

Research discrimination

Ottawa (CUP) - The federal government should stop discriminating against research in the social sciences and humanities, recommends an all-party Parliamentary committee.

In a concise report released March 12, the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs recommends that the Mulroney government amend the Income Tax Act so that the social sciences and humanities are no longer excluded in the Act's definition of scientific research and experimental development.

Vancouver (CUP) - Vancouver received some of the highest levels of radioactive fallout in North America from the April 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster, a Simon Fraser University marine biologist said recently.

Louis Druehl said a study he conducted with nuclear chemist John D'Auria showed levels of radioactive iodine of 450 becquerels per kilogram of seaweed in samples taken from locations along the B.C. coast last summer.

A becquerel is a measurement of radioactivity which represents the disintegration of one atom. Levels of 70 becquerels per kilogram are considered unsafe by Canadian standards, although some European countries allow higher levels.

Further, the committee recommends that private donations to the Social Sciences and Humanities research Council, made under the federal government's matching grants scheme, be eligible for the same tax allowances provided for donations to other research councils.

The recommendations have important ramifications for SSHRC, one of

the three federally funded councils that provide financial assistance to university researchers. If the committee's recommendations are approved, SSHRC has greater chances of meeting government-set goals for private sector donations.

"Obviously we're very pleased with this," said SSHRC official Jeffrey Holmes. "We've

been working on this for some time, and we're glad to see that they (the committee) see that all councils should be treated equally."

Exclusion in the Income Tax Act has demoralized social scientists, who are convinced corporate sponsorships will be virtually impossible to at-

tract without the allure of lucrative tax credits.

"We are literary people, not scientific. No corporation would be inter-

ested in us," said Carleton University French professor

Eldon Kaye, currently under contract to SSHRC.

Vancouver glowed — after Chernobyl

Druehl said samples taken from Vancouver in May 1986 contained more radioactive iodine than any found in Alaska, California, the eastern provinces or Japan. They were comparable to some samples taken in European countries such as Germany.

Druehl said the seaweed samples, known as Fucus or rockweed, is inedible and unlikely to have posed any health threat. This type of seaweed takes up

how other plants were affected, he said.

The threat of a much greater amount of radioactive material falling on Vancouver is very real because of the proximity of Canadian and American reactors, he said.

Vancouver received so much fallout because of the "fate of the wind and rain," said Druehl. He said he is concerned that Vancouver received so much radiation, even though Chernobyl is 24,000 kilometers away.

"I'm not saying stop nuclear power," said Druehl. "what I'm saying is that this is a pollutant

and that it belongs in reactors, not on our beaches or dinner tables."

Mike Cackette, an SFU chemistry graduate student who worked on the study along with undergraduate Karen Moore, said though the amount of radioactive iodine in the seaweed is now negligible, there may be isotopes of elements of with longer half lives present.

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"I'm a diplomat," said Babb, "and as such I'm concerned with spreading civilization. I'm prepared to debate with anybody about South Africa."

Flemmings however, rejected the free speech argument.

"Go down to South Africa and talk about free speech. He's a diplomat and is paid to lie for his country." Flemmings said.

