





# Atoning For the Holocaust?

*Last fall, the government of Nova Scotia signed an agreement with the province's mainland Micmacs that recognized certain of their hunting rights. Here, Daniel Paul, Executive Director of the Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs, reflects on the accord, and on its place in the historical relationship between the province's Aboriginal peoples and those who have arrived here since 1497, the year John Cabot is thought to have reached what was to later become Nova Scotia.*

**T**he government of Nova Scotia, by recently signing conservation agreements with our people, has taken a tentative step toward breaking down centuries-old concepts of the Micmac that are totally alien to a pluralistic democracy such as Canada's. These concepts have been perpetuated for hundreds of years, depicting the Micmac and other tribal groups throughout the Americas as "heathen savages" — uncivilized, uncultured and of inferior intellect. These ideas have been utilized by Europeans for centuries to justify what, in the annals of history, can only be described as the most brutal rape of a race of people that the world has ever witnessed. These concepts are indefensible before God, and before man.

The Aboriginal peoples have suffered and have reaped the fruits of hell for the sins of the first European colonists and their subsequent heirs. Fully developed, democratic civilizations based on the principle of the dignity of the human person were destroyed or subverted by European civilizations that were, until recent times, based solely on the principle of the dignity of the elite. The average citizens of these European civilizations were held by the elite as chattels and slaves.

The Micmac in Nova Scotia have been persecuted for more than 450 years. This has happened for no logical or justifiable reason. The time has come for this province, and this country, to embark on a road that will right the

grievous wrongs that were indiscriminately perpetrated on the Micmac and other Aboriginal groups all across Canada.

Germany, the United States, Canada and other have, and still are, atoning for the holocaust visited upon the Jewish people during World War II. The holocaust visited upon the Aboriginal peoples of the Americas has never been atoned for or, for that matter, even acknowledged.

Atrocities against the hemisphere's Aboriginal peoples such as genocidal bounties, deliberate smallpox infections (these have occurred in Nova Scotia), starvation, absolute discrimination, religious persecution and the destruction of cultural, political and social systems are well documented. It's time these heinous crimes, actions and deeds were publicly and fully acknowledged. To continue to stigmatize a race of people by stereotyping them as the children of heathen savages, and by accusing them of being intellectually inferior, is an unconscionable crime against humanity. To recognize one's sins and make atonement for their consequences is spiritually uplifting; to continue to allow people to suffer the consequences of one's sins is unforgivable.

Now is the time for the European people of Nova Scotia and Canada to discover their respective souls and make amends to a suffering people. To do less would be a travesty before God, and before humanity. The recently signed agreement between the government of Nova Scotia and the the Micmac people is a small first step in this direction: its detractors would prefer to ignore the holocaust that has taken place since the arrival of Europeans to this province.

To have a country that will see its Aboriginal people as a healthy, respected and financially sound segment of the wider society should be a goal pursued with unremitting tenacity. When this is achieved, we will then have a truly great and illustrious nation. If our country fails to make an outstanding effort to achieve equality and justice for its Aboriginal people, then it will have failed in the fields of nationhood and humanity. •

## New Maritimes

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# New Maritimes

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**Guest Editorial** 2

**Air Your Briefs** 4

**Soundings** 5

Irving Swoops Down on Maine *Phyllis Austin*  
Cape Breton Acadians Battle Assimilation *Jocelyne Marchand*  
*HardTimes*: Smoothing the Fishery's Future Road *Rick Williams*

**Focus** 15

On The March: Maritime Gays and Lesbians Get Organized *Anne Bishop*

**Readings** 18

The Puzzles of Women's Past *Shirley Tillotson*  
Fewer Balms, More Bombs *Steven Maynard*  
Shipping Out in the Golden Age *Judith Fingard*  
Researching for the Neo-conservative Agenda *Jim Overton*

**Outlook** 34

Contras, Morgues, a Day at the Beach *Louise Green*



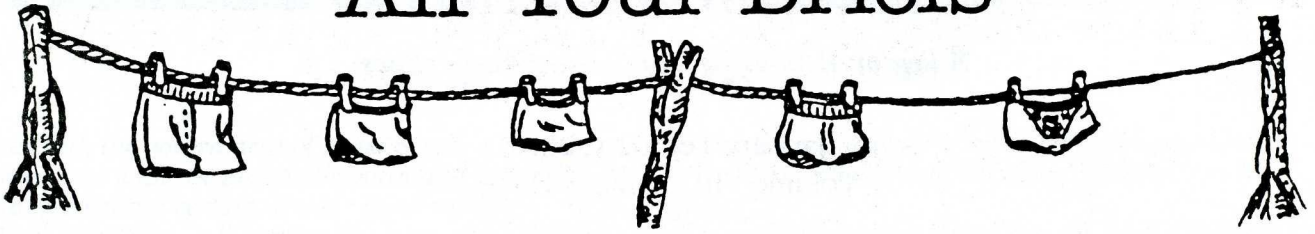
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# Air Your Briefs



## **Merci!**

I don't often take the time to sit down and write letters, but this time, I felt the need to express my appreciation. Congratulations for such a fine and intelligent magazine!

As I settle back into Canadian life after two years in Nicaragua, I am often shocked by the obscenity of mainstream news. The "news" seems packaged to sedate and confuse rather than to inform.

Luckily, magazines such as *New Maritimes* do try to offer more balanced journalism. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Or, as we say here, *mille fois merci!*

**Diane Fournier,  
Douglastown, N.B.**

## **What's Up, "Y"?**

"Dangerous Parolees at YMCA" read a headline in a Halifax newspaper last February. It ran over an article that dealt with the matter of parolees resident at "the Y." Like many mainstream media pieces, it was both informative and misleading; informative in that it was probably news to most Haligonians that the Y runs a registered half-way house under terms of a contract with the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), misleading in that it grabbed our attention at the expense of the facts.

Is any given parolee dangerous? The question is a red herring, because if he is, judgement can only be made after the fact: it's simply impossible to prove beforehand. Of more importance is that these "prisoners" of Corrections Canada receive adequate supervision.

Included in the contract between

the Y and the CSC are a number of words and phrases that seem curious. The Y is instructed "to ensure public safety," is responsible to ensure the "removal of the offender from the community should the resident's behaviour deteriorate" and to form judgement about whether residents are "in violation of any release condition." These words might sound comforting to a public worried about crime, but these things are not happening at the Y. And, in recent correspondence I had with Pierre Blais, the federal Solicitor General responsible for the CSC, he told me that "the evening and night supervisors at the YMCA, as in other facilities, have no specifically stated surveillance responsibilities," and added that "the expectation is not one of supervision." These words are less than comforting. The Solicitor General apparently feels that the Y's apparent violations of its contract are okay with him.

The Y will receive \$55,000 under the terms of its 1989 contract with the CSC. I worked there for nearly ten years, but was laid off a year ago because I refused to do extra cleaning along with my desk-clerk work and what I perceived to be my significant security duties. The Solicitor General, and the Y, aren't sympathetic to this particular perception of mine.

When I saw recent coverage of the parole officers' strike and heard them comment about a lack of supervision in the "correctional" system, I contacted local media people and gave them copies of both Blais' letter and the contract the Y has with the CSC. The following day, I received a call from a CBC reporter who told me that these documents and the issues they raise aren't newsworthy.

I have been told that Tom Coon, the Chief Executive Officer of the Halifax Y, has recently been disciplined by the

Y's Board of Directors because of the poor staff relations there and for his inept reaction to the above-mentioned media attention. A source within the Y recently told me that Mr. Coon has accepted a less exalted position at an Ontario Y, and will be leaving Halifax in the near future. If this is true, I commend the Board for taking a sound first step toward improving the situation there.

I have made all this information available to the local Liberal and New Democratic parties, and would be happy to do so for the Conservatives, should they ask.

I feel strongly that if the Y is going to enter into a contract that imposes certain responsibilities, it should live up to them. And if the government is going to give out lucrative contracts, it should at least ensure that stipulated terms are met.

**Michael Alexander-Carter  
Halifax, N.S.**

## **How Tough**

Having grown up in the patriarchal culture of the Maritimes, Rick Williams now realizes he was "a victim of a repressive and backward sexual culture." [see "Growing Up in a Man's World," *New Maritimes*, September/October, 1989.]

I'm looking forward to follow-up articles — perhaps one by a white person from South Africa describing how tough it was to grow up in a white-supremacist environment.

You could title the whole series "The Oppressor as Victim."

**Larry Fyffe,  
Fredericton, N.B.**



# "This Bugger" Plays Hardball

## *Irving Swoops Down on Maine*

*This article appeared originally, in very slightly different form, in the August 18, 1989 edition of Maine Times. Phyllis Austin is a staff writer for that periodical. Reprinted by permission.*

**I**rving Oil Company is trying to gain a choice foothold along a busy commuter highway in Hallowell. But the proposed location for a 24-hour gas station/convenience store is in the historic district, and a fight between the giant Canadian conglomerate and local residents is underway.

It's the second time in 1989 that Irving Oil, part of the Irving family's \$10 billion empire, has battled with small-town Mainers over the site of a "Big Stop" facility. This past winter, neighbours in Presque Isle opposed Irving's plans to build a station at a congested intersection, and the case is pending in Superior Court.

These latest controversies are calling attention to Irving's stake in Maine, which keeps growing, although competitors believe that the speed of the company's expansion has slowed.

The large red, white and blue signs spelling out the Irving name at Big Stops are but the most conspicuous evidence of the family's investment in a range of Maine industries that includes fuel oil, asphalt, forestry and trucking as well as the gas station/convenience stores. Irving's extension into the state in the 1980s was facilitated by the decreased number of major, national-brand oil and gas companies operating here. Since 1987 the number of Irving gas station/convenience store outlets has increased from 32 to at least 226, according to the Department of Environmental Protection. Such rapid growth has made Irving Oil number one in that market, followed by C. N. Brown Company with 135 "Big Apple"

### **Phyllis Austin**

facilities, up from 30 two years ago. Cumberland Farms, which once led the gas station/convenience store rankings with 41 outlets, is now third, with 53 stores.

In a number of cities Irving has two, three or even more Big Stops. But the closest one to the lucrative Augusta market is in Gardiner, seven miles south. The proposed site on Water Street would place Irving very close to the State House. Between 13,000 and 17,000 vehicles a day, most of them commuting state government employees, travel past the planned location.

Andrew Hamilton, an attorney for Irving Oil, says that the company "desires to meet the concerns of the residents of Hallowell" and will attempt to work out solutions to whatever problems stand in the way of obtaining

approval from the planning board, the codes enforcement officer and the Department of Transportation (DOT). "We know we have some persuading to do," he says, but notes that the Big Stop is a permitted use of land in the area, which is a commercial zone as well as a historic district.

The opposition, spearheaded by Row House Inc., the local non-profit historic preservation watchdog, says the central issue is compatibility. Neither the proposed use of the property nor the design of the facility would be in harmony with the historic character of the area, according to Alan Richardson, Vice-President of Row House. He also says the site is in a flood-plain zone.

Aside from these concerns, opponents are rankled by the fact that Irving slipped under the wire with its proposal. A new ordinance that took effect on August 10th prohibits gas stations along the section where Irving wants to





build. If the Big Stop is approved, the company will have a monopoly there, says Tom Reeves, another Hallowell resident opposing the project.

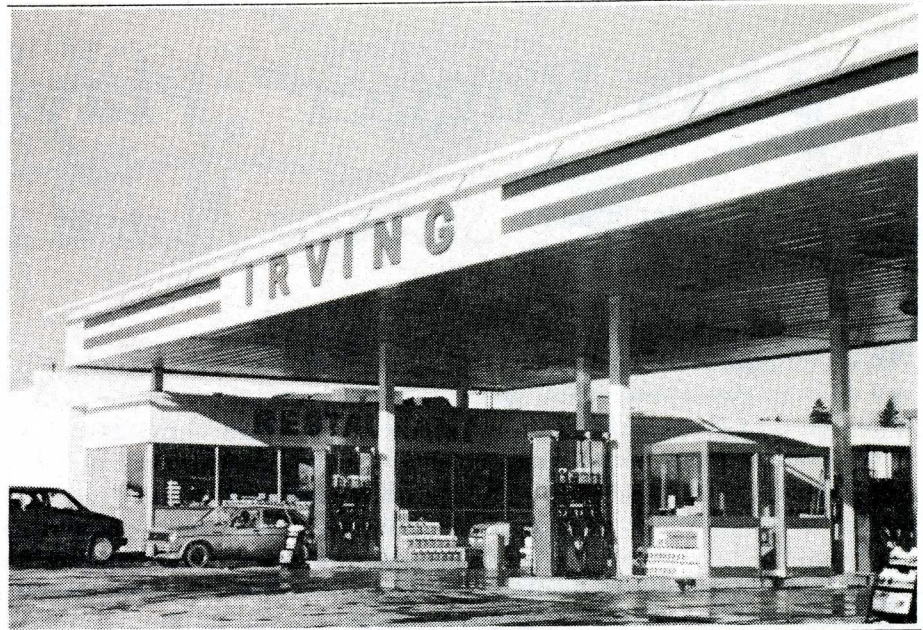
In presenting its intentions to the planning board, the company has tried to portray the fight as one against Irving Oil rather than against a bad proposal, says Reeves, adding that "It's a diversionary move." Alan Richardson agrees, arguing that the opposition would fight a gas station on Water Street no matter who was proposing it.

Townpeople seemed to be slow in waking up to the impact of the plan, admits Charles Hazard, another opponent. But Row House's unanimous vote to fight it "says something about community involvement now," says Reeves.

Citizen petitions against the plan are circulating in town, and Richardson believes that one-third of the residents are against the project. It's the first time since 1975 that townspeople have been so stirred up about a threat to the historic character of Hallowell; fourteen years ago, the town beat the DOT in a battle over widening Water Street to four lanes, a project that would have meant the demolition of many historic homes on the Kennebec River, on the east side of the street.

The site on which Irving hopes to build involves two parcels of land totalling just under a half-acre on the west, or inland, side of Water Street. The property is across from a meat market and Irving has reportedly offered the owners \$300,000 for that property.

The initial plan called for the construction of a 90-foot long ranch-style



facility with clapboard siding, an asphalt roof and a 57' by 45' lighted canopy. That design had the Big Stop elevated eleven feet above the street to meet flood-plain requirements. The restored Colonial homes on the street behind the store would look down on the Irving roof and canopy.

"We are concerned with the increased traffic problems, drainage and excessive noise, for starters," says Charles Hazard. Adds Tom Reeves, "It doesn't take a genius to see that the use and design are an insult." Opponents question how the planning board could accept Irving's plan when it has already rejected a proposal that would have seen cedar shingles put on the exterior of a sandwich shop also in the historic district.

Just before *Maine Times* went to press, Irving representatives met with the planning board to present two new

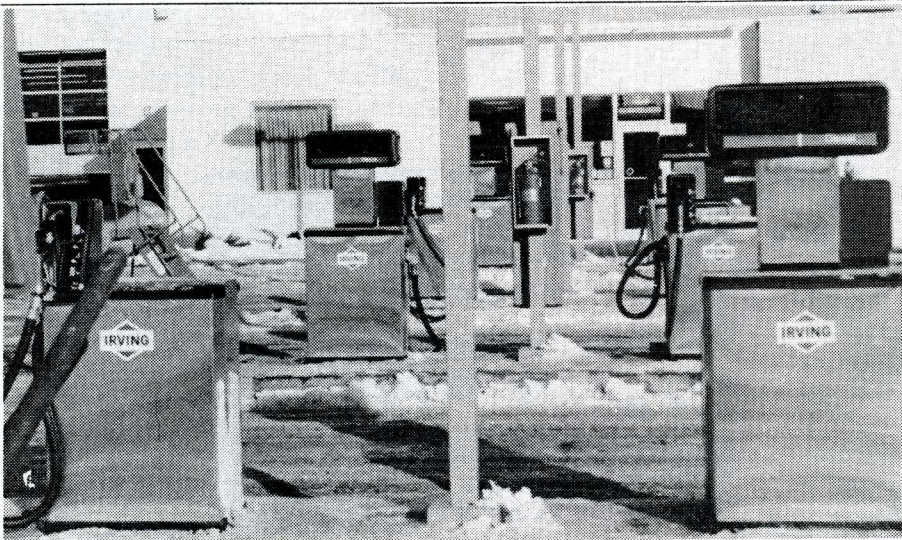
design options to address opponents' concerns over the original plan.

One official involved, who didn't want to be named, says that Irving is being "very conciliatory" now, but he doesn't think the company will be patient for long. "We know the Irvings — the oil, the lumber, the real estate. This is plainly a David and Goliath situation, and you know who David is. But David won."

Harold Jones, President of C. N. Brown, guesses that if the Hallowell situation were happening in Irving's New Brunswick backyard, it "would be acting differently." Patriarch K. C. Irving, 90, and his three sons run what is thought to be the largest privately run conglomerate in North America. The family's 300 or so companies extend into every corner of New Brunswick life. "[Irving] can't have an image [in Maine] of running over a town," says Jones. "Yankees would pick them like a chicken."

While Hallowell and Presque Isle residents are dealing with Irving publicly over Big Stop issues, the company is also doing battle with Fort Kent-based Daigle Oil. Irving tried to buy out Daigle, an arch-rival for gas and oil business in Aroostook County and also competitors across the border in Irving country. Daigle sells home heating oil to New Brunswick customers.

Because of Irving's high prices in New Brunswick, Daigle can sell there for 40 cents a gallon less and still make a profit, says Daigle spokesperson Maxine Robichaud. She contends that





Daigle is getting harassed at the border. "We suspect someone with a lot of influence has said to give Daigle a hard time."

She says that Daigle trucks are routinely delayed at the border, while other American trucks are not. Customs officials question drivers, inspect the trucks and examine paperwork, Robichaud says, and the delays cause the company to lose time and money. She suspects Irving is behind the trouble "but we have no proof."

Michel Saucier, chief of Canadian customs at the Edmundston border crossing, says he knows nothing specific about delay problems experienced by Daigle drivers. However, he admits that American fuel tankers are being stopped to see if their product contains toxic polychlorinated biphenals (PCBs). "Environment Canada asked customs to assist in controlling the importation of these fuels mixed with PCBs." When the problem was discovered several months ago in Quebec, all American tankers were delayed while supplies of their fuels were tested, Saucier says. "We're still controlling" imports through spot checks, he adds.

On the Aroostook side, Robichaud says that Irving "is pushing in almost all communities where we do business. No matter what anyone else does, they want to be less [in price] here."

Daigle and Irving both have their names on their retail gas outlets in Aroostook County, so customers know up front who they are choosing to do business with. But Irving hasn't put its name on the home heating oil firms it has purchased to compete with Daigle and other independents in the northern part of the state.

Besides retaining the local company name, Irving has typically kept the former owner or manager to run the business. Robichaud says that Irving's strategy makes it impossible for her firm to advertise as a "local" or "American" company, in the hope of gaining an advantage over a "foreigner."

Major independents such as Dead River and C. N. Brown have refused acquisition offers from Irving, forcing it to penetrate the home heating oil market by buying smaller companies. In the past year, Irving has purchased small firms in Millinocket, Mars Hill, Lime-

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stone, and Fort Kent and currently has an acquisition pending in Washburn. Irving has "paid four times what a fool would," says an industry source. It has bought "junk — poor management, poor equipment..." he adds.

Some small companies — such as V. L. Tamaro Oil Company in Woodland — have refused to sell, simply because Irving is the prospective buyer. Vince Tamaro says, "We are a family-owned business, and we're going to stay a family-owned business. The Irvings are very, very, very greedy people. If you have the money they have, why try to run other people out of business?"

Irving watchers say the company's share of Maine's \$600 million gas station/convenience store business may now be as high as 35 percent. And competitors say that Irving has at least 60 percent of the industrial fuels market and three-quarters of the asphalt market in northern Maine. As for trucking, it operates more vehicles than anyone else — at least 428 — through its Sunbury, Midland and Road & Sea subsidiaries. It also owns a half-million acres of forest, making it one of the state's dozen largest landowners.

Alarmed by Irving's aggressive business style, competitors have raised questions of predatory pricing and monopoly control. The Tri-State Gas Dealers' Association triggered "protectionist legislation" in 1988 that was ultimately withdrawn before it reached the House or Senate floors. State law makers, however, directed the Attorney-General's office to examine the competitive status of Maine's motor fuel industry.

But because no money was appropriated, that review was not done. However, Steve Wessler of the Attorney-General's office says that a bill will be proposed in 1990 to require gas and oil companies to give prior notification to the state if they are buying another similar company. That would enable the Attorney-General's office to keep tabs on changes in market share.

Harold Jones of C. N. Brown says that despite Irving's expansion, he doesn't think it's as great as the Irving family would have liked. "I think zoning, state and local permits and locations are harder to come by" than they had counted on. And the company's Big Stop construction plans have run into delays created by building moratoriums in a number of communities.

Another industry official guesses that Irving "suddenly came to realize there's only so much to go around in Maine, and there are some players not intimidated — unwilling to sell out to Irving." Even when the company bid high on a dozen gas station locations being sold by Texaco, current leaseholders rushed to meet the inflated prices and prevent Irving from moving in. Frank Hinkley, for example, paid \$325,000 and \$400,000 for two sites in Brewer and Orono that were appraised for only \$115,000 and \$200,000 respectively.

"I don't have the fear [of Irving] I had a year ago," says Harold Jones. "C. N. Brown is expanding and competing nicely. But the hardest thing I have to contend with is the cloud that this bugger could smother us with if it wanted to." •



# Campaigning for a “Creeping Cancer”

## *Cape Breton Acadians Battle Assimilation*

**I**t was a predictable result: last March, the Appeals Division of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia ruled that the children of a group of parents in industrial Cape Breton had the constitutional right to a French-language education. The decision marked the end to a long battle. The Committee for French Education, an organization of francophone parents, came out on the winning side, while the provincial Attorney General and, indirectly, the Cape Breton County School Board, ended up holding the short end of the legal stick. The tab for the judicial imbroglio, in the area of \$500,000, was picked up by taxpayers.

The parents had been confident of victory, but the School Board and the Attorney General's office had both decided to dig in their heels and fight to the last taxpayers' dollar. The reasons for both these attitudes lie in the history of the French language in Nova Scotia.

### **Deportation and Assimilation**

The first Europeans to settle in Nova Scotia were the French-speaking Acadians, who began to arrive in the province from France during the first years of the seventeenth century. Over the next 150 years, L'Acadie changed hands between France and England a number of times before it finally became the British colony of Nova Scotia. With the establishment of a permanent colonial administration in Halifax in 1749 came the politics of assimilation. The authorities, nurtured on years of war with France, were fearful of the many people they found around them who were not only Catholic, but also spoke the language of the “enemy.” Anglophone Protestant missionaries and teachers were sent into the countryside in the hope that within a few years they could turn the Acadians into

### **Jocelyne Marchand**

good, English-speaking Protestants.

Not surprisingly, this naïve plan failed miserably. Infant mortality among Acadians was low, families were large and people tended to live long lives. The Acadians were growing steadily in numbers, and the authorities were faced with trying to administer a British colony populated for the most part by French-speaking “papists.” A far more draconian scheme, one well-documented in history books, was devised by Colonel Lawrence, the colonial Governor: the infamous Deportation of 1755 was thought to be the final solution to the problem.

It didn't quite work out that way. By the middle of the next decade, the on-again-off-again war that had raged between England and France for more than a century came to an end. Acadians, most of whom had been living as refugees in New England, Britain or France since the Deportation, were allowed to return to Nova Scotia. Thousands came back, only to find their property now in the hands of New England Planters recruited by Colonel Lawrence. So they established new communities of their own: areas of the province that are today known for their Acadian populations — places such as Digby County's “French Shore,” Isle Madame and Cheticamp — trace their roots back to this era.

Prior to the Deportation, the Acadians had been a prosperous agricultural people and, unlike many settlers who received support from the colonial authorities, they had been self-sufficient. But when they came back the occupation of their former lands by others left them little choice but to turn to the sea in quest of a livelihood. They also found that they were now a minor-

ity group. The battle for cultural survival that had begun before the Deportation was resumed, and would continue for many years. It now seems that that struggle will stretch into the 21st century.

Education has played an important part in this centuries-long fight for cultural survival. Government attitudes toward Acadian education have been sometimes oppressive and other times tolerant, but never generous. When Nova Scotia proclaimed its first Education Act in 1766, its central purpose seemed to be the restriction of Catholic instruction. Then, in 1841, Halifax declared that any school in the province using French, Gaelic or German as the language of instruction was entitled to public funding on a par with existing English-language schools. But this benevolent approach didn't last long. The Education Act of 1864, which became known as the “Tupper Law,” set out to standardize the province's school system and curriculum by requiring that all municipalities that collected taxes had to provide a school for the community's children. It created a Council of Public Instruction which decreed that English would be the only language of instruction in the province's schools. It also decreed that only schools with licenced teachers could receive public funding. To get a licence, teachers would have to either pass a written examination or be a graduate of the Provincial Normal School (the forerunner to today's Nova Scotia Teachers' College) in Truro. The examination was, of course, in English, as was all instruction at the Normal School. No credit was given to teachers who were proficient in French.

The Tupper Law was to have a tremendous effect on the education of young Acadians in the province. Despite its anti-French bent, there was, for some, a silver lining in this cloud of linguistic intolerance: it was tolerant of





*Collège Sainte-Anne has been a focal point of Acadian culture for a century. Shown here is an Acadian festival, c. 1958.*

the Catholic religion, and many Acadian community leaders considered themselves Catholic before weighing the importance of their own French tongue. Therefore, there was little protest to the new Tupper Law. Almost all the teachers in the schools of the province's Acadian regions were clergy from Québec or France, and most couldn't speak English, so it was impossible for them to become licenced. Without public funding, schools in Acadian areas struggled financially. But Acadian communities found various ways around the Tupper Law, and students did receive some French-language education, although most struggled for literacy.

When *La Société Nationale des Acadiens* (National Society of Acadians) was formed in 1881 it marked the end of more than a hundred years of silence by Acadians. The Society provided visible leaders to Acadian communities, and education was one of its first priorities. In 1890, Collège Sainte-Anne was established at Pointe-de-l'Eglise (Church Point) in Digby County to provide a French-language classical education to the young males of the community. It had financial problems from the very beginning and in order to get essential funding from the province it had to serve as an English-language academy as well. But it was a start, and by 1914 there were 110 schools classified as "Acadian" across the province. Of course, this classification referred more to the ethnic origins of the students than to the curriculum: the most fortunate Acadian children were reading French translations of English texts, but they were also singing English

songs and celebrating English holidays.

The problem of how to educate French-speaking Acadian children was first officially studied by the province in 1902, in an effort "to investigate the best methods of teaching English in the schools situated in the French districts of the province, and generally to make any suggestions to the Education Department which could have the effect of bringing about greater educational progress in such districts." Obviously, for the powerful Council of Public Instruction, "progress" meant finding a better way to make English the language of instruction in Acadian schools, and the recommendations that came from the study reflected this attitude. It was suggested that French should only be used in the first four years of schooling and that all further instruction should be in English only. At the secondary level, French could be taught, but only as a foreign language. A special "Acadian visitor" was appointed to supervise schools in Acadian areas. This didn't work out very well: the first "visitor" could barely speak French, and the post was eventually eliminated on the grounds that the territory involved was too large for one person to cover.

Acadians would wait until 1939 before the Department of Education finally recognized French as a language of instruction for schools in Acadian regions. But recognition of the language was far from a cure-all. Even today, Acadian parents are concerned about the quality of education their children receive, because resources are still scarce: at the Department of Educa-

tion in Halifax, the same person is responsible for both the French immersion program and Acadian schools. For the most part, attitudes have changed but little.

The province's Acadians have lacked programs, properly trained teachers and general support for decades, but they have not stopped fighting the battle for the survival of their culture and language. For many years their impressive birth rates guaranteed a growth in numbers, but birth control today is just as popular in Acadian communities as elsewhere. Once, families of twelve or more children were common: now, two or three is the norm. Over the past century Acadians, like other Maritimers, have found it difficult to survive economically in small towns and villages. When they leave those areas, it is unlikely that their children will get a French-language education, and after a few years at an English school they usually stop speaking French: peer pressure alone is usually sufficient reason to let proficiency in the language lag. Eventually, it becomes a language used only when grandparents come to visit, and then, because of neglect, it is only dimly understood. When it comes time to fill out a census form, the box beside "English" is the one chosen as the "language used in the home." The result is another statistic, another assimilated Acadian.

Today, Acadians living in the larger urban centres of the province have become an almost invisible minority group. Assimilation has been the high price exacted for the economic security Acadians have sought in moving to areas like Halifax or Sydney. And most accept this: after all, you have to speak English in Nova Scotia to have much hope of finding a job.

### **Battle in the '80s**

In 1983 a group of parents met in Sydney to talk about French language education for their children. It was a mixed assembly. Acadians from Cape Breton and New Brunswick were joined by Franco-Ontarians, Québécois and people from the French territory of Saint-Pierre off the Newfound-



land coast. All had lived in Cape Breton for some years and were well established in the community. They had seen what happens when francophone children receive their education in English: in Sydney, few of the Poiriers, Samsons, Boudreaus or LeBlancs speak French, although their parents probably did.

The parents who came together in 1983 thought it was time to break the cycle which leads to assimilation and felt that, finally, they had the means to do it. Recent federal and provincial legislation had been passed which recognized minority-language rights. They knew they were a minority, they knew they had a language: it seemed to them that they had some rights as well. They formed the Committee for French Education.

In June of 1981, the provincial Legislature passed Bill 65, which outlined how schools could be designated as "Acadian" in Nova Scotia. It permitted the Cabinet, on the recommendation of the Minister of Education, to make the designation, determine the area to be served by the school and outline the ratio of French to English instruction in its course of study. But the Minister of Education was somewhat restricted by Bill 65: he could only make his request to Cabinet after being asked to do so by a local School Board. The legislation also stipulated that French was to be the principal language of administration in Acadian schools.

In the following year the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms became law and provided a rationale for French minority education in Canada. Then, in 1984, an amendment to Bill 65 was passed which facilitated the administration and financing of Acadian schools and also created a number of "Acadian Districts" where a French education would be available to students. The Sydney area was not one of them.

Committee members weren't naïve: if they were going to make a request to the Cape Breton County School Board for an Acadian school, they would do it right. With funding from the federal Secretary of State, they undertook a study in 1983 to document the number of students that, in a strict legal sense, should be entitled to French-language instruction. Over a six-month period,

with the full cooperation of the School Board, more than 11,000 questionnaires were distributed. This was no Gallup poll: all students in the County's school system received one, and they were asked to take them home for their parents to fill out.

Most researchers are pleased if between 25 and 30 percent of questionnaires are returned in surveys of this sort. The response rate to the Committee's survey was phenomenal, a whopping 52 percent. Using the strictly legal criteria outlined in both provincial and federal law, it identified 666 children whose parents had minority-language rights which gave them a constitutional claim to have their children educated in French. Even Committee members were surprised at the results and at the weight of evidence this gave them as they approached the Board.

Perhaps, though, they shouldn't have been so surprised. Industrial Cape Breton has been home to Acadians for a long time. Many left rural areas around Cheticamp or Richmond County earlier this century to become coal miners or steel workers. New Waterford is particularly known for its Acadian population: after World War I, twice-weekly French classes had been held at a church hall and the local Mount Carmel School offered an unofficial bilingual program for many years. But by the mid-70s, these classes, lacking formal support, became a victim of amalgamation as Mount Carmel itself was closed and Acadian children were swallowed up in the new, larger school system.

Non-Acadian francophones, too, have come to Cape Breton County in recent years. Many came to work at the Canadian Coast Guard College, the University College of Cape Breton, federal government offices or the Fortress of Louisbourg. Altogether, the 1986 census identified 4,955 people of French origin in the County.

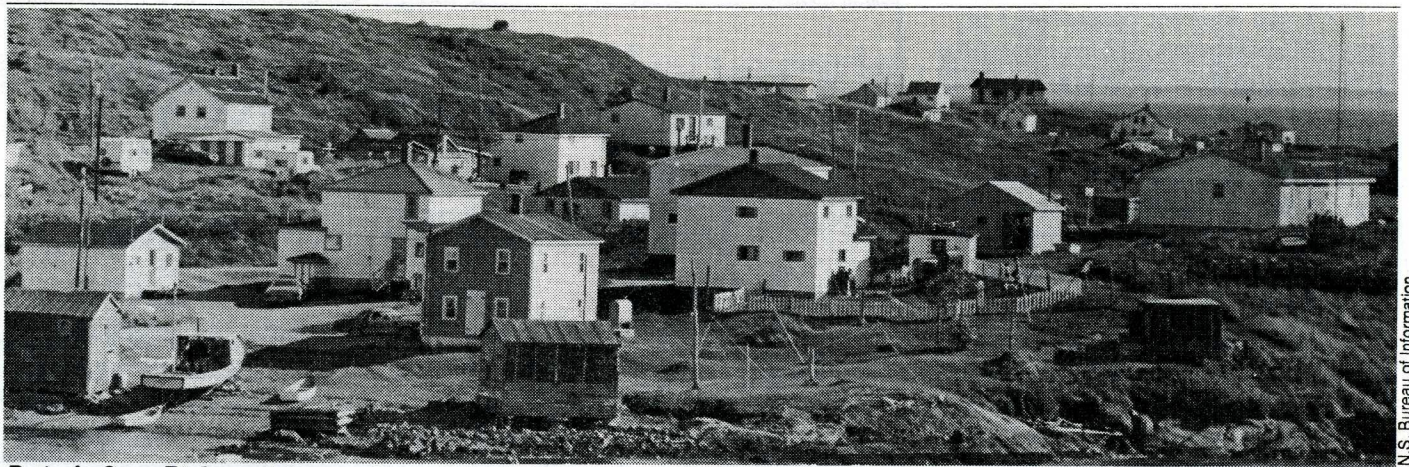
In October, 1984, the Committee presented the School Board with a thorough, 75-page brief entitled *An Acadian School*. It included an historical perspective, copies of the legislation supporting their request and full details of the survey. There was even a section outlining how funding could be obtained to support an Acadian school.

The Committee made twelve recommendations. The three most important of these asked that the School Board establish an advisory committee on French education, that a formal request be made to the Minister of Education to designate the area an Acadian District and that a plan be developed for the implementation of an Acadian school program before September of 1985. The Committee also asked that "the Cape Breton School Board recognize the Acadians in this area and the conditions of their unfortunate assimilation, and that it acknowledge the unique opportunity represented by an Acadian School to rectify it."

Four years later, on September 6, 1989, the Cape Breton School Board finally began a program of French-language education for 50 francophone children in four classrooms of a Sydney junior high school. Why did it take so long? Where were the other 600 students the survey had identified? Why only four classrooms instead of an Acadian school? The answers to these questions lie, at least in part, in the acrimonious attitudes of School Board members toward the Committee for French Education and on the willingness of the provincial Attorney General's office to legally back up the Board.

After they presented *An Acadian School* to the School Board, parents who were members of the Committee attended the monthly Board meetings in the hope that their brief would be discussed and that a decision would be made. But the Board virtually ignored their request. Some Board members did give the issue some attention: a number of them said that there was already too much French in the schools, that it was "a creeping cancer." Others said the proposition would be too costly. Board employees met with the Committee a number of times, but only to demand the names of parents who had answered the survey. The Committee was unwilling to turn these over to the Board without being told how they would be used. Then, in April of 1985, six months after the Committee had presented its brief, the Board announced officially that it was refusing to establish an advisory committee, and, presumably, dismissing the possibility of an Acadian school for the





N.S. Bureau of Information

*Petit-de-Grat, Richmond County. Nova Scotia Acadians who leave their communities for work often soon lose their language.*

County at the same time.

The Committee for French Education was small, but it refused to let the issue die. Unfortunately, it had difficulty in gaining general support among much of the local francophone community. Most parents, while they may have been assimilated Acadians themselves who regretted the loss of their native tongue, were apparently unconcerned about the rampant assimilation taking place and didn't seem anxious to exercise their right to have their children educated in their own language. Many felt that French immersion classes, which are designed to teach English-speaking children a second language, would remedy the situation, and the Board was willing to accommodate them: in September of 1986, 60 students, including many children of assimilated Acadians, began a late-immersion program.

But for Committee members, an immersion program that didn't even recognize the *native* language of Acadian students was not enough. They talked about setting up an alternative school on their own. They wrote to politicians — including the Prime Minister — asking for help, but they received few replies. On the first day of the 1986-87 school term, a dozen children were brought to the School Board office of David Brennick. Parents told him that because he was responsible for French-language education in the County, they were leaving their kids with him.

In 1986, the Committee hired two lawyers: Wayne MacKay was a widely recognized expert on constitutional law and Ray Riddell brought courtroom expertise and experience to the case.

They soon began a roller coaster ride of litigation and negotiation that would stretch over three years. It began with a series of talks with the Board not unlike the ones the Committee had already been through. The lawyers were astounded at the Board's attitude because it seemed obvious to them that the Charter of Rights applied in this case. There were also a number of legal precedents to support the Committee's demand for a school. They couldn't imagine that the fight would go all the way to the courtroom. But the Board had other ideas: the lawyers failed to make progress in their negotiations because, to use Wayne MacKay's words, "Bad faith and obstructionism became an all-too-familiar pattern."

During their discussions with the Board, the Minister of Education and the Attorney General's office, MacKay and Riddell began to have serious doubts about what was motivating their opponents. When they were first hired by the Committee, parents had told them that they felt they were victims of racism and bigotry. The lawyers responded cautiously to the use of such language. But after long months of fruitless negotiation MacKay and Riddell were much more sympathetic to the parents' use of such strong words.

After two years of meetings and legal wrangling MacKay and Riddell finally took the Committee's case before the Trial Division of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia in early 1988. Judge J. Doane Hallett ordered the School Board to hold an official registration of francophone students before the end of March, 1988 and reserved his final decision on whether the Committee had a right to a francophone school

until the results of the Board's registration were known. In the final analysis, this was to be a numbers game.

The registration was duly held, but only 50 children were registered. Judge Hallett then ruled that this was an insufficient number of students to warrant invoking the Charter of Rights minority-language clause.

Why were so few children registered? It may have had something to do with the fact that by the time the registration was held, parents had already been surveyed three times: first by the Committee, then by the School Board, and finally by a sociologist at the University College of Cape Breton hired by the Board. They had also been interviewed by David Brennick, the School Board official responsible for French education, who wanted to make sure the parents weren't just "pretending to be French."

Another factor that certainly contributed to the low registration numbers was the manner in which the whole issue of French-language education had unfolded since 1985. First, francophone parents not involved with the Committee learned from the media that the School Board had turned down the original request for an Acadian school. Then they were told that there would be a school, but it would be in New Waterford. Following this, media reports announced that there would be a school in Sydney, in a building formerly used as an elementary school. (The Board even invited people to visit this facility. When visitors arrived, what they found was a facility being used as a warehouse by the Board. Where desks had once stood, there were now paint cans, tools, and other trappings of



the average domestic basement or garage. All this was reported in the media. The building has since been condemned because highly toxic PCBs were among the things stored there.)

When the advertisement advising of the court-ordered registration finally appeared in area newspapers, francophone parents were asked to register their children for French-language instruction that might, or might not, be offered. Nobody knew where a future French-language school might be located, who would teach the students, or what would be done about francophone students who had already been in the English system for a number of years — would there be any transitional programs for these children? And, if there was to be a French-language school, how would kids get there every day? Given all these uncertainties, it's little wonder that many francophone parents in the area failed to register their children.

The Committee and its lawyers were frustrated by both the results of the registration and Judge Hallett's decision, but they weren't prepared to give up. The matter was taken to the Appeals Division of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia. Finally, in March of last year, the decision came down that francophone parents in Cape Breton County were constitutionally entitled to have their children educated in their own language.

The Appeals Division's decision, however, was far from completely favourable to the Committee. It supported Judge Hallett's view that provincial legislation which denied an Acadian school to Cape Breton County — Bill 65 — did not run counter to the federal Charter of Rights. This meant that the School Board had no obligation to open a francophone school, but it nonetheless had to provide French-language instruction for the children who had registered for it. MacKay and Riddell advised Committee members that an appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada would likely be successful and that they might still be able to get the school they had fought so long for. But after six years, the parents were tired of battle and feared that, if they took the matter to federal court, the School Board would be able to delay even further the French-language education



## EMERGENCY IN EL SALVADOR

Thousands of wounded and displaced civilians have taken refuge in the churches. Food, medicine and clothing are desperately needed. When the army blocks transport of supplies, churchworkers are taking them in on foot.

Given the number of wounded and massive destruction, an enormous amount of help is needed — even if a ceasefire were declared today.

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the provincial Appeal Division's decision now demanded be provided for their children. So, last September, four classrooms in Sydney were finally set aside for French-language instruction.

It is ironic that when the School Board initially turned down the Committee's request for an Acadian school one of the reasons it put forward for its decision was that it would be too costly. By the time the battle was finally over, costs of close to a half a million dollars had been tallied. The parents legal fees were paid for, in part, by the Canadian Council for Social Development (CCSD), while lawyers MacKay and Riddell personally donated the balance of the many hours of legal work that went into the case. The School Board was supported throughout by the provincial Attorney General's office. Both the CCSD and the

Attorney General get their funding from the same source — taxpayers' pockets.

A time will come when another group of parents in a different area of Nova Scotia not recognized as "Acadian" by the Department of Education will have to fight a battle similar to this one. It is to be hoped that they have as much conviction, stamina and energy as the people who made up Cape Breton's Committee for French Education. •

*Jocelyne Marchand is an Acadian. Originally from northern New Brunswick, she has lived in Nova Scotia for the past twenty years. She currently manages the Canadian Book Information Centre in Halifax. Her two children attend the only francophone school in the metro area.*



# Smoothing the Fishery's Future Road

## *Fisheries "Management" Needn't Mean Chaos*

In my last column I discussed the need to revitalize and perhaps reinvent the practice of economic planning. The new-right thinking that is maintaining its fragile and bizarre hegemony in the Western developed countries is re-shaping the role of the state in modern national economies. Lots of babies are being thrown out with the old "liberal-welfare state" bath water, and one of the most important of these is government's role in shaping economic activity to meet the basic goals of society.

In Canada, conservative politicians are eager to reduce the role of government in any way they can, professing a simplistic faith in the power of market forces to sort out complex human questions about where, and how well, people will live, and how they will earn their livelihoods. Some right wingers seem genuinely to believe that the market will make better, more "rational" decisions than any planning committee or elected body possibly could. However, most of those in political power want to down-grade the role of government as watch-dog, regulator, and investor-of-last-resort, because it is in their narrow economic interest, and that of their corporate pals, to do so.

We expect such talk from right-wing politicians, but lately there has been a growing consensus between the right and many progressive people — environmentalists, NDPers, community activists — about the evils of "big government." A kind of new-style anarchism seems to be linking together many people, on both right and left, in an extreme localist, decentralist, small-is-beautifulist brand of rhetoric that is neither well thought out nor grounded in the politics of the real world. While I'll leave the more theoretical aspects of this debate to a later column, I'll at least fire an opening salvo here by suggest-

### Hard Times

*Commentary on the Maritime Economy by Rick Williams*

ing that this kind of thinking leads to either the absolute marginalization of poorer people and regions like ours (Southern Ontario gets all the capital investment while we get a workers' coop that pays \$5.50 an hour for a six-day work week), or merely to chaos.

The fishery is a good example of an industry in which the role of government is crucial. The current crisis in the fishing industry is, in large part, a product of poor planning and localist politics. [For a detailed analysis of the crisis, see *Net Results: Sorting Through the Fisheries Tangle*, by Kathryn Morse, in the November/December, 1989 issue of *New Maritimes*.] Government will continue to play a large role in the fishery, and for the sake of this region's future it must quickly become an effective one. This doesn't mean that "big government" must tell every fisherman just how, when and where to bait the hook: there are realistic ways in which effective planning and management could be developed while giving more real control over day-to-day fishing activities to producers.

The fishery has always been managed as a "common property" resource. This means that everyone has had an equal right to try to catch whatever fish are out there. It's been a free enterprise free-for-all in which, eventually, everyone has lost. Market forces and technological change have recently combined to overwhelm traditional methods of controlling effort and competition at the community level. As a result, the continued viability of the whole fisheries bio-system is in jeopardy.

But there is an alternative to this common-property management system that could, in the long run, lead to

a much more stable and manageable fishery — a system of "enterprise allocations" (EAs) — also known as "boat quotas" or "property rights." To establish an EA system, tough political decisions would have to be made about the amount of fish available to be caught and the most appropriate number of fishermen relative to the number of fish. Following this decision, each fishing person or enterprise would be given an equal share of the total quota, as a "property right" to be fished or "managed" in the most efficient and economically rewarding way possible.

For the fisherman, there would be no competitive rush to catch the fish because he or she would already own it. The key to success would be to optimize operations by landing the fish at the best times in terms of market conditions, to produce a catch of high quality in order to command a better price and to run as efficient an operation as possible to reduce operating costs. Fishermen couldn't make more money by simply catching more fish than the next person: they would have to do it by fishing efficiently and at the right times. It wouldn't necessarily make sense to invest piles of money in bigger boats, to fish in bad weather or to carry bigger loads. The important thing would be to minimize overhead costs and debt.

With a system of EAs, fishermen would have a much greater stake in good management practices because they couldn't do better than the other guy simply by catching more fish. The only way to increase their own EAs would be by expanding the fish stock as a whole through sound conservation practices. There still might be incentives to cheat, but there would be stronger motives not to let someone else cheat than now exist.

Perhaps the most important aspect of EAs is that fishermen would become co-managers of the fishery. Where this





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system has been tried, in New Zealand and in a few sectors of the Atlantic fishery, it has encouraged fishermen holding EAs to work as a group to run both the particular fishery involved and the system itself. Ideally, each fisherman would develop the attitude that she is managing her own block of the overall quota, and that she is participating with all the other fishermen in management of the resource. Once government set up the framework, fishermen would run the system themselves. Scientists might then be able to work directly with fishermen, rather than getting caught in a squeeze between government managers and industry interests, as presently happens.

This is not to suggest that introducing EAs on a widespread basis would be a simple solution to the fishery's many complex problems. The most important difficulty in introducing such a system is the fact that there are now too many vessels and too many fishermen relative to existing fish stocks. To set up an efficient EA system, it would be necessary to permanently remove some of them from the industry. That would involve direct and difficult decisions — the kind of decisions that politicians hate to make. Their inclination is usually to fudge the issue, but political fudging by a federal government that has never really cared much about the Atlantic fishery is itself one of the main causes of the current crisis. And, whether EAs are introduced or not, these hard decisions will still have to be made if the fishery is to survive as a viable industry.

A major issue with EAs is that giving the fish away to enterprises and individuals raises the spectre of "private property" and all the problems that go with it. Some critics fear that an EA system will inevitably mean the elimination of most producers as they sell off their "property" to the highest bidder, much in the same way as farmers sell land to agribusiness or land developers for big bucks rather than to other family farmers at reasonable prices. Farmers resist limits on their right to sell their land for the best available price, and some predict that fishermen would do the same with their own property. In fact, this problem already exists with lobster licenses: theoretically, they revert to government when no longer

used by the holder, but, in practice, they are routinely sold for tens of thousands of dollars.

But if government sets up a system of EAs properly, this problem could be overcome. If it permanently shifts ownership of fish stocks from the public to the private sector, then the system will break down over the long haul. But there is another option: fish stocks could be treated like crown lands. Allocations could be leased or rented out on a long-term basis, with the proviso that the lease holder must obey certain rules. There could be explicit restrictions on the saleability of the lease, and on the number of leases that any one enterprise or individual could hold. Overall management of the resource could be vested in a joint fishermen-government body in order to reduce the danger of political interference on behalf of any one producer or enterprise.

A system of EAs is currently being used in the large offshore groundfishery. Once basic decisions about the most appropriate number of fishermen relative to existing fish stocks are sorted out, EA systems might work in a much wider range of fisheries. They could be a useful tool in shifting management responsibility and real power to fishermen themselves. There is also one other way this could be done, a very dangerous way — by further extending the right-wing agenda into fisheries management and doing away altogether with government's role as ultimate planner and manager. We already have unacceptable levels of chaos in the fishery, and a simple abandonment of the infrastructure of control would spell even greater disaster. What is needed is a restructuring of the management and planning system that would spread power and responsibility in the industry. Effective planning doesn't mean bureaucracy and centralization, it means the right people in the right places making the right decisions. •

*Rick Williams is an Associate Editor of New Maritimes. He contributes this regular column.*



# On The March



## Maritime Gays and Lesbians Get Organized

By Anne Bishop

**G**ays and lesbians in the Maritimes are currently experiencing an explosion of energy, consciousness and organization. During 1988, in Halifax alone, the number of lesbian/gay organizations grew from eight to fifteen in the space of just a few months. Each summer for the past two years that city has been the scene of a Gay Pride March, something not seen for more than a decade previously. There have been numerous meetings where gays and/or lesbians have come together to discuss common problems. In Halifax, Fredericton and Charlottetown there are groups working to have "sexual orientation" clauses added to provincial human rights legislation. The United Church is embroiled in lively debate about its ruling that "homosexuals" are not to be barred from ordination as ministers. AIDS activities, organizations and cultural expressions are bringing gay/lesbian issues to public attention, and the press is covering these as never before. And, significantly, men and women are working together, something that had been lacking in most of the gay/lesbian community for a number of years.

This upsurge in activity is, for the most part, a response to the spread of AIDS across the continent. The disease has had two effects on the gay and lesbian

communities that have spurred reaction: gay men have been hit with a "holocaust of omission" and the "sleeping monster" of homophobia has been aroused.

A review of official responses to various other health crises over the past several years reveals this "holocaust of omission" by governments, researchers, universities, the media and the health-care system itself:

- in 1976, a mysterious ailment caused the deaths of 29 people who had attended a convention of the American Legion in Philadelphia. The media covered the catastrophe intensely for a month, and newspapers carried dramatic photos of flag-draped coffins. The American government promptly marshalled hundreds of people and millions of dollars to investigate. Within a matter of weeks, the cause of the disease had been pinpointed and health officials were in control of the situation;
- also in 1976, a virulent sexually transmitted disease called Ebola Fever killed 153 health-care workers in Central Africa. The government of Zaire called on the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control in the United States. Response was swift and the fever was contained and controlled in just a few weeks;
- in 1981, Toxic Shock Syndrome hit the headlines across North America. Officials acted immediately,



and the malady was soon contained;

- in 1982, someone tampered with a few bottles of Tylenol in Chicago. In short order, thousands of health professionals were put into action checking drug store shelves. Tylenol's manufacturer, Johnson & Johnson, spent \$100 million of its own in an effort to address the problem. *The New York Times* ran daily stories for a month, four of them on the front page, and then followed up with 22 more. In all, seven people died, and the crime was solved in five weeks.

AIDS was first identified in 1980. Within two years, there were 634 cases reported in the United States, 260 people had died, and the disease had been reported in eleven other nations. During 1982, *The New York Times* ran only six stories on AIDS, all of them buried in the back pages. The American government committed its first funding — \$1 million — in October of that year, during the peak of the Tylenol scare. And even that relatively tiny amount did not actually get delivered for another year. By then, 2,600 people had contracted the disease: more than 1,000 had perished. Most of them weren't American Legionnaires, health-care workers, or headache-suffering shoppers. They were, for the most part, gay men, poor Haitian immigrants, intravenous (IV) drug users, Blacks or Hispanics living in poverty. Officials didn't seem overly concerned.

American figures on AIDS are more easily available than Canadian ones, but Ottawa's reaction has generally echoed Washington's. Health Minister Perrin Beatty admits there is still no government strategy on AIDS and that spending has been miniscule. Last May, Dr. Norbert Gilmore, head of the National Advisory Committee on AIDS, resigned in frustration, saying "The program is in a mess. No one knows what's going on. I sometimes wonder how many kids out there are getting infected while we diddle around trying to decide if we can talk about diddling around."

Lack of government action on AIDS is certainly frustrating to well-meaning officials, but it is encouraged by the attitude in many circles that the disease is some kind of divine retribution, that its victims "aren't worth saving anyway." This outlook is reflected over and over again by statements of officials in many countries, and even here in the Maritimes.

In Britain, the Conservative leader of the South Staffordshire District Council offered his recipe for stopping AIDS: "I would put 90 percent of queers in the ruddy gas chamber. I'd shoot them all." Opposition parties demanded that he be disciplined, but to no avail. In fact, Prime Minister Thatcher has publicly praised comments from other officials that reflect similar attitudes.

The Medical Journal of Australia, ostensibly a publication concerned with science, offered this sage comment: "Perhaps we've needed a situation like this to show what we've known all along: depravity kills."

In April of 1985, the American Secretary of Health gave the keynote address to an International AIDS Conference, and said that "We must conquer AIDS before it affects the heterosexual population.... We have a very strong public interest in stopping AIDS before it spreads outside the risk groups, before it becomes an overwhelming problem." The doctors, re-

searchers and gay community leaders present were by that time dealing with 10,000 cases of the disease.

By the time AIDS was first mentioned in an American Presidential speech late in 1987, 21,000 had contracted the disease. President Reagan expressed concern for hemophiliacs, blood transfusion recipients and the spouses of IV drug users. The users themselves and gay men were, apparently, not worthy of mention.

In Nova Scotia, Dr. Wayne Sullivan, the Administrator of Community Health Services, said at a public meeting that there are a only a few hundred people at risk in the province, adding that "When they're dead, the problem will be solved."

Lesbian and gay people have survived in the past through silence and invisibility. Now, many are beginning to understand that — to quote one button often worn by activists — "Silence Equals Death."

More and more, gays and lesbians are speaking out. Almost 700,000 people took part in a "March on Washington" in October of 1987, the largest civil rights demonstration that city has ever seen. The AIDS Memorial Quilt, launched during the March, has been touring the continent and was even recently nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. In Canada, one Member of Parliament, Svend Robinson, has publicly proclaimed that he is gay. There has probably been more media coverage of gay and lesbian issues in the past year than there was in the previous five.

AIDS has roused the gay and lesbian communities, but it has also awakened the "sleeping monster" of homophobia. The word "homophobia" was coined in 1967 by Dr. George Weinburg, who said, "I recognized that fear, revulsion and distrust of homosexuals are often converted into rage toward them.... Like any phobia, it is an obsessive and irrational fear." As long as gays and lesbians remained silent and invisible, homophobia, although always present in our culture, was, for the most part, left to slumber. But now, entire communities are turning out for public meetings to express fear and anger. To some extent, these expressions are a reasonable response to a fatal new disease, but to a larger degree, they are homophobic reactions. When people's concerns are about role models rather than contagion, they are taking about their own attitudes, not about disease.

This newly aroused homophobia takes many forms. Single people who are merely suspected of being gays or lesbians are losing jobs and being denied accommodation, services and health care. The most visible evidence of this rise in homophobia is the increasing incidence of harassment, beating and even murder — "gay bashing," as it is called. In the United States, the National Registry of Hate Crimes records more incidents of gay-bashing than of any other crime of hate, even though 90 percent of it is thought to go unreported. It is estimated that one in four American gays will be a victim of gay bashing during their lives, as will one in every ten lesbians.

Less immediately threatening, but no less serious, than gay bashing are the homophobic comments and conversations increasingly being heard, in every conceivable setting, by gay and lesbian people. Because we are, by and large, invisible, perfectly "nice" people feel quite free to say hurtful and hateful things about us in our



presence. These cause a constant undermining of self-esteem and mental health, especially for those who walk quietly away.

The growth of homophobia has been costly to gays and lesbians, but it has also given us an opportunity. Some have reacted by crawling further into the closet, but others have responded by stepping out and speaking up for all to hear. These opposite reactions have caused tensions within the gay and lesbian communities. Some of the firings, vandalism and public scandal aimed at gays and lesbians in the Maritimes during the past year have come from within our own community: those who become more public pose a terrifying threat to those who feel their only safety lies in invisibility. But people who have spoken out have discovered that much of their fear is left behind. These are the activists who are responsible for the recent burst of energy in gay and lesbian organizations in the Maritimes.

This rising level of activism has also gained strength from the joining together of men and women in political activities. For many years past, most gay men's organizations were primarily social, while lesbians have put all possible effort into the women's movement. The two groups went separate ways, as women's consciousness of sexism grew and matured. But, of late, the two have found common ground in the face of AIDS and the need for better human rights protection. Predictably, the struggle over sexism has been renewed, but lesbians are finding very different attitudes in gay men they we did some years ago. All gay men have been touched by AIDS — through suffering, worrying, supporting and grieving — and they have learned new emotional skills. As well, lesbians have brought new organizational skills, learned from our work in the non-hierarchical institutions of the women's movement, to the newly forged alliance.

When oppression is exposed to light, as homophobia has been over the past few years, rednecks emerge, but so do decent people. Members of the "straight" population have come forward to work with gay and lesbian people, and to express their solidarity politically. (Polls show that about three-quarters of the public feel that gays and lesbians should have the same human rights protection as the rest of the population.) As a result, Manitoba, Ontario and the Yukon have now joined Quebec in prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. (This means that 68 percent of Canadians are currently protected by such legislation.) This has been very encouraging to gay and lesbian organizations in the Maritimes, where all three provinces are witnessing activity, if not success, on this front.

In New Brunswick, the Minister of Labour has ordered a review of the provincial Human Rights Code, A report is due imminently, and there is some talk of public hearings about the matter in the spring.

Prince Edward Island's Human Rights Act was reviewed in late 1988 by a special committee of provincial legislators which sought public input. Their recommendations will be included in a proposed revision of the Act that will be presented during the Legislature's next sitting in February. Unfortunately, the revised Act that will be put before Island legislators won't include sexual orientation as a prohibited grounds for discrimination because of the "need of further study due to the complexity

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and vast amounts of information available."

In Nova Scotia, a new Human Rights Act that included sexual orientation was ready to go to the Legislature last April, but was held back by the government. It had the support of Liberals and New Democrats, and a majority of the Conservative caucus (including most key cabinet members). It would have passed if presented, but the government has thus far failed to bring it forward. This leaves all Nova Scotians with an outdated Human Rights Act that is a patchwork of amendments.

The work towards broadening human rights legislation in the Maritimes is but one expression of the new energy in the gay and lesbian communities here. Other areas of work include: AIDS services, advocacy, lobbying and support; organizations of People With AIDS; cultural organizations and advocacy groups; public and internal education, and; Gay Pride activities.

There are three main challenges facing the gay and lesbian communities in the Maritimes today. We must find a way for men and women to work together against sexism. We must heal the rift between those who have come out of the closet and those who remain inside. And we must confront the deeply rooted, passionately felt homophobia of powerful sectors of our society.

Today, the battle over gay and lesbian issues is one of a number of issues on the cutting edge of Maritime politics. As both an observer and a participant, I'm sitting on the edge of my seat to see what will happen next. I know we can't stop: we are literally fighting for our lives. •

*Anne Bishop is a member of Lesbian and Gay Rights Nova Scotia, a lobby group working towards human rights reform. New Maritimes adapted this article from a paper presented at an academic conference in Halifax last fall.*



1/Shirley Tillotson  
The Puzzles of Women's Past

On every page, this book confronts us with a blend of the oddly familiar and the strange, lost past

***No Place Like Home: Diaries and Letters of Nova Scotia Women, 1771-1938*, edited by Margaret Conrad, Toni Laidlaw and Donna Smyth, Formac Publishing, Halifax, N.S., 1988; 305 pages; \$19.95 (paper).**

The closest I've ever come to churning butter was trying to whip cream without an electric mixer, so I didn't right away feel a deep kinship with Rebecca Ells, a farm woman who in 1901 recorded in her diary, among other things, her daily butter production. Then, in her entry for February 5th she admitted, "I do get tired working with the butter sometimes...." I could understand that comment—I'd be bored to tears myself. The entry continued: "It brings us in quite a lot of money," and I thought, "Ah, reality."

Rebecca probably got the same mixed satisfaction from counting up the pounds of butter churned that I used to get out of totalling my hours of overtime at work. Unlike my own income, though, hers was not simply wages but revenue from her family farm, made all the more meaningful because she managed the enterprise herself during her husband's twelve-year junket to the Yukon. On every page, *No Place Like Home* confronts us with this blend of the oddly familiar and the strange, lost past.

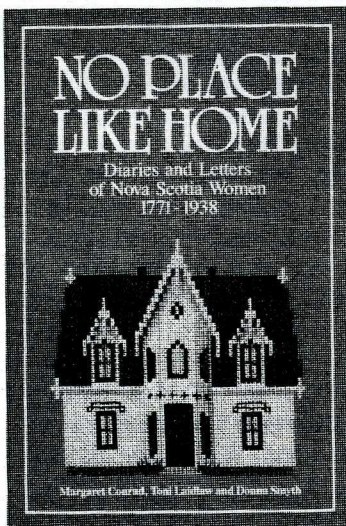
In many of the selections, a comment like Rebecca's confession of February butter blues brings out meaning from between the lines. In among the loosely-connected gossip about strawberry prices and Mrs. Blake's youngest son being murdered out in California, comes suddenly the personal voice that only diaries or private letters lets us hear: "O I wish I could go away and have no care on my mind, if I could have confidence in them I have to leave, all would be right but I have not...." This writer, Margaret Connell, was usually fairly cheerful, but often gave signs of a struggle against gloom. Perhaps her outburst of frustration was uncharacteristic, but this single complaint reveals a great deal of what she

fought against—that feeling of entrapment in caring for kin.

In some ways, Margaret Connell's and Rebecca Ells' chapters are among the easiest to appreciate in this collection. Some of the diaries, by contrast, offer little that is familiar or apparently personal. For instance, Hannah Richardson's diary entries are forbiddingly terse. She describes her life in curt fragments, always starting with the weather: "Fine. To the shop all day. Went out in the evening, Joe with me." One entry ends, simply, "Lonesome." For Hannah's diary, the accompanying biographical note is essential if one is to gain an understanding of the life that left this thin residue. Without some outside clues, one would never know that "the shop" was a shoe factory: Hannah spent her few extra words describing her social life, not her job.

Like Hannah's diary, Eliza Chipman's also benefits greatly from its introduction. An evangelical Christian, Eliza used her diary as a tool for self-examination. She was deeply conscious of her fallen nature, and reflected on it at tedious length. But, because the editors point to the ways her religion served her needs, she seems less of an obsessive crank. Somehow, too, the fact that she raised twenty children (eight of them from a second marriage) seems to require the reader to give a second thought to her preoccupation with "God's saving mercy."

Whether by means of the context-setting introductions or by the eloquence of the texts themselves, this collection is a fascinating introduction to the history of Nova Scotia women. The editors unobtrusively place their analysis of women's history at the end of the book, in effect asking the reader to listen to the voices of the past before deciding what this history is about. But the epilogue itself is far from anti-climactic: a pithy but digestible overview of the broad shifts in the conditions and concerns of North American women's lives, it raises questions that the documents themselves might not at first suggest. Readers may find themselves unable to escape from





this book, devouring it a second time with renewed interest, backwards from the epilogue with renewed interest.

This movement back and forth between historical reflections and interpretations is a familiar path to anyone who has tried to write history. At first, the path is not at all clear: many people get stuck at one end or another. *No Place Like Home* is something of a guide book that can take people through their first attempts to make sense of documents from the past. The editors spare us the painfully hard work of deciphering centuries-old handwriting, and also provide us with the who-what-when-and-where context that we otherwise would spend weeks, months or even years trying to figure out. But they also present us with documents edited so lightly that we can make our own discoveries and ponder questions other than those the editors themselves raise. Why did Bessie Hall tell her mother how to clean house? Was this 28-year-old woman handing out orders to her family because she — along with many middle-class women during the early part of this century — had learned about “taking charge” by doing war-time volunteer work? Or was she just an odd cookie with peculiar family relationships? Such questions can't be answered by the limited set of documents in this collection, but there is more material out there (and maybe someday an enterprising archivist will produce a research guide to sources for women's history

in the Maritimes). *No Place Like Home* stirs up questions that can be taken to the archives.

But many people never get to the archives until they retire from “work.” The question they most often bring with them is the genealogist's: “Who were my ancestors?” This book speaks to that question, but in a larger way: it offers us an opportunity to recognize what we share with the past, both common oppressions and, sometimes, common pleasures. We may no longer even know what farm-girl Louisa Collins “ropery romp” was, but we can enjoy with her the “deep conversation about old times.” Other readers may be more interested in learning about the strange forms our foremothers' enthusiasms took. What did missionary work mean, to make Mathilda Faulkner yearn for it with such passion? There is material here for those who like to tease away at the puzzles of the past. And yet, these diaries also offer the easier enjoyments of the traveller's tale or the well-captioned family album.

One caution to those approaching this book: only some of these diarists and letter writers are “good stylists” in a twentieth-century sense. Even with the handwriting barrier removed, a few of the selections are still taxing to read. But, the original language of eighteenth-century women can be one of the delights of reading them, so long as it isn't rushed. Spoken out loud, we can even hear the rhythm of another day's

There is material here for those who like to tease away at the puzzles of the past



*“Friday morning is always taken up making butter.”*



Women's  
history can  
be shaped  
out of  
fragments  
left from  
parts of the  
past

speech: "How much, how earnestly do I long to see you, to do every Thing in my Power to soften and alleviate all your Distresses, & divide with you all my Pleasures."

Regrettably, the documents in *No Place Like Home* represent only white, Protestant women of Nova Scotia's past. This narrowness, as the editors tell us, is, in part, a reflection of patterns of literacy, cultural differences around the practice of diary-keeping, and the privileges of leisure and education enjoyed by those groups from which the documents originate. If letters and diaries from Catholic women, Black women and Acadiennes have survived, let us hope that they, too, may be published. History can, of course, be constructed with-

out diaries and letters, but it would be unfortunate if the only *personal* voices in Nova Scotia women's history were to come mainly from the province's more privileged classes.

*No Place Like Home*, then, is not the whole story. Nonetheless, it offers us some ideas on how women's history can be shaped out of fragments left from parts of the past. And, in their richness of personality, documents like those in this book always hold refreshing surprises. •

*Shirley Tillotson, a native of the Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia, is pursuing studies in women's history at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.*

## 2/Steven Maynard Fewer Balms, More Bombs

***Warm Wind in China*, by Kent Stetson, Nu-age Editions, Montréal, Québec, 1989; \$12.95 (paper).**

**A**IDS hysteria in Nova Scotia rose to new heights when, in September of 1988, the front page of Halifax's *Chronicle-Herald* screamed "AIDS Fiend Strikes Again." The role of the media in framing Scott Wentzel's story in a deliberately inflammatory manner, the ensuing national police hunt to track him down and the subsequent regulation of his life by court order all remind us that AIDS is not just a health crisis; it is a political one as well. The *Herald* headline was not an exceptional incident: it was only one of the more sensational manifestations of the ways the forces of moral conservatism are using AIDS in their attack on people living with AIDS and HIV infection, gay men and others.

Although for many Maritimers AIDS means daily resistance to a virus and living with a chronic illness, the *Herald* headline highlights the political nature of the struggle over how it gets represented in the media, and in other realms of culture. On one side are those trying to use AIDS to define gay men (and lesbians), once again, as diseased and deviant. On the other side we have what might be called the "resistance of self-representation" — people working on cul-

tural productions and the alternative media of our own communities to challenge the dominant language and images of AIDS.

When, in January of 1988, Kent Stetson play *Warm Wind in China* premiered in Halifax, it was one of the first dramatic productions in Canada about AIDS and, in the theatre world, one of the first of these self-representations. Last year, the Montréal publishing house Nu-age Editions, released a volume that contained *Warm Wind in China* in both its French- and English-language versions. What follows is not a review of the stage production, but looks instead at this new text in the context of the culture and politics of AIDS.

Cultural critics working on AIDS-related productions often distinguish between three different artistic responses to the AIDS crisis. First, there are those works that give expression to the loss and grief over the death of lovers, friends and family. These are often very personal accounts that seek to provide a memorial to individual struggles with AIDS. A second response is the use of cultural productions and/or the reputations of artists as commodities for sale, thus raising much-needed funds for AIDS organizations. And, thirdly and most recently, we have the rise of cultural activism, wherein artists and political activists try to contest the dominant representations of AIDS. Where does *Warm Wind in China* fit,



# WARM WIND IN CHINA

Metro Area Committee on AIDS

in the context of these three cultural responses to the AIDS crisis?

This work focusses on a gay couple, Slater and Davis, who, as the play opens, are on a Nova Scotia beach. The setting has much importance beyond adding a touch of local colour. To date, most of the cultural work on AIDS has come out of gay communities in large urban centres such as San Francisco, New York and Toronto. *Warm Wind in China* is a reminder that AIDS has reached out well beyond these urban gay ghettos. We need only recall that the story that pushed AIDS onto the Maritime stage — the trials of Eric Smith — began in the small community of Clarks Harbour. And while Slater and Davis are evidently educated — Slater at one point explains his AIDS diagnosis with reference to a Renaissance poem — there is something in their language that betrays their Maritime working-class roots. To Stetson's credit, *Warm Wind in China* pushes the cultural representation of AIDS beyond its relatively narrow focus on urban, middle-class men.

At the same time, Stetson should also be given credit for retaining his focus on gay men. Some work on AIDS by gay men has sought to de-emphasize its gay content, usually in an effort to counter the ways in which the mainstream media and others have, with clearly homophobic intent, depicted AIDS as a "gay disease." The problem with this strategy is that it serves only to render gay men and people living with AIDS more invisible. Stetson, by dealing with gay characters in an explicit and unapologetic manner, resists rather than becomes complicit in society's attempts to use AIDS to further marginalize and silence us. This refusal to remain mute or invisible is all

the more imperative in a province where mayors and others have more than once suggested that MacNab's Island in Halifax Harbour would make an excellent quarantine camp for people with AIDS.

But *Warm Wind in China* is concerned less with quarantine measures and more with unraveling the complex emotional lives of its two main characters. Other critics have suggested that the strength of this work derives from Stetson's effective use of language and of such images as wind and breath. But its strength, I believe, is also a product of the very discernable sexual tension between the two protagonists, particularly in the rough edge to their masculinity.

Early in the first act, Slater tackles Davis in the sand, pins him down and twists his arm behind his back. Later, he ties Davis's hands and feet together with pieces of rope. At first, Davis consents, intrigued by the introduction of this new element to their sex. He teases, "Watcha got in mind, tiger? This is weird. Promising but weird. I don't know what those leather guys get out of this kinky stuff." But Slater then buries him in a pit of sand and a potential sexual encounter turns into something less as Slater forces Davis to hear him out:

*Slater: You know how I've been feeling a little tired lately? Losing things, like my strength? Well, I organized this little picnic to let you in on a little secret...*

*Davis: What are you talking about?*

*Slater: I'll lose my hair. I'll begin to rot inside and watch myself disappear...*

*Davis: No.*

*Slater: 'Fraid so, Champ. The lingering colds, the confusion. All part of the same*

Most cultural work on AIDS has come out of large urban centres like New York and Toronto



The focus of the second act shifts to family relationships, to the "landmines beneath the broadloom"

package.

And later, the tension turns sexual and physical again:

*Davis: Look at you... You're getting a hard-on. You dog. All pumped up and nowhere to go.*

*Slater: You wanna come with me? Hub? Wanna come for the big ride to the great beyond? (He drops his pants.) Here's your ticket, hot shot. (He falls to his knees, bare ass to the audience.) Don't want it? Whatsa matter? Scared you might catch something? Eh? (He pushes his crotch into Davis's face.) Come on. Let's exchange a few precious bodily fluids..*

*Davis: No.*

*Slater: No? What's the matter? Don't want me any more? Time was you couldn't get enough. Come on. (He uses force.) Everything I got is yours, Davis. You know that. You told me that yourself.*

*Davis: No. God damn you.*

But there is much more to Slater and Davis than hardness. At different points they are vulnerable, caring and romantic. Immediately following the scene in which Slater forces himself on Davis, Davis asks simply, "What?" Slater replies, "I'm scared."

Cradling Slater in his arms, Davis recalls that "I fell in love with you the minute you said my name. It was your voice. It came right from your soul. Those eyes. Your eyes."

Stetson tugs the reader back and forth between toughness and tenderness, between the twist of an arm and the touch of a face. With this, he captures something of the anxieties and fear of rejection that surround relationships and the negotiation of sex in the face of AIDS. But, more than that, by playing with the language of gay sexual banter and by using images of leather, rope and roughness, he draws upon and incorporates different aspects of gay culture into the play. This serves to underscore *Warm Wind in China* as a self-representation, as "ours," lending it a subversive edge when placed in the dominant heterosexual discourse.

The focus of the second act shifts to family relations, to the "landmines beneath the broadloom." Slater is now in the hospital and his parents, Jack and Elna, have come to see him and take his son, Matthew, home with them. Upon their arrival, his parents must confront both Slater's illness and his gay identity. As other secrets from beneath the broadloom emerge, we learn that this is not really news to them. In the first act we learned that Slater's first gay sexual experience happened when he was twelve years old and was with his father's

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brother, Uncle Ed. The problem was not so much the experience itself — Slater makes it clear that it unlocked for him his gay desire — but in how he felt betrayed by his father who physically beat him and who did nothing, even though he was aware of the relationship, when Ed would call Slater “the little faggot.” Trapped in his family, Slater had nowhere to go for help in understanding this betrayal of his emerging sexuality. He tells Davis of one experience with his father;

*He tells me to put the broken mirror back together. See? But he grinds it with his heel. Thousands of grains of glass. I don't know why he'd do that. Then he tells me to put it back the way I found it. The way I found it. I do my best. I can't. I'm just a kid. Dad won't look at me. I stare at the ground. Can't talk to him. Can't talk to Mom. Can't talk to anyone.*

When, in the second act, Jack suggests that Matthew can't stay with Davis because he or some of his friends might turn him “queer,” Davis responds by forcing Jack to confront his own homophobia and the long-hidden secret of Uncle Ed;

*Jack: What about your new buddies?*

*Davis: What new buddies?*

*Jack: Someone like Arnold. I mean you guys and kids. If Matt was a girl it'd be different.*

*Davis: Arnold is into men, not boys. We leave that to married men and straight relatives.*

*Jack: You're treading on dangerous ground.*

*Davis: Uncle Edwin still live next door? (Silence) You're terrified of me.*

*Jack: Scared of a faggot? Not too God-damned likely.*

*Davis: You don't mind a bit of lisp and swish. But if a guy looks you in the eye and says I love your son the way he needs to be loved, it all goes to ratsbit.*

What emerges from the second act is a finely textured description of the ways a Maritime community enforces a code of conformity and silence. Faced with a gay son with AIDS, Jack's strategy is that “we all agree to keep this thing quiet,” because “if this gets around the island we'll be ruined.” In such a community, what Jack calls “a normal home... a home with a father and mother” is seen as a solution to all problems,

rather than a major part of the problem itself. It should be noted that Stetson is too sensitive, and his characterizations too subtle and careful, to leave the reader with any suggestion that the problems of community and family he describes are unique to the rural Maritimes. Communities marked by ignorance and homophobia, along with “normal homes” where emotional and physical abuse are inflicted on youngs gays and lesbians, are found throughout Canada.

In a note at the beginning of this book, Stetson writes that what he sees emerging from the AIDS crisis are “stories of heroism.” As the play moves towards Slater's death, it becomes clear that *Warm Wind in China* is about coming to terms with dying and loss. Stetson has said in an interview that “I wrote it as a balm, not a bomb so much. It's for those who have lost, who will lose.” He added that “the best thing I've done as an artist is to insist on a *Warm Wind in China* benefit for Halifax PWAs (People With Aids).”

In terms of the three different artistic responses mentioned earlier, *Warm Wind in China* clearly falls into both of the first two categories. But what about the third response, the cultural activism and the battle to contest the dominant representation of AIDS? Activists argue that art which constructs AIDS solely in terms of individuals obscures the broader political context and, therefore, sometimes unwittingly plays into the dominant discourse. One thinks here, for example, of Slater and Davis trying to pin down that “one slip” that introduced the virus into their relationship. This only serves to reinforce the notion of AIDS as a result of personal sexual transgression. Activists who insist that representations of AIDS are as real and powerful as the virus itself would ask — and I have heard this question posed with reference to *Warm Wind in China* — whether we really needed another story about a person with AIDS who dies. To counter the daily message of AIDS as a fatal disease, we need fewer stories about loss and grief and some positive representations of people struggling with and surviving this disease. And finally, there is what one cultural activist calls the “prophylaxis of safe text”: reading a book or seeing a play about AIDS can encourage some people to rest easy by allowing them to think that they are therefore doing something about the disease. What is really needed are cultural works

A description emerges of the ways a Maritime community enforces a code of conformity and silence



The struggle  
against  
AIDS does  
not occur  
solely in the  
realm of  
culture

that move people in the direction of collective action against the virus. We need fewer balms, and more bombs.

The struggle against AIDS, of course, does not occur solely in the realm of culture. In Nova Scotia, there are currently several groups devoted to fighting the disease. The provincial PWA Coalition is an excellent example of people living with AIDS and HIV infection organizing on their own. In January of last year, for instance, the Coalition held a press conference to demonstrate the use of aerosolized pentamidine, in defiance of the federal government which has refused to release the life-prolonging drug for use. People with AIDS in Nova Scotia face a government which in October of 1988 rejected the key recommendations of its own Task Force on AIDS. Eight months later, it rejected the inclusion of sexual orientation in the provincial human

rights code following months of sustained organizing by the lesbian and gay communities. But as the cool winds of conservatism blow in Nova Scotia, activism continues to heat up. In May of 1988 over 400 people attended a Halifax AIDS vigil. Last year's vigil drew just as many and the people took to the streets of Halifax's downtown.

One of the speakers at that vigil was Kent Stetson. It is encouraging to see such fusion of the cultural with the political. And the seeds for it are present in *Warm Wind in China*. As Davis says in the play itself;

*We have fought this thing, by ourselves, from the beginning. And we will keep on fighting, by ourselves if we have to, for as long as it takes. •*

*Steven Maynard is a gay AIDS activist.*



Living With AIDS



### 3/Judith Fingard

## Shipping Out in the Golden Age

***Seafaring Labour: The Merchant Marine of Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914*, by Eric W. Sager, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montréal, Que., 1989; 321 pages; \$34.95 (hard bound).**

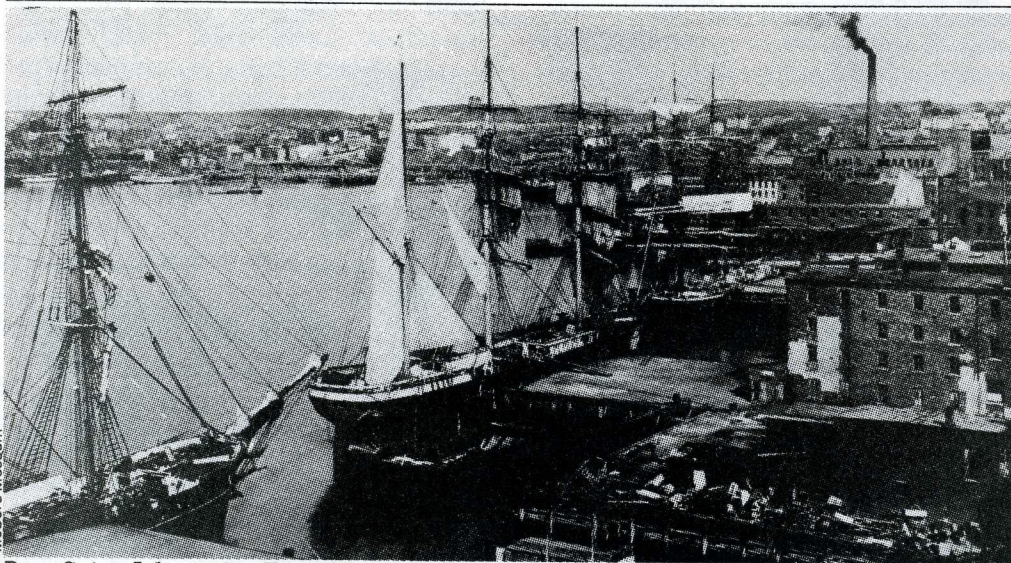
**T**his book is a fascinating exploration of the world of the nineteenth-century seafarer. We learn about the intricacies of his craft, about the duties he performed on the complex Atlantic Canadian-owned vessels that sailed to the farthest corners of the world. Virtually everything the interested reader might want to know about recruitment, wages, working conditions, labour protest, the art of seafaring and the culture of the fo'c's'le can be found between the covers of this work.

The concept of a "golden age of sail," that era of wood, wind and water in nineteenth-century Atlantic Canada, has been under attack by historians of the region for some time. Eric Sager, a historian teaching at the University of Victoria, continues that attack in this book. He argues that the shipping industry achieved its profitability and longevity only by squeezing every possible ounce of productivity out of its workforce in the second half of the century. This was accomplished through industrial management and state regulation. The middle of the century saw the paternal master-servant

relationship on the schooner/workshop replaced by the authoritarian control of the aloof shipmaster on the large vessel/factory.

Although the bulk of this study focusses on the deep-sea merchant marine, Sager also provides us with interesting insights into service on coastal and fishing vessels. He views the working environment on these small craft as a forerunner to that on the deep-sea fleet, which rose to prominence during the peak years of ship-owning in the region. Although there was some overlapping in this transition from one to the other (the schooner persisted and, indeed, outlived the barque and full-rigged ship), this change is central to Sager's rather mechanistic thesis of the transformation of workshop to factory. He explains the changes in shipboard relations — from personal and paternal to impersonal and authoritarian — as a function of the larger size of the new vessels, which required more crew members, and the longer distance of voyages. The diversification of the workforce, in terms of both specialization of tasks and ethnic background, also helped speed the transition. While this is an attractive argument, it falls rather flat when applied to the Atlantic Canadian merchant marine because the full impact of the industrial machine — in the form of the steamship — never materialized here. In a shipping

Shipboard relations shifted from personal and paternal to impersonal and authoritarian



Busy Saint John, 1870. The full impact of the steamship never materialized in the region.





**Bluenose  
masters  
were some of  
the hardest-  
driving,  
ruthless and  
cruel  
commanders  
of the age**

industry in decline, we have to be satisfied with the "proto-industrial" barque.

If Sager had considered other influences in the shipping industry of the time, ones not necessarily incompatible with his industrial model, his discussion would have been more well-rounded. Three of these omissions spring immediately to mind.

First, the naval traditions which influenced and interacted with those of commercial seafaring on vessels of the British Empire are given very short shrift. At best, Sager grudgingly acknowledges the need for more study in this area. Given Britain's naval supremacy at the time and the discipline that maintained it, it's hardly surprising that an authoritarian structure also existed in the other large-scale marine workplace, rather than the egalitarianism that flourished among eighteenth-century pirates or the democracy of the present-day Norwegian service, both of which Sager prefers, in spite of their irrelevance to his area of study.

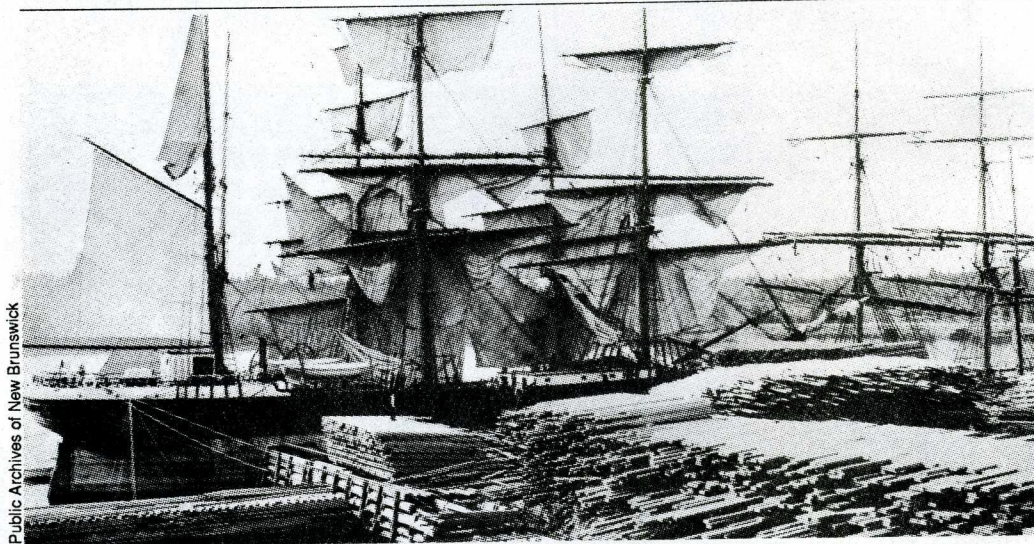
The second omission involves the author's ideas about the "typical" seafarer. At the same time as he denies his existence, Sager describes him as young, literate, with rural roots and able to perform various jobs to ensure his survival. However, no attempt is made to analyze his life-cycle. Given the attitudes adopted by working class women in the nineteenth century (and by university students in the twentieth), Sager might profitably have identified some of the short-term considerations that shaped the experience of merchant seamen. This would have helped us better understand their willingness to put up with the appalling working conditions they suffered.

An even more serious omission is the

author's failure to explore the pre-command experience of the shipmasters who figure prominently in this study. During a reading of *Seafaring Labour*, these men emerge on the proto-industrial vessels as a breed apart from the deck hands. This one-dimensional view of captains supports Sager's limited interest in adversarial social relations at sea. Given his endorsement of the conventional wisdom that Bluenose masters were some of the hardest-driving, ruthless and cruel commanders of the age, it seems that an analysis of the on-the-job training and careers of these men would be crucial to any well-rounded discussion of this book's subject.

These reservations aside, I recommend this book to all those interested in the history of the region's working people. Sager's integration of a wide range of sources is impressive and he brings to his analysis an intimate acquaintance of his subject. And he is far too committed to narrating the experiences of working people to rely totally on dehumanized statistics. For his qualitative evidence, he relies on the "interesting" official logs that reveal the details of conflict and he uses the published literature of the sea to evoke an ambience worthy of Joseph Conrad or F. W. Wallace. Some of the contemporary accounts he favours, such as Benjamin Doane's *Following the Sea* and John Froude's *On the High Seas*, are currently in print, so readers of this important and compelling work have an opportunity to sample for themselves the first-hand accounts of life at sea during the rapidly tarnishing golden age of sail. •

*Judith Fingard is an author and historian living in Halifax.*



Public Archives of New Brunswick  
*Loading cargo on the Miramichi, 1890.*



4/Jim Overton

## Researching for the Neo-conservative Agenda

***Living on the Dead: Fishermen's Licensing and Unemployment Insurance Programs in Newfoundland*, by Maura Hanrahan, Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland; 1988; \$2.50.**

“Living on the dead” is a reality in thousands of fishing communities in the Maritimes and Newfoundland. Self-employed, seasonal fishermen can, if they qualify, draw unemployment insurance (UI) between November and May. But in areas where the season is short, it's not easy to get from the fishing season to the time of UI — and it is this gap in time that some Newfoundlanders call “living on the dead.” There is a wealth of insight into the frequent harshness of Newfoundland life in that pungent phrase, and even more about how important UI has become for those who fish the Atlantic.

It's because UI has become such a vital part of local communities that present debate over the future of the programme is so heated and so crucial. In 1988, the fishing industry entered another of those severe economic crises that have made it a prime example of capitalist bust-to-boom-to-bust. Uncertainty is rife; many fishermen must devote almost all their energy to the struggle to obtain even a meager income. In many parts of Newfoundland, the 1988 inshore fishery failed. Along the South Coast, for example, inshore catches plummeted from 27,742 tonnes in 1987 to 15,262 tonnes in 1988, while offshore boats also failed to catch their quotas. As well, last year saw a disastrous failure of the inshore fishery in both Labrador and on the Great Northern Peninsula. And these failures have been made even more catastrophic by a recent decline in fish prices.

As if this were not bad enough, the recent drastic cuts in fish quotas brought about by the serious decline in fish stocks are threatening to devastate parts of rural Newfoundland. This year, eight deepsea fish plants employing 4,500 people will close for periods ranging from 17 to 27 weeks; next year, the situation promises to

become even worse. And on top of all this, the most recent federal budget has spelled out Ottawa's commitment to further reduce UI coverage. Because UI represents between 31 and 55 percent of the incomes of those who fish for a living in the province, Ottawa's UI policy shifts cause deep concern here. Down-time at fish plants coupled with longer UI qualifying periods will mean great hardship for many Newfoundlanders.

In this context of crisis and a visibly collapsing welfare state, a study such as Maura Hanrahan's *Living on the Dead*, dealing with federal licensing, unemployment insurance and the “plight of the small boat fishermen” will almost certainly have an impact. Based on approximately fifty personal interviews with Newfoundland fishermen conducted in 1985 for the Newfoundland Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment (headed by Douglas House, Director of the Institute of Social and Economic Research), *Living on the Dead* presents, in condensed form, some of the analysis of this controversial Royal Commission.

Like so many other people, Hanrahan doesn't like UI. She thinks that today it has drifted away from its original goals and has undermined an old, admired tradition of independence and flexibility. She believes it is being systematically abused and that it is undermining family traditions in outport communities. Hanrahan's study will be a valuable weapon in the arsenal of right-wing critics of the welfare state because it appears to provide scholarly support for the destruction of UI as we now know it in the region. But whatever its political uses, *Living on the Dead* is a poorly thought out, badly researched and weakly edited “tract for the times.” It is not a balanced appraisal of UI: it presents little new evidence, and its central arguments do not stand up.

Take one of Hanrahan's major arguments against UI; it now “functions not as an insurance system but as income supplementation.” This is an echo of most recent conservative critiques of UI, including Claude Forget's notorious 1986 Report. UI, Hanrahan asserts, was initially designed to keep people going during *occasional* peri-

This study is a poorly thought out, badly researched and weakly edited “tract for the times.”



Hanrahan is not wrong to criticize UI; she merely hasn't noticed all the flaws in the existing system

ods between steady jobs, but in Newfoundland it serves a different purpose: it keeps people going through *recurring* periods of seasonal unemployment. A system "implicitly designed for an urban industrial work force with year-round jobs" has, in a rural society with a weak labour market, been twisted. UI should be about *insurance* against unemployment, not about *maintaining income* in the off-season. Or so the story goes.

But what's behind this view? Hanrahan's position is based on a very narrow view of the nature of UI and on considerable ignorance about its history. It is absurd to argue that UI should be working to some grand plan, or to some original "insurance" principle, which in the early 1940s was carved, forevermore, in tablets of stone. A look at its history discloses no such grand plan; rather, it reveals a decades-long debate between those who want it to work like any other insurance plan and those who wish to see it meet other, broader social objectives. Even in the '40s, UI had already departed from what might be called strict insurance principles with the introduction of seasonal regulations. The provision of supplementary and fishermen's benefits continued this trend into the 1950s. And since the 1960s — at least until the advent of the present government — the trend has been to extend UI

coverage to more and more groups of workers and towards the creation of a comprehensive national system for pooling the risks and costs of unemployment. So why, as Hanrahan insists, should pure "insurance" principles be the basis of UI?

Now, if we defend the UI system as it operates in Newfoundland against the cry that it is "income support" rather than "insurance," this doesn't mean that it's the only or the best social insurance scheme possible. UI has many problems, but none of these are addressed by those who simply claim that the system is not working *as intended*. To talk of UI as "income support," and of fishermen "exploiting" the system, as Hanrahan does, has obvious political implications, given that such arguments have become an essential plank in neo-conservative arguments for UI "reform."

Or take another of Hanrahan's criticisms, this one aimed specifically at "fishermen's UI." She has a valid point in highlighting some problems here: the difficulty in getting enough weeks with catches over \$99 to qualify for benefits; the paltry nature of the cheques received by many of the fishermen who finally do qualify, and; the quandary of how to get through the days without stable income — the time of "living on the dead." These are surely fairly obvious problems; the system is creaking visibly under the pressure of the present crisis. The \$5 million relief fund recently established by the federal and provincial governments to help those affected by the failure in the fishery is a stark reminder of this. Special assistance programmes for fishermen who have been unable to qualify for UI have become a fact of life in Newfoundland during the 1980s. These help some people, but the assistance provided is always inadequate and hiring guidelines for emergency make-work schemes are vague and controversial. Even when people are "lucky" enough to draw UI, low earnings often dictate an income of less than \$100 per week. Hanrahan is not wrong to criticize UI; she merely hasn't noticed all the flaws in the existing stop-gap system.

Consider her two main charges against UI: that it is riddled with abuse and that it undermines Newfoundlanders' traditional independent lifestyle. She claims that the "system offers an inviting economic opportunity," even if it is "one of the few" in many fishing communities. This is part of her argument that not only is UI *not* "insurance," but that there is "fairly widespread

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*A Newfoundland outport scene. UI has become an essential income source over the years.*

misuse" and "abuse" of the scheme. "Fiddling" the system, she maintains, is very common. Such arguments have been an essential element of neo-conservative attacks on UI since the mid-1970s. But those who talk so much about abuse and press for action to eliminate it rarely support their arguments with other than hearsay evidence. Words like "widespread" are easy to use but are much more difficult to prove. Hanrahan doesn't even begin to do so.

Hanrahan claims that state intervention (in the shape of UI and licensing policies) represents an erosion of "traditional self-sufficiency in Newfoundland fishing communities." Here we are presented with another familiar argument, one which blames dependence on UI for undermining rural independence. In this reasoning, reality — the fact that dependence on UI results from lack of work and inadequate income from the fishery — is stood on its head.

Hanrahan holds the view that UI is inherently inappropriate to Newfoundland, arguing that it has led to a decline in the number of people engaged in the fishery. She backs up her position by pointing out that failure to qualify for UI makes survival in the fishery very difficult, and cites some UI rules that do, indeed, disqualify many would-be fishermen. But the rules she mentions are the result of recent alterations to the UI regulations. Presumably, these rules could be changed again if enough pressure were brought to bear on Ottawa. So, once again, her argument breaks down on close examination.

Critics of UI like Hanrahan have an unrealistic, rose-coloured view of the history of "traditional" Newfoundland fishing communities. The state has been involved in these at least since World War I because of their massive problems of poverty and

dependence, and because of the related threat of economic collapse and subsequent social upheaval. One-quarter to one-third of the population of "traditional" Newfoundland in the 1930s was absolutely destitute and on public relief. The traditional "self-sufficient" fishery is an illusion, useful only to those who want to blame UI for rural poverty and dependence, and unwilling to see that dependence on it results from lack of work and inadequate earnings from the fishery.

Much the same unrealistic romanticism clouds Hanrahan's discussion of state licensing policies. The personal registration system emerged in the mid-1970s and was formalized as a "management tool" only in 1981. Before then, personal licenses were unrestricted and no effort was made to use them to control fishing effort. Even after 1981, registration was not used to exclude people from the fishery.

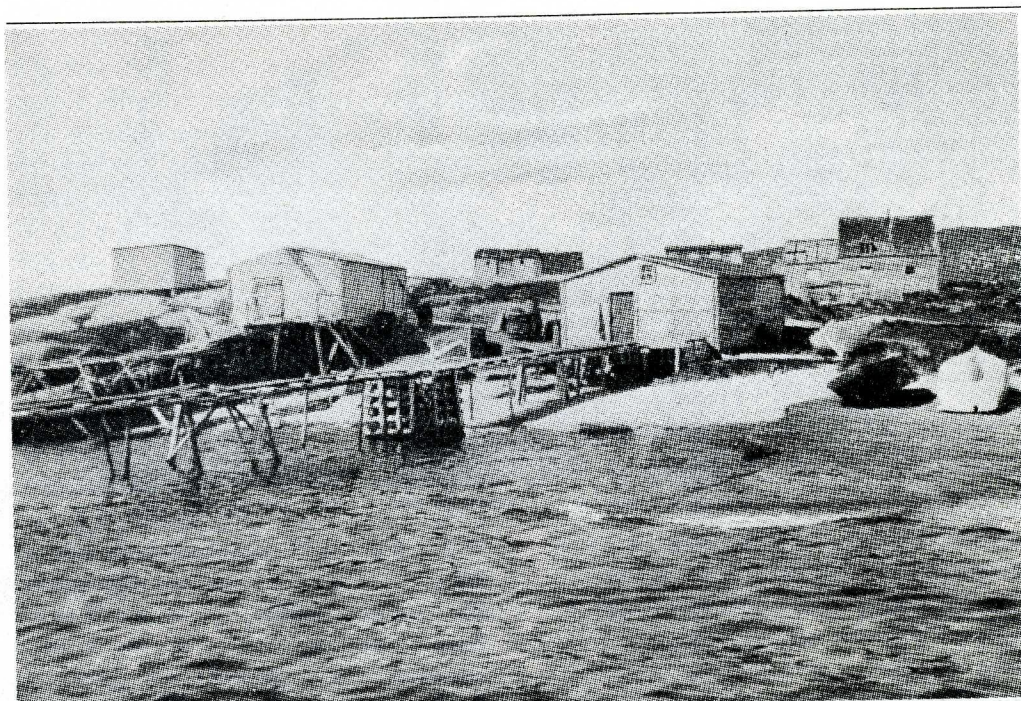
The registration system makes a sharp distinction between "full-time" and "part-time" fishermen. Full-timers (those who have fished the normal season in their area for two consecutive years) have access to state money — for example, the special loan programme for those affected by the 1988 inshore fishery's failure applied only to them. Part-timers can't get limited-entry licenses or register vessels over 22 feet long, and, since 1985, they can't set cod traps either. As well, unionized full-timers have priority when it comes to landing fish at unionized fish plants. Part-timers can apply for full-time status only after two years.

Linked to this registration system, and in many ways much more important than it, is a limited-entry licensing system that determines which species can be caught and what kinds of equipment can be used. The system of registration and licensing has

Critics of UI have a rose-coloured view of the history of "traditional" Newfoundland fishing communities



The dismal situation of part-timers is due to the drying up of income from sources *other* than fishing



An isolated outport, c. 1935. Many Newfoundland families were completely destitute.

become a means of distinguishing between a part-time fishery using small boats, catching mainly groundfish with hand lines and a full-time fishery employing larger boats, catching a wider variety of fish species with fixed gear. These regulations were intended as a way of restricting entry to the fishing industry, and were supported by the fishermen's union, which saw them as a good means of protecting "bona fide fishermen." If low incomes were, in part, caused by "too many people chasing too few fish," then restricting entry would raise income for full-timers — the union's core membership — by moving towards a kind of closed shop. Unfortunately, Hanrahan fails to deal with this issue.

Hanrahan doesn't like registration and licensing, arguing that they have neither protected "bona fide" fishermen nor professionalized the fishery. As well, she asserts that this "alien" system, "characterized by complex and seemingly arbitrary rules and regulations," poses "a threat to the ability of many fishing Newfoundlanders to successfully earn a living." It means people can't rely on a variety of occupations to generate income because government regulation promotes "occupational specialization in a region where this is not usually the optimal economic adaptation." State regulation has robbed people of flexibility in their involvement in the fishery, forcing them to rely on one or two species of fish and making them more vulnerable to failure than in the past. This loss of flexibility has "had far-reaching

effects on fishermen's incomes and the rural economy."

But, once again, this is a drastic oversimplification of the real situation. The statistical evidence on the decline of the part-time fisherman is highly ambiguous. The number of part-timers has gone both up and down since regulation was introduced. A lot of people probably registered as part-time fishermen before the coming of regulation as a way of maintaining access to a potential source of income. Hanrahan does not prove her case, nor is she successful in establishing her criticism that regulation has not improved incomes from fishing. It's true that, looking at the statistics she cites, income has at best reflected "no change." But we should think about what other possible factors are at work shaping incomes; prices and catches are two obvious areas which Hanrahan fails to examine. To argue that licensing and regulation have had *no positive effect* on the income of full-timers, one would have to know what would have happened in the absence of these programmes. What has fallen — quite drastically in the case of part-timers — is income from sources other than fishing and fishermen's UI. This means that the dismal situation of part-timers is due to the drying up of income from sources *other* than fishing. It's possible that if the present system allowed more flexibility they might have been able to compensate for this by improving their income from fishing, but this is by no means certain.

Isolated Communities



The argument that rural Newfoundlanders have lost their traditional flexibility, egalitarianism, and family orientation is a central one to Hanrahan, but it is based on nothing more than a comic-book version of Newfoundland history. When, where and for whom was fishing ever more "flexible"? Until very recently, one of the outstanding characteristics of fishing in Newfoundland was the *limited* (that is, inflexible) number of species exploited. Flexibility was always dependent on location, on the existence of local buyers and foreign markets for particular species of fish, and on the types of equipment used.

And how do we know that fishing used to be so much more egalitarian? Hanrahan blames licensing for undermining "egalitarian practices that used to characterize social and economic life in rural Newfoundland," and charges that it has "resulted in inequalities in fishing communities and subsequent social strain." Her point is, once again, *partly* valid — there are examples of some fishermen with licenses for specific species or with large boats doing very well, while others do poorly, and this has led to resentment. But her wider criticism is founded on a misunderstanding: inequalities and antagonisms in fishing communities go back a long way before the advent of the modern regulatory state. In the 1930s, there were

various "grades" of fishermen and it was generally recognized that the most impoverished fishermen (next to those who had lost their equipment) in a community were those who were forced to use the most primitive methods — hand lines and row boats. Very often, these people were then forced to sell their fish before it was salt-dried — and thus at a lower price than they might have otherwise received — in order to get the supplies they needed to continue fishing. Licensing and registration did not invent these divisions in fishing communities, though they may have intensified them.

As for the "family relationship," Hanrahan's major point here is that licenses, registrations, gear and certified fishing vessels can no longer be passed on from father to son, and this has created "disparities between young people and the older generation." Newcomers now face a kind of apprenticeship before they can enter the inshore sector. No longer can a "retiring fishermen... give one son the boat, another the trap and so on, so that each would have an equal chance of developing into a self-sufficient fisherman."

Once again, Hanrahan is *partly* right. Government regulation does, indeed, play a part in making it hard for young people to enter the fishery and thus become "inde-

Licensing did not invent divisions in fishing communities, but perhaps intensified them



Incomes earned in the Newfoundland fishery have been steadily falling in recent years.



This study  
will be cited  
as "evidence"  
that UI  
should be  
disposed of  
as a life-line  
for fishing  
communities

pendent." But it isn't *just* regulation that makes this difficult. Within the "traditional fishery," there was also an apprenticeship system — young men worked first without pay as assistants, then as share-men, next as partners, and finally as independent fishermen — and in most cases, equipment was not inherited outright but gradually purchased. There was a clear hierarchy in both the family and the fishery that often made it difficult for young men to move up the fisherman's ladder to full-fledged independence. But Hanrahan ignores this fact of history, as well as concrete proposals from the fishermen's union that would make today's system more equitable. A general license giving "fair access to all fish species" might remove some of the inequalities of access to fish species — but it wouldn't help those on the very bottom of the pile.

What would Hanrahan put in place of UI? Here *Living on the Dead* becomes very vague. She wants to eliminate the existing licensing scheme and modify the registration system. She argues that "at the very least," UI should be altered "to accommodate the traditional economic adaptations of fishing Newfoundlanders." And she endorses the idea that fishermen's UI be replaced by an "income supplementation system" that could guarantee "a certain off-season income that would increase in proportion to landings." Without these changes, she says, "there will be a further erosion of self-sufficiency and a deepening of the dependency syndrome in the province."

It's most revealing that Hanrahan, working from her romantic notion of a "self-sufficient" and "flexible" traditional Newfoundland society, aims all her weapons at state responses to economic problems — which do indeed create plenty of dissatisfaction, much of it warranted — and none at the economic problems themselves. That we hear almost nothing from Hanrahan about corporate concentration, competition, declining fish stocks, low prices, etc., is symptomatic of a new regionalist neo-conservatism.

Hanrahan's work is a strangely abstract one — it shies away from politics. But the struggle in rural Newfoundland today is for a basic income, and it is emphatically political. Various forms of income support are under attack, including fisherman's UI, regionally extended benefits and social assistance. UI arouses deep feelings — in 1985, for example, a petition signed by

14,000 people involved in the fishery was submitted to the federal government demanding improvements in the system. Such efforts have made it difficult for the federal government to proceed with its plans to eliminate regionally extended benefits and fishermen's UI.

Now that we have a Conservative government entrenched in Ottawa and a free trade deal on the books, it is essential to defend existing programmes and to support the union's calls for the easing of UI eligibility requirements. But even if these goals were achieved, of course, it would only ensure that the most poorly paid would have their poverty reinforced — that's the reality of any income support programme that links benefits to earnings, as UI does. This linkage, of necessity, denies benefits to those most in need. Even income stabilization plans may (as labour critics have suggested) "tend to stabilize already existing poverty."

Clearly, a better income support system than the one currently in place is needed. And in thinking what to press for here, it is necessary to consider the free trade deal, with its commitment "to reduce government-created trade distortions." Any support system which *only* applies to those involved in the fishery may be more likely to run into problems with American counter-vail actions than would a broad programme like UI. If those forced into poverty by unemployment and low earnings are to receive adequate support, this issue will have to become the focus of a powerful and united political campaign. Hanrahan's neglect of the politics of income support fatally flaws her discussion of unemployment insurance and leads her, unwittingly or not, toward lending support to neo-conservative advocates of UI "reform."

This study will be cited, no doubt, as "evidence" that UI should be unceremoniously disposed of as a life-line for fishing communities in Newfoundland and throughout the Atlantic region. But it provides no such evidence. The death of UI as a social programme is in the neo-conservative cards, but those who are so eager to bury it, including even those who profess to be so warmly attached to fishing communities and their inhabitants, have, as Hanrahan's work shows us, nothing better to put in its place. •

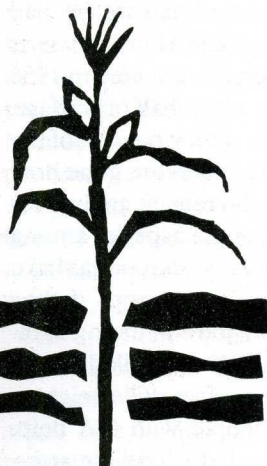
*Jim Overton teaches sociology at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland.*





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# Contras, Morgues, a Day at the Beach

*In April and May of 1988, Louise Green, a student at Harvard Divinity School in Boston, went to Central America by way of Florida. She was travelling with fellow members of Witness for Peace, an inter-faith group working to document the violence in that region and to make its scale known to Americans. During her travels, she kept a daily diary, outlining her reflections and experiences. What follows is excerpted from that diary.*

*Miami, Florida...*

Today I met my first contra. Alberto Suhr is one of the founding members of the FDN, the main contra group. He quit in 1984, but the Reagan Administration, apparently unaware he had left the ranks, honoured him in 1985 as a freedom fighter. He re-joined in 1986 for another year-and-a-half of warfare. He estimates that ninety percent of the original contra founders are gone now and that those who remain are in it for the lucrative business aspects, among other things. Suhr says the contras have slaughtered their own troops if they began to question the continuing fighting, and that FDN-controlled death squads in Honduras have killed eight to nine hundred people with CIA help. Troops often had no food or arms, while their leaders had thousands of dollars; the budget for the Miami FDN office alone is \$100,000 per month. Suhr still maintains a good relationship with the FDN — he even did taxes for a bunch of the guys last April while he was working at H & R Block....

Now that an amnesty is available, he will go back to his native Nicaraguan Atlantic Coast and resume his architectural practice. The thing he really got tired of was attacking civilians: "That's no way to win a war," he says....

I try to picture ol' Alberto back in his

## Louise Green

office, planning a residential home or drawing an office building. I wonder which images of life as a contra will come to his mind, what mental explosions will mar his next business meeting, how much he will miss the old days of easy money and counter-revolution. He seems like such a nice guy and it occurs to me that he really believed in the need for change in his country.... He says he has matured, he trusts the Sandinistas more now, he just wants to



go home. I hope he makes it, but his old life makes me sad and, hesitantly, I ask him if he regrets being involved in so much death. He replies that he has a lot to regret, but there was a time when it all seemed to make sense. Within myself, I search for that time, but can't find it. I guess you had to be there....

*Guatemala City...*

Forty thousand individuals have disappeared in Guatemala, of a population of approximately eight-and-a-half million. Most people are indigenous, descendants of the Mayans. Vinicio Cerezo is the first civilian president elected in over thirty years. The Army's public relations director tells us it is a friend of the people; it has established "model villages" where streets are named "Freedom," "Joy," "Hope." He says the Army enjoys a high level of support, particularly since 1982. The American Ambassador tells us there is a new "democratic opening" in the country, that it is an extraordinary time. His economics counsellor tells us that land

reform would only perpetuate small, unprofitable farms, that agri-business and large corporate farms are the wave of the future. The *real* problem in Guatemala today, he says, is (we hold our breath) "access to credit." (We sigh.) Embassy staff say the Guatemalan people are easily trained, hard workers, and the wages are very low - great business opportunities. The Minister of the Interior tells us that there is no discrimination against the indigenous people, and he has never heard of anyone claiming otherwise. He says there are no major problems facing the government today. The Archbishop of Guatemala City says the role of the Church is to be a reconciling force, that it would be unwise to bring up the past.

Forty thousand people have disappeared in Guatemala. It is doubtful they are all on vacation.

The Mutual Support Group (GAM) was born in the morgues of Guatemala City in 1984. Five women kept meeting there accidentally as they went to check bodies in hopes of finding disappeared family members. Now they have 1,000 members, each of whom is mourning missing persons. In the first days of the organization, two GAM leaders, along with a three-year-old son, were kidnapped and tortured to death. When the bodies were later found, the little boy's fingernails had been pulled out.

Nineth, the group's leader, confronts so much brutality daily that she seems to be one large, open wound. I worry for her — a person cannot live long on the brink of disaster. She walks on the edge of pain, and says that Guatemalans live "with death between their teeth." In March, ten students disappeared from the University; two were later found with signs of torture. In April, 28 people were kidnapped in the Santiago Atitlan area alone. Nineth says there is no longer fear in her group



so much as there is a profound outrage over the continuing violence. They demand an accounting of the whereabouts of the disappeared, but President Cerezo has already stated that no investigation will take place because the Army simply would not allow it.

I wear a bracelet, woven by Guatemalan refugees, to commemorate Albertina Diaz Giron, last seen in Guatemala City in early 1984. I walk the neighbourhood of our hotel and I wonder if she also passed this way. Did she buy tortillas at this stand? Did she smile at a group of *norteamericano* tourists examining post cards? Was she on her way to the sprawling market on New Year's Day of 1984 to pick up a burrito and wander in the stalls? Did she know it would be her last day to speak to her mother, laugh with her friends? At the GAM office, I watch Nineth tremble with emotion as she describes her sorrow, her missing husband, her murdered co-workers, the loss of the great love of her life. Glancing down at the band on my wrist, I see Albertina's eyes fill with tears....

On the 5th of March, 1988, four people from GAM travel to Military Base No. 20 to protest the Army's practice of charging three dollars for any enquiry regarding a disappeared person. They are surrounded by troops, the press representatives present are beaten, and all are told that if they don't leave they will be shot. On the following day, there is no media coverage of the event. However, the Army later issues a press release that denounces the "violation" it had "been subjected to" by GAM on the day of the protest.

(Last October, the GAM office in Guatemala was bombed and one of its workers died in the explosion. Fearing for her own safety, my friend Nineth has since gone into hiding.)

#### *Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala...*

Most of the people in this small city, set between three volcanoes at the edge of a lake, are Indians in brightly woven dress. The town square is filled with fruits and vegetables and men with cowboy hats in embroidered striped pants. Dozens of stalls offer native textiles and crowds of children

harass us constantly with bracelets they are selling. Throngs of women yell at us to come buy. A boat brings wealthier tourists across Lake Atitlan from a nearby resort to purchase crafts and clothes. It takes them back before the daily *chocomil* (the name townfolk have given to the strong winds on the lake) stirs up the the afternoon waters into dangerous choppiness.

There are other dangerous winds blowing, with sharp gusts, through this city — disappearances, murders, shootings, death threats, masked men surrounding houses. A local teachers' association has asked international visitors to come here and help document the harassment. The Army claims it captured a list of 200 town residents from a guerilla camp and soldiers have made personal visits to most of those on the purported list. Fifteen teachers have been kidnapped or intimidated into leaving. A city official recites to us the incidents of torture, disappearance and murder as if he is recalling dry spells or times of especially heavy rain. People here are inured to violence. Certainly, they are emotionally affected by it and suffer deeply, but they have also come to expect it. There is a certain deep paralysis of terror, as one priest puts it, that must be unlocked before people even dare to resist. Violence is just another part of the national landscape....

#### *Santiago Atitlan Marketing Technique:*

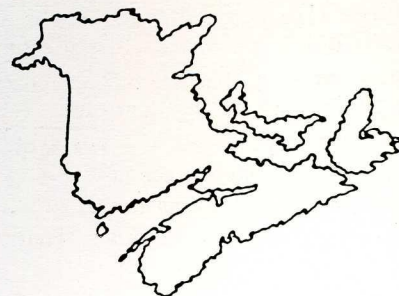
"Rapidly approach *gringos* en masse. Confusion in numbers works to your advantage. Flash as many different goods in their faces as possible. Impress upon them the low price and if they don't bite, lower it. If you can't appeal to their shopping instincts, go for the humanitarian appeal: "Buy for me. I hungry." Train children at the youngest possible age to peddle the woven bracelets they have made, and make them intensely competitive with each other. Now the *gringos* are sitting ducks; approach rapidly and sit alongside them. If necessary, use the silent staring method about ten inches away from their plates of food. Guilty *gringos* will immediately look at your wares to divert attention from their huge meals. Develop international flair: learn key

phrases in French, English and German. Remember, you have the upper hand in terms of guilt, but they have the wallets."

#### *Managua, Nicaragua...*

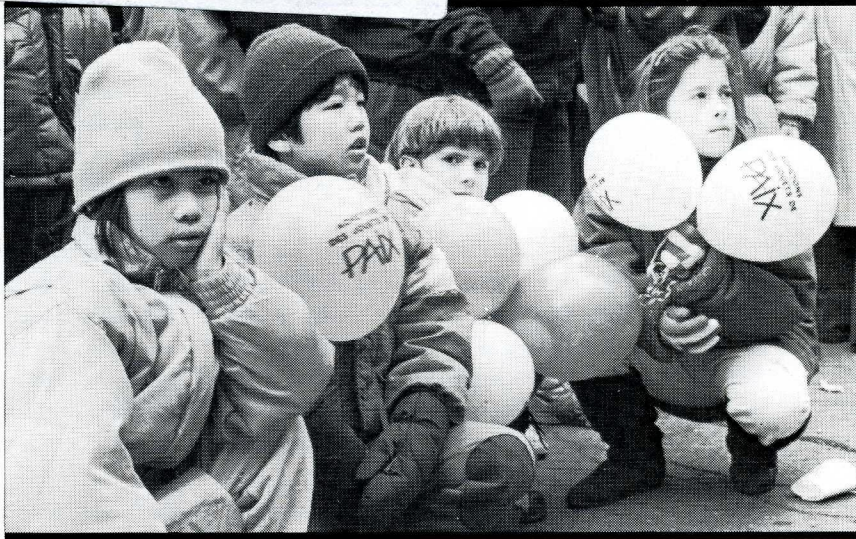
I went swimming today at a beautiful lake and beach that has been developed since the revolution. Hundreds of people were enjoying the cool waters and the small thatched-roof pavilions for picnics and shade. The steep hills on either side create a private, secluded feeling. This used to be a Somoza family hideaway and wasn't then available to those who enjoyed themselves there today. It seems incredible that the Somoza family owned nothing when it came to power, but had 60 percent of the land by 1979. The Ministry of Culture offices are now in a beautiful Spanish-style home surrounded by trees and spacious grounds; it is by far the nicest house I have seen in this country. Somehow, I wasn't surprised to learn it had been the home of the last Somoza's wife, when she was in town. Apparently, she spent a lot of time shopping in the Unites States.

The vast wealth of this one family is hard to comprehend when compared to the average Nicaraguan's lot. It's as if the Reagan family — Ronnie, Nancy, Maureen and Ron, Jr. — had occupied the American Presidency for ten terms. At the end of that time they are confronted: "Excuse me, but I happened to notice that you now own Washington, Oregon, California, Montana, Utah, Nevada, Colorado, Arizona, Wyoming, New Mexico and Kansas. Uh, would you pretty please give some back?" It might take a little bit of pressure to make it happen. But wouldn't Americans feel fine as they sat sunning themselves at a California beach after it belonged to the rest of them again?... •





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