs from January to March. Survivors of this event are pressuring the federal government to shut down the winter scallop season before more men lose their lives. The fishermen are afraid that if they refuse to go out on the boats, the companies which employ them will let them go. According to Jim Mosher, owner of the Cape Aspy, the captain has the final say whether a ship goes out or not but some fishermen claim that the companies exert a great deal of influence in this. Ice build-up from freezing spray was said to have thrown the Cape Aspy off balance and impaired her equipment. Hopefully, the companies and the sailors can find a compromise that will stop a tragedy like this from recurring.

Easing Immigration Laws

Recently, the plight of a Saudi Arabian refugee has received a great deal of attention from the press, as well as women's and immigrant groups. Nada fled this Middle Eastern country because she was being persecuted at home for not conforming to strict Islamic tradition. Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Immigration, has allowed her to remain in Canada due to the pressure put on him by these advocacy groups. However, there are dozens of other cases very similar to Nada's. The Immigration and Refugee Board has announced that it will look into this situation and if it is necessary it will change the guidelines. Canada currently accepts refugees who are escaping prosecution on the basis of political affiliation, religious belief, and race but not on basis of persecution

due to gender. It is worth noting, however, that if Canada does decide to include persecution due to gender as a reason for refugee status, it will be one of the first countries in the world to do so.

Joe's New Job

Less than two weeks after stepping down as Premier of Prince Edward Island, Joe Ghiz is off to his next job. For all of the future Dalhousie Law students out there, and I know that there are a few of them, you will have a very familiar person as the Dean of your school. Mr. Ghiz has returned to the institution where he originally studied law. He beat out a staff member for the U.N., and two Dal faculty members for the job. The former Premier is definitely experienced enough for the job having attended Harvard Law school as well as Dalhousie's. He also made a very good name for himself practicing law in Charlottetown before winning the Liberal leadership in 1981. Mr. Ghiz will definitely be missed as our province's representative on the national scene but he will get a well-deserved rest from it all in his new position.

Tex's Taxi

Of late, Charlottetown has been trying to decide whether or not its mayor, Ian "Tex" MacDonald, deserves to be given a car at the city's expense to do his functions as the city's top official. This debate has brought a couple of things to my mind. The first is how does someone with the nickname "Tex" get elected Mayor of a Canadian capital city. The second observation is actually relevant to the issue. I understand that Mr. MacDonald had been driving a rented Honda. Now, I don't think that this fits his nickname either. Maybe the city could buy Tex a nice riding horse and a cowboy hat. I think that would be much more suitable than a Japanese import. Besides, with all this cold weather we've been having, the horse would probably be much more dependable. ●

