



Dalhousie University

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**BREAKING BARRIERS:  
REPORT OF THE  
TASK FORCE ON  
ACCESS FOR  
BLACK AND  
NATIVE PEOPLE**

Submitted to Dr. H.C. Clark, President  
of Dalhousie, on September 21, 1989

By  
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15 September 1989

Dr. Howard C. Clark  
President  
Dalhousie University  
Halifax, N. S.

Dear Dr. Clark:

On behalf of the Task Force on Access to Dalhousie for Black and Native People, I am pleased to submit to you a copy of our report.

Many members of the Black, Micmac and University communities assisted us in our task, and we hope that this report will be made available to them. It is also our hope that this report will be widely distributed within the broader community.

We trust and expect that our report will be the basis of vigorous discussion and constructive action.

Sincerely yours,

A. Wayne MacKay  
Chair

Janis Jones-Darrell

Viola Robinson

Julia Eastman

K. Scott Wood

## DEDICATION

One of the members of this Task Force, Dr. P. Anthony Johnstone passed away before our work was complete. This Report is dedicated to him.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of the Task Force would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance of Assis Malaquias, Consultant to the Task Force, for his field work, research and rough drafting of earlier versions of segments of this Report. We also are indebted to Susan Jones, who in her good natured fashion, performed the secretarial duties for the project and organized our many meetings. To the many individuals and organizations who took the time and effort to give us written or oral submissions, we can only say that these contributions form the core of this Report. The insights acquired from these presentations enriched the members of the Task Force, and we hope this Report will reach the larger communities that compose Dalhousie University.

As Chair of the Task Force, I would like to thank personally each member of the Task Force for service beyond the call of duty. Under a very difficult time frame we all sacrificed other aspects of our lives in recognition of the value of what we were trying to achieve. We would also like to thank the Department of the Secretary of State for its generous financial support for the Race Relations and Affirmative Action Project at Dalhousie.

We were all saddened by the death of Dr. Anthony Johnstone who, until shortly before his death was an active and involved member of the Task Force. Dr. Johnstone was committed to this endeavour as part of his general battle for human rights in Nova

Scotia and it is our hope that this Report and the action which it precipitates will be a fitting legacy to this remarkable man.

A. Wayne MacKay,  
Chairperson,  
Task Force on Access for  
Black and Native People.

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## PREFACE

This is a report about Nova Scotia's Black and Micmac people and the barriers which have impeded their access to Dalhousie University. It is also a report about the nature and character of Dalhousie University and its responsibility to the indigenous Blacks and Micmacs who have been the victims of racism in Nova Scotia. In it we attempt to bridge the gap between the white university culture and the minority cultures of our Black and Micmac people. It is a small effort to salvage a future which includes the unique perspectives of the dispossessed.

In an effort to avoid speaking for either Blacks or Micmacs, we attempt to incorporate the insights and wisdom that we have gained from the process of consultation. In an imperfect way, we have tried to emulate the inquiry model popularized by Tom Berger when he investigated the impact of a northern pipeline on Canada's Native and northern people. Few experiences in my first decade at Dalhousie have been so moving and valuable as going into the Black and Micmac communities and listening to their views. There are lessons of discrimination and pain, but there are also lessons about the strength and resilience of the human spirit. As Patricia Monture eloquently states, "We must not appropriate the pain of others."<sup>1</sup> We have a responsibility as an academic community,

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<sup>1</sup> Patricia A. Monture, "Ka-Nin-Geh-Heh-Gah-E-Sa-Nonh-Yah-Gah" (1986). [Full cite] (1986), 2 Can. J. of Women and the Law 159.

however, to reduce its sting.

While the Task Force was enriched by the participation of members from both the Black and Micmac communities, we must acknowledge some of the biases brought to this task by the white members of the university community, such as myself.

There is an inevitable tendency to measure success or failure by middle class standards. Values, such as academic freedom, the objective pursuit of scholarly truth and our preconceptions about the nature and role of a university are part of the baggage that we carry. All too often these values will come into conflict with the experiences and aspirations of Blacks and Micmacs. The choices that we made will reflect our preferences. Where possible, we have attempted to acknowledge the competing value choices and articulate why we have tipped the scales in the way that we have.

I am personally indebted to the members and the staff of the Task Force, as well as the numerous people who shared their experiences with us. The process has educated me about the nature and mission of Dalhousie University, as well as the burdens and dreams of Nova Scotia's Black and Micmac population. I have felt the shame of being a member of the white majority in Nova Scotia, and the joy of dreaming about a better future for my children, as well as those of the indigenous minorities.

"Going from Preston to Dalhousie University is like taking a trip to the moon."<sup>2</sup> A trip to a university campus must no longer feel like a journey to another planet for minority communities in Nova Scotia. The challenge presented to Dalhousie is to make the university a more familiar place for indigenous Blacks and Micmacs. In order to achieve this goal the university community must reach out to the Black and Micmac communities. By so doing, the university will become a richer place. By allowing these people to claim what is rightfully theirs, we can strike a small blow against racism in Nova Scotia. Dalhousie can make the dream about university education for Micmac and Black Nova Scotians a reality in the 1990s.

I shall attempt to articulate the human value of rising to this challenge by leaving the safety of prose and venturing into the poetic realm. The first poem was crafted by the renowned poet, Maxine Tynes, after reading this preface and upon my request. I am honoured not only by the contribution of her inspiring poem, but also by her suggestion that I should also include my own effort, evoked by our Task Force hearings in Truro<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Wayne Desmond, making a presentation to the Task Force on May 3, 1989 at the Black Cultural Centre, coined this expression.

<sup>3</sup> While modesty should prevent such inclusion, my only defence is to ask the question - what aspiring singer would pass up an opportunity to perform a duet with Aretha Franklin, Tina Turner, or Tracy Chapman.

Racism

Racism  
the alphabet of that word  
a metallic absurdity on the tongue,

the cell of its imprisonment  
slamming down all of your days  
on all of your life.

the cage of racism  
allowing no life-to-life cross-over  
to the other side

no people to people

mind to mind

heart to heart.

the bite of racism  
is deep and deep  
and relentless in its pursuit  
incising Black and Native and language and  
gender cultures  
excising the heart of all that we are.

We bleed generations of pain.  
We heal to hope.  
We rise to challenge.  
We shout the imperative.  
We stride the future.

The language of the Black and Native future  
has no alphabet for racism.  
has no agenda for it  
no taste  
no time  
no reality.

And in some future Black and Native time  
the rain of racism falls  
and finds no waiting hearts;  
finds no grounds wanting.

Maxine N. Tynes  
14/06/89

Racism

Racism  
to whites  
is only  
a word,  
  
acquiring  
an eloquence  
on Black and  
Native tongues,  
  
choosing  
within  
a sea  
of desperation  
the  
courage  
to dream  
about a future,

where  
the splendour  
of  
difference

evokes  
the incredible  
beauty  
of being  
human.

A. Wayne MacKay,  
01/06/89

In her wonderful letter accompanying her poem, Maxine Tynes refers to "the measured pulse-beat of the fact of racism; of the pain of racism; of the coming together as human beings to challenge and to change the way we are together." As a Task Force we challenge Dalhousie University not merely to take the pulse of the problem but to take concrete steps to provide a partial cure. Anything less will be a betrayal of the trust that the Black and Micmac communities have placed in the Task Force and the larger Dalhousie University community. It is indeed time to change the way we are together as communities of human beings.

A. Wayne MacKay  
Chairperson  
Task Force on Access for  
Black and Native People

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### I. Introduction

The Task Force on Access to Dalhousie for Black and Native People was established by Dalhousie University's President, Dr. Howard Clark, to study and report on the role the University should play in the education of the region's indigenous Black and Native people. The mandate of the Task Force was:

- a) to review existing programmes and resources at Dalhousie which serve the Black and Native communities;
- b) to consult with leaders and representatives of these two communities, with provincial and federal government officials, and within the university community;
- c) to propose by June 30, 1989, a strategic plan whereby Dalhousie can most appropriately serve the needs of the Black and Native communities, and the role which the Transition Year Programme should play in the fulfillment of this plan; and
- d) to contribute to the evolution of an overall university policy on affirmative action and to the awareness of the university and the wider community concerning access to education.

The Task Force was chaired by Wayne MacKay of the Faculty of Law, and included Julia Eastman, Policy Advisor in the President's Office, Tony Johnstone, Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, Janis Jones-Darrell, Advisor to the President on Minorities, Viola Robinson, President of the Native Council of Nova Scotia, and Scott Wood of Henson College of Public Affairs

and Continuing Education. Assis Malaquias served as the Task Force's consultant and Susan Jones acted as the Task Force's administrative secretary.

Our work began in earnest in February, 1989, leaving only four months to the proposed completion date of June 30, 1989. The most important reason for the short time frame was the necessity for the President to act decisively on the future of the University's Transition Year Programme (T.Y.P.) for the 1989-90 academic year. Although its continued existence was assured for one more year in the spring of 1989, we still felt it was important to proceed quickly, so that the T.Y.P. and Dalhousie's other access programmes would not enter the next school year under the debilitating shadow of uncertainty that has existed for the last few years. With the death of Dr. Johnstone and the usual difficulties of co-ordinating summer schedules, our submission date was moved to September 21, 1989 - which is still only a little over six months from the time we embarked upon our task.

Rapid completion of the work of the Task Force was desirable for other reasons as well. The high profile Marshall Inquiry hearings and the controversy surrounding racial incidents at Cole Harbour High School have raised the consciousness of Nova Scotians about the experiences of Blacks and Micmacs in this province. Indeed, the Royal Commission Report arising from the Marshall Inquiry is also expected to be tabled in the fall of 1989. The times seem right for recommendations for change.

## II. The Historical and Social Context

The histories of Nova Scotia's Blacks and Micmacs are, in many respects, not happy ones. Both communities have experienced centuries of oppression and economic deprivation. Although they differ in a great many ways, both are characterized by disproportionately high rates of poverty and unemployment. Blacks and Micmacs in Nova Scotia have had to overcome many social and economic barriers to achieve secure and fulfilling lives.

This being so, the two communities are prime targets for affirmative action. Their under-representation in post-secondary institutions is a direct consequence of the many barriers their members have had to face. Special measures to enhance their participation in higher education are not only desirable, but just, in both moral and legal terms.

## III. The Legal Context

There is increasing legal recognition - at international, national and provincial levels - that education is a basic human right, which should be broadly accessible to all segments of society. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the Canadian Human Rights Act all lend support to this view. Failure to provide adequate education for Blacks and Micmacs in Nova Scotia is thus a violation of nationally and internationally accepted standards and norms.

#### IV. The Economic Context

Giving racial minorities full access to education is not only a matter of equality, rights and legal obligations, but also a moral imperative in a society increasingly dominated by science and technology and in which the importance of education has increased significantly. Data are available which show, for example, that the education and skill requirements of jobs are going up dramatically; that the monetary returns to education have increased in the last ten to fifteen years; that jobs for those with low education levels are very vulnerable to automation; and that the risks of unemployment and income declines for those with low education levels have increased. At the same time, members of many racial minorities continue to have education levels well below the norm and employment patterns (when they do find employment) in occupations and industries that are at risk. There is, in other words, an argument to be made at this historical juncture that could not have been made as strongly a couple of decades ago, when unskilled and semi-skilled work was more readily available. The time is ripe for educational change.

##### a. Access to Education

The educational experience of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs in this province is such that concrete measures need to be taken to ensure that these people can realize their potential in higher education. It is necessary to develop and enhance programmes which provide qualified Black and Micmac students with the incentives and

means to succeed in the fields of study of their choice. Access for Blacks and Micmacs, therefore, cannot be seen simply as absence of barriers. Access must be defined as a systematic and structured effort to provide a place within the university for students who, for social, economic and other reasons beyond their control, have been unable to pursue their education.

There are examples at many Canadian universities of programmes designed to facilitate access to education for members of traditionally under-represented segments of society. Some general types of access programme are:

- a) Programmes that prepare students for regular degree studies
  - (i) undergraduate (e.g. University of Toronto's Transitional Year Programme)
  - (ii) professional (e.g. University of Saskatchewan pre-university nursing and legal programmes).
- b) Special professional programmes
  - (i) degree (e.g. University of Western Ontario Graduate School of Journalism's communication programme for Native students).
  - (ii) non-degree (e.g. Saskatchewan Indian Federation College).
- c) Native studies programmes (Trent University, University College of Cape Breton).
- d) Support systems for minority students in regular degree programmes (e.g. University of Manitoba ACCESS programmes).

It should be emphasized that most of these programmes are of relatively recent origin. Most universities have been slow to recognize their duty to make post-secondary education available to disadvantaged minorities. It is not enough to refrain from blatant acts of discrimination. Because many barriers to education are

systemic in nature they must be confronted in an active and constructive way. This process is in its infancy. The past injustices visited upon Nova Scotian Blacks and Micmacs can only be confronted by affirmative action. Universities in general, and Dalhousie University in particular, should take the lead.

## VI The Situation at Dalhousie

In terms of the categories outlined above, Dalhousie's efforts to provide access to education for Blacks and Micmacs have been concentrated in two major areas:

- a) the preparation of students to enter and succeed in regular degree programmes (e.g. the T.Y.P. and the Law School Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs); and
- b) specifically designed professional programmes (e.g. Micmac Bachelor of Social Work Programme and the Certificate in Community Health).

The University also has a Faculty - Henson College of Public Affairs and Continuing Education - whose mandate it is to improve access for students with varied educational needs and backgrounds.

### a. The Transition Year Programme

The Transition Year Programme (T.Y.P.) is a one-year programme with a carefully constructed core curriculum, which enables Black and Native individuals who lack the formal academic qualifications for admission to prepare themselves for first year university. Approximately ten Blacks and ten Natives are accepted into the programme annually.

The T.Y.P. was established in 1969 and has undergone many

changes in the intervening years - changes in administrative and physical location, curriculum, the staff and student body, resources, philosophy and goals. An original emphasis on community activism declined over the years, as the preparation of students to succeed in regular undergraduate programmes emerged as the Programmes's foremost goal. The T.Y.P.'s existence has always been uncertain, and the programme has been the subject of frequent reviews. Severe budget cutbacks in the 1980s eroded the programme's effectiveness and led many to question the University's commitment to it. Two contradictory reviews of the programme in 1987, and uncertainty about the continuation of funding were among the factors which prompted the establishment of this Task Force.

b. Micmac Bachelor of Social Work

In September of 1984, Dalhousie's Maritime School of Social Work began offering a Bachelor of Social Work programme for Micmac social services staff, employed by agencies sponsoring the programme, i.e. the Native Alcohol and Drug Association, the Welfare Programme, the Native Council of Nova Scotia and the Micmac Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia. Of the 49 original students, 21 will graduate by the end of the 1989/90 academic year. The programme, which is now ending, is notable for its geographic decentralization, for its appreciation of Micmac culture, and for its emphasis on the connections between study and work. Two advisory committees, which include local and national representatives of the Native community, provided general direction

in terms of policy and curriculum. The primary source of funding for the programme was the federal Department of Indian Affairs.

c. Micmac Professional Careers Project

The Micmac Professional Careers Project was established in January of 1986 by Dalhousie University, the Union of Nova Scotia Indians and the Native Council of Nova Scotia, to address the lack of Native people in professional programmes such as Law, Health Sciences and Administration. The Planning Committee for the Project is made up of several representatives of the Micmac, the Innu, the Inuit and the Malecite, as well as representatives from government and educational institutions. Initial funding came from a private foundation - the Joseph S. Stauffer Estate. The Project has been instrumental in establishing both the Law School's new programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs, and the certificate programme in Community Health, which it administers.

d. Certificate In Community Health

This programme was designed and developed to meet the needs of Native health personnel in the Atlantic Region. It is offered by Henson College and the Faculty of Health Professions, and provides academic up-grading in Math and Biology, work-related courses and university-level study to a group of forty-one Native health workers. The programme is of two years' duration and is expected to be completed by June 1990.

e. Law School Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs

Dalhousie's Law School launched a programme on June 30, 1989, to increase the participation of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs in the legal education. The Programme has five main tasks:

- a) recruitment and promotion of legal education in minority communities;
- b) development of a programme of pre-law training for minority applicants;
- c) modification of the present legal education curriculum;
- d) institutional support for minority students who attend law school; and
- e) recruitment of law teachers from the indigenous minority community, or failing that, from other visible minority communities.

The programme will be the responsibility of a Director of Minority Education. The permanent Director will be drawn from the Black or Native communities and there will be an Advisory Board drawn from both the university and minority communities. The Nova Scotia Law Foundation is the primary source of funding for the Programme.

f. Henson College

Henson College was established in 1984 to serve as a bridge between the University and the communities it serves. In doing this, the College acts as a general access programme for members of traditionally under-represented groups.

g. Complementary Initiatives

A number of groups, units and individuals on campus provide support for, and promote the interests of, indigenous Black and Native people at the University. Prominent among these are the Black Canadian Students' Association, the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students' Association, the Native Education Counsellor, the Senate Committee on Affirmative Action in Education, the Advisor to the President on Minorities, the Dalhousie Multicultural Committee, and the Committee on Racial and Ethnic Affairs.

VII What We Were Told

One of the important roles of this Task Force was to listen to the voices of the indigenous Black and Micmac communities and accurately report what we were told. A great many people communicated with us in private consultations, at public hearings in several locations throughout the province, and by means of written submissions. We are extremely grateful for their help. Our findings, insights, and recommendations reflect what we heard.

The topics which received most attention in the course of our consultations were:

a. The School System in Nova Scotia

Although our mandate did not include examination of the role of the public schools, many presenters at our public hearings

expressed grave concerns about the education of Blacks and Micmacs. There were some signs of hope within the Micmac community that things are improving, especially in areas where there is greater band control, but the message from Black presenters was bleak. Many described the Cole Harbour incidents as typical rather than aberrant and called for a public inquiry into racism in the Nova Scotia school system. The clear perception in both communities is that there are significant racial barriers in Nova Scotia's schools that must be eliminated before large numbers of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs have access to university education through regular channels.

b. The Role of the Universities

Although those who met with us did not hold the province's universities responsible for the failures of its school system, many argued that there is much more the universities could do. Specifically, they could reach out into the school system and the communities to "make university a legitimate aspiration for Black and Micmac children". It was recognized that financial incentives and assistance will be required to enable many Black and Micmac people to realize this aspiration. To the extent that those we spoke with did blame the universities, it was for inadequately preparing prospective teachers and counsellors to work with students of different ethnicity or race. Insofar as teachers and counsellors behave in ways which are insensitive or racist, Faculties and Schools of Education are said to share the blame.

c. Dalhousie's Image

Two perceptions of Dalhousie were frequently expressed during our hearings. One was that the university is remote from the province's Black and Micmac communities and does not provide a supportive environment for their members. Groups and units such as the Black Canadian Students' Association, the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students' Association, the Office of the Native Education Counsellor, and the Transition Year Programme do provide comfort and support, but much remains to be done to make Dalhousie a hospitable environment for Black and Native people.

The second, even stronger, perception that emerged from our consultations is that Dalhousie is not committed to providing higher education for the province's Micmacs and Blacks. This perception appears to have two major sources - the University's budgetary treatment of the T.Y.P., and its apparent willingness to respond to the needs of Native people, only to the extent that they can secure external funding.

d. The Transition Year Programme

Because the T.Y.P. is well-known and of long-standing - and a central part of this Task Force's mandate - much of the testimony we heard related to it. There was almost universal support for the continuance of the T.Y.P. in some form, but serious problems were also identified. These included:

- the programme's poor image and marginal status on campus.

- the T.Y.P.'s perceived function as a "safety valve" for the province's school system, which reduces pressure for reform.
- unintentional undermining of Black and Micmac high school students' motivation to achieve grades sufficient to enter university by regular channels.
- a poor past record (recently improved) of preparing Micmacs for university.
- insufficient resources for the programme to be effective.
- lack of agreement about the purpose and goals of the T.Y.P.
- difficulty meeting the needs of both mature students and students who have recently left high school, particularly in the area of math.

Among the suggestions most frequently made to us were that:

- the University make a genuine commitment to the T.Y.P. and give it the staff and other resources it needs to be effective.
- the T.Y.P. be more closely integrated with the rest of the University.
- the Black and Native Studies class be made a credit class, and possibly opened up to undergraduate students.
- members of the staff of the T.Y.P. be racial and ethnic role models for the students, preferably from the indigenous Black and Micmac communities.

- a permanent administrative home be found for the T.Y.P.
- the programme's links with the Micmac community and, in particular, the Black community, be strengthened.

e. Other Commitments Sought

A point made repeatedly in the course of our consultations was that the T.Y.P. is not a substitute for measures to increase Black and Micmac participation in other programmes of the University. It was argued that it is only by taking such measures that Dalhousie can become truly positive force in the province's Black and Micmac communities and in the education system.

Many suggestions were made about things Dalhousie could do to attract young Black and Micmac students into its undergraduate programmes and to counteract the barriers to education they face in the schools. There was some discussion of professional programmes as well. The Micmac Bachelor of Social Work and the Certificate programme in Community Health were both cited as good programmes, but we were told that Dalhousie should accept more responsibility for developing programmes for Native people and should not rely on their organizations to secure the necessary funds. Members of the Black community also said that Dalhousie should take steps to prepare Black people for the professions. The Law School's new programme for Blacks and Micmacs was welcomed by members of both communities and its initiative was cited as an example for Dalhousie's other professional schools to follow.

f. Lessons From What We Were Told

One of the main conclusions that we drew from what we were told is that a large number of people in both the Black and Micmac communities care deeply about the education of their children. Access to higher education is seen as an important way to gain a more equal place in Nova Scotian life. It was also evident that people are tired of studies and recommendations that collect dust. They want to see action.

Meaningful consultation with the Black and Micmac communities is vital to the credibility and success of any access programme. It is not enough to invite a few representatives of the communities to come to campus. The university's agents and emissaries must go into the communities and seek their members' opinions, on their own turf. This is not only a matter of courtesy and respect, but also an excellent way to build bridges to the university, and a way of getting fresh perspectives on problems. The insights of the people who spoke with us set the stage for the recommendations which follow.

VIII Findings and Recommendations

After deliberating on what we were told, we recommend:

1 (a) Dalhousie mount a programme of outreach and recruitment within the province's Black and Micmac communities.

1 (b) the University establish a number of renewable scholarships for Blacks and Micmacs.

1 (c) the Awards Office ensure that Black and Micmac students in financial difficulty have access to bursary funds.

1 (d) the Vice-President (Student Services) seek to arrange

summer and part-time employment for Black and Micmac students.

1 (e) the Vice-President (Student Services) arrange the appointment of a Black counsellor to provide advice and support to Black Canadian students on campus.

1 (f) the Vice-President (Student Service) establish a resource centre for Black Canadian students on campus, comprising space to meet, to study and to house the students' Counsellor.

1 (g) the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) provide adequate University facilities and services at no cost to the office of the Native Education Counsellor, thereby reflecting the value of that office's contribution to the University.

2 (a) Dalhousie commit itself to offering the Transition Year Programme as a programme of access to university for indigenous Black and Micmac people for a period of at least ten years.

2 (b) the University make the Transition Year Programme an access programme principally for mature students.

2 (c) First priority for positions in the T.Y.P. be given to indigenous Blacks and Micmacs. If positions are vacant after all qualified members of the foregoing groups have been accommodated, they should go to Blacks and Aboriginal people from Atlantic Canada. If after these four groups have been accommodated, there are still positions, Black and Aboriginal students from elsewhere in Canada should be considered.

2 (d) Dalhousie commit itself to supporting the Transition Year Programme at a level consistent with the effective performance of its role.

2 (e) the appointment of an Administrative Secretary for the programme be restored to a full-time basis;

2 (f) the Transition Year Programme have both a director (with a half-time appointment) and an assistant director (with a full-time appointment);

2 (g) the appointments of teaching staff within the Transition Year Programme recognize (in terms of time commitment, remuneration, qualifications and experience) the multiplicity and intensity of the instructional, advisory, administrative and cross-cultural demands on them;

2 (h) a member of the staff of Counselling and Psychological Services - preferably a Black or Micmac - be cross-appointed to the Transition Year Programme in order to offer the Study

Skills Class, to participate in instructional development and coordination, and to be a source of advice and support to students.

2 (i) the budget for the Transition Year Programme be increased in recognition of the need for effective recruitment, individual tutoring, and staff training and to provide financial support for more than one "non-status" Native student.<sup>1</sup>

2 (j) the Transition Year Programme become part of Henson College of Public Affairs and Continuing Education, reporting to the College's Dean, and through him to the Vice-President (Academic and Research).

2 (k) representatives of the Black and Micmac communities be appointed to the Board of Henson College at the earliest possible opportunity.

2 (l) the budget of the Transition Year Programme be separate from those of other units in Henson College.

2 (m) the Vice-President (Academic and Research) initiate a search for a Black or Native Director of the Transition Year Programme with academic credentials which would justify cross-appointment to an academic department.

2 (n) if the University is unable to attract a Black or Native candidate with these academic credentials to the Directorship of the Transition Year Program at this point in time, the Vice-President (Academic and Research) should initiate the appointment of a faculty member who has worked with the Black and/or Micmac communities to the Directorship on a half-time basis for a period of three years, and then search again.

2 (o) once the new Director is in place, a search should be initiated for an Indigenous Black or Micmac to serve as Assistant Director for the Transition Year Programme on a full-time basis.

2 (p) the Vice-President (Academic and Research) assist the Transition Year Programme in arranging cross or joint appointments with academic departments for members of its teaching staff.

2 (q) those responsible for classroom scheduling ensure that

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<sup>1</sup> The TYP is currently able to provide support for ten Black students and for one Native student who is ineligible for funding from the Department of Indian Affairs. Other Native students accepted into the programme must qualify for such funding.

suitable classrooms are made available for instruction in the Transition Year Programme.

2 (r) the Registrar and the Assistant Director of the T.Y.P. take steps to further integrate the recruitment and admission processes of the undergraduate Faculties and the T.Y.P..

2 (s) an advisory board be established for the Transition Year Programme, consisting of representatives of the Black and Micmac communities, particularly educators, the University, and the T.Y.P. Students' Association.

2 (t) the advisory board recommended above, assist the T.Y.P. in developing a detailed set of policies conducive to attainment of the goal of enabling students to succeed in regular university programmes.

3 (a) the Faculties of Medicine, Dentistry, and Management strike committees to identify:

i) the extent of current Black and Micmac participation in their programmes;

ii) measures which might be taken to enhance this participation;

iii) needs of the Black and Micmac communities for training which is not provided in regular programmes;

iv) means of meeting the above needs through specially-designed programmes, perhaps involving distance education; and

v) potential sources of funding for these initiatives.

3 (b) the senior administration of the University assist the Faculties to implement plans for increasing Black and Micmac access to the professions.

4 (a) The senior administration give priority to the development of an effective overall process, implementation policy and strategic plan with special emphasis on the access of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs to Dalhousie.

4 (b) the membership of the Board of Governors include members of both the Black and the Micmac communities.

4 (c) the Senior Administration assist and encourage departments and schools to recruit and hire Black and Micmac faculty members.

4 (d) Dalhousie establish a number of graduate fellowships for indigenous Blacks and Micmacs.

4 (e) the Black and Micmac communities be represented on the new Community Relations Council.

4 (f) the Faculty of Arts and Social Science offer credit courses in the history and culture of indigenous Black and Micmac people.

4 (g) the Office of Instructional Development invite the Black Canadian Students' Association and the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students Association to co-operatively develop and participate in a workshop for departmental advisors and other faculty members on the experience of Black and Micmac students at Dalhousie.

4 (h) the School of Education take steps to improve the cross-cultural and race relations education component of its teacher training programmes.

4 (i) Henson College and the School of Education organize a major conference on the experience of Blacks and Micmacs in the province's educational system which brings together students, educators, members of the Black and Micmac communities, representatives of the province's schools, universities and government, and others.

4 (j) Dalhousie explore the feasibility of offering credit and non-credit courses in the Black and Micmac communities to encourage future university participation. Every effort should be made to hire Black and Micmac instructors and to coordinate these initiatives with those of Henson College, the School of Education, and other universities and community colleges.

5 (a) the senior administration provide leadership in raising funds for the measures recommended in this report which are needed to increase Black and Micmac participation.

5 (b) the University increase its financial commitment to the education of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs and use its operating funds, to the greatest extent possible, to increase their participation in regular degree programmes.

6 (a) the President consult both the Black Canadian Students' Association and the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students' Association about the recommendations made in this report.

6 (b) every effort be made by the appropriate administrators or units:

i) to provide the financial, social and other forms of support for undergraduate students recommended in above by September 1990 and to launch the suggested programme

- of recruitment and outreach in the fall of that year;
- ii) to reorganize and revitalize the Transition Year Programme by September 1990;
  - iii) to develop plans for increasing Black and Micmac participation in the programmes of the Faculties of Dentistry, Management and Medicine by May of 1990;
  - iv) to secure both Black and Micmac representation on the Board of Governors within one year;
  - v) to establish graduate fellowships for indigenous Blacks and Micmacs by May of 1990;
  - vi) to ensure that there are Black and Micmac members of the new Community Relations Council from the outset;
  - vii) to provide credit courses in the history and culture of indigenous Black and Micmac people beginning in September 1990;
  - viii) to arrange the suggested workshop for departmental advisors on the experience of Black and Micmac students during the academic year 1989/90;
  - ix) to make improvements in the cross-cultural education and race relations component of Dalhousie's teacher training programmes by September 1990; and
  - x) to sponsor a major conference on the experience of Blacks and Micmacs in the province's education system within one year of the submission of this report.
  - xi) to articulate the University's role in the education of the region's Black and Micmac people in its mission statement, the statement of its role and capacity, and in other appropriate policy documents.
  - xii) to develop a policy and strategic plan for educational equity, affirmative action in education, and race relations by May, 1990.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This Task Force has been immersed in the complex problem of combatting systemic racism. In contrast to the views expressed by members of the Nova Scotia government, we have been forced to conclude that racism is a problem in the Nova Scotia education system.<sup>1</sup> Few of us were aware of the number and height of the barriers which face indigenous Black and Micmac students who want to pursue higher education in Nova Scotia. These barriers include racist attitudes in the larger society, low self-esteem and expectations on the part of the minority students, limited financial resources and inadequate academic skills as a consequence of the pre-university educational system. Universities such as Dalhousie have been no worse than the larger Nova Scotian society but nor have they been much better. In spite of the existence of the Transition Year Programme (T.Y.P.) for twenty years, Dalhousie has failed to assert a leadership role in the education of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs. The T.Y.P. has been underfunded and marginalized, and it has not been promoted as part of what the university is all about.

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<sup>1</sup>In the controversy surrounding the much publicized fight between white and black students at Cole Harbour High School in March, 1989, various Cabinet Ministers indicated that they did not think that racism was a major problem in the schools. While the scope and time available for this study preclude a full exploration, the evidence presented to us clearly supports the conclusion that systemic racism exists in the Nova Scotia educational structure.

It is time for Dalhousie University to make a serious and on-going commitment to the increased access of Black<sup>2</sup> and Micmac students. As a Task Force, we were told over and over again that Dalhousie has failed to demonstrate a true commitment to access programs and failed to take a leadership role in promoting higher education for Nova Scotia's indigenous minorities. Indeed, the continued need for T.Y.P. after twenty years is a negative comment on all levels of the province's education system.

If Dalhousie wishes to escape its image as a white, elitist institution it must respond to the call for action that emanates from this Report. The time for soothing words and well-meaning policy statements has long since passed. As we will discuss in this introductory segment of the Report, there is a high consciousness about racial issues and a political will for change that engenders optimism among the members of the Task Force.

It is our fervent plea that this not be another fruitless study of the problems of racial minorities, ignored by those with the power to effect change. Bitter experience on the part of many of the people who appeared before the Task Force told them that recommendations for change were likely to go unheeded.<sup>3</sup> Our

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<sup>2</sup>Throughout this report we shall be referring to indigenous Black Nova Scotians although we may not always use the adjective "indigenous".

<sup>3</sup>It is interesting to note that the Royal Commission on Education, Public Services and Provincial-Municipal Relations, Nova Scotia (1974), called for the schools to play an active role in

challenge to the decision-makers at Dalhousie is to prove the skeptics wrong. We have invested our time and efforts in this process on the assurances that Dalhousie is willing to make good on its verbal commitments to the Black and Micmac peoples of Nova Scotia. The University's credibility as an institution is on the line and one can be sure that its responses to the recommendations in this Report will be closely observed by the affected minority communities, as well as the larger public. It is time for change.

#### 1. Mandate and Role of the Task Force

Dalhousie's concern about the educational experience of members of racial minorities, especially indigenous Blacks and Micmacs, has led to the creation of several programmes designed to promote access to higher education. For various reasons, mainly financial and structural, the University has been unable to devote adequate resources to these access programmes. The Transition Year Programme (T.Y.P.), one of the first of its kind in Canada, has faced drastic financial cuts and an overall "ghettoization" to the point where its survival is questionable. Access programmes, in general, have not been given adequate direction or attention in recent years.

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meeting the needs of minority students. The Graham Commission Report also suggested that much progress had been made and that significant racial problems were unlikely. Recent racial controversies such as those in Cole Harbour would suggest that this optimism was misplaced. Many of the Commission's recommendations have not produced action.

It is within this context that a Task Force was established by Dalhousie University president, Dr. Howard Clark, to study and report on the role this institution should play in the education of the region's indigenous Blacks and Natives (see Appendix A).

The mandate of the Task Force is:

- a) to review existing programmes and resources at Dalhousie which serve the Black and Native communities;
- b) to consult with leaders and representatives of these two communities, with provincial and federal government officials, and within the university community;
- c) to propose by June 30, 1989, a strategic plan whereby Dalhousie can most appropriately serve the needs of the Black and Native communities, and the role which the T.Y.P. should play in the fulfillment of this plan; and
- d) to contribute to the evolution of an overall university policy on affirmative action and to the awareness of the university and the wider community concerning access to education.

The Task Force is chaired by Wayne MacKay of the Faculty of Law, and includes Julia Eastman, Policy Advisor in the President's Office, Tony Johnstone, Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission (now deceased), Janis Jones-Darrell, Advisor to the President on Minorities, Viola Robinson, President of the Native Council of Nova Scotia, and Scott Wood of Henson College of Public Affairs and Continuing Education. Assis Malaquias served as the Task Force's consultant and Susan Jones acted as the Task Force's administrative secretary.

The Task Force was actually first established in the spring of 1988, with Professor Michael Cross of the History Department in the chair. He subsequently resigned because of other commitments. The real work of the Task Force began in February, 1989, leaving only four months to the proposed completion date of June 30, 1989. The most important reason for the short time frame was the necessity for the President to act decisively on the future of T.Y.P. for the 1989-90 academic term. While its life was assured for one more year in the spring of 1989, we still felt it was important to proceed quickly, so that T.Y.P. and Dalhousie's other access programmes would not enter the next school year under the debilitating shadow of uncertainty that has existed for the last few years. With the death of Dr. Johnstone and the usual difficulties of co-ordinating summer schedules, our submission date was moved to September 21, 1989 - which is still only a little over six months from the time we embarked upon our task.

Rapid completion of the work of the Task Force was desirable for other reasons as well. The high profile Marshall Inquiry<sup>4</sup> hearings and the controversy surrounding racial incidents at Cole Harbour High School have raised the consciousness of Nova Scotians about the experiences of Blacks and Micmacs in this province. Indeed, the Royal Commission Report arising from the Marshall Inquiry is also expected to be tabled in the fall of 1989. The

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<sup>4</sup>Royal Commission into the Wrongful Conviction of Donald Marshall Jr. (1989). This Commission, commonly referred to as the Marshall Inquiry, is due to report in the fall of 1989.

times seem right for recommendations to enhance the participation of racial minorities in mainstream society.

Six months is a short time to address such an important issue but we never intended to answer all the questions implicit in providing university access for Blacks and Micmacs. This Task Force is the beginning of a process of consultation, which will provide further opportunities in the future for input from the concerned communities. We have attempted to sketch the outlines of the problems with a broad brush but turn a sharper pencil to the drawing of proposed solutions for specific problems. Thus, this report sets a broad context for specific recommendations, which will only address one aspect of a larger problem. Other aspects will have to await future studies and recommendations.

## 2. Defining Access

The educational experience of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs in this province is such that concrete measures need to be taken to ensure that these people can realize their potential in higher education. It is necessary to develop and enhance programmes which provide qualified Black and Micmac students with the incentives and means that will enable them to pursue a university education in the fields of their choice. Access for Blacks and Micmacs, therefore, cannot be seen simply as absence of barriers. Access must be defined as a systematic and structured effort to provide

a place within the university for students who, for social, economic and other reasons beyond their control, have been unable to pursue their University education.

By providing access to Black and Micmac students, Dalhousie is seizing the opportunity, as part of its mission, to reach out to new communities who have been historically under-represented in higher education and thus change Dalhousie's elitist image.

Access, to be meaningful, must mean more than allowing people to enter university. There must be a commitment, evidenced by resources and support services, which will allow the Black and Micmac students to succeed in university life. Ideally this will mean allowing them to successfully complete not just access programmes but also university credit programmes which may lead to degrees. It is quite possible that success can be achieved even by those who do not complete university degrees or go beyond programmes such as the T.Y.P. There are many views presented to the Task Force about the meaning of success for access programmes and there were differing opinions among the members of the Task Force. There was, however, general agreement that access must mean on-going support appropriate to the needs of the particular student.

Access also means that the University community must recognize some of its institutional barriers to Blacks and Micmacs. To many

minority students, Dalhousie University is a cold and alien environment and even one that can be hostile to the different perspectives that Black and Micmac students will bring to the campus. There are attitudinal, as well as financial, barriers within Dalhousie which must be recognized and reduced before there can be real access for members of the Black and Micmac communities. We shall return in Chapter Three to the challenges of identifying and reducing the institutional hurdles imposed by Dalhousie itself.

There was also general agreement that access must not be considered solely in relation to the individual university student. Consideration must be given to the family (immediate and extended) as well as the larger Black and Micmac communities from which the student comes<sup>5</sup>. Involving these family and community support networks in the university educational process will greatly enhance the students' chances of success. It will also add an important multi-cultural aspect to university life. Defining access in a constructive way is the major challenge of this Report and many of the following pages will be directed to this end.

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<sup>5</sup>This was a point emphasized by the Advisory Board for the Micmac Bachelor of Social Work Programme when we met with them on May 10, 1989. The members of this Board stressed the value of involving parents, spouses and the larger minority community as a way of improving the individual student's chances of success. This same view was expressed by members of the Black community particularly during our public hearings at the Black Cultural Centre, the North End Branch Library in Halifax, and in Truro.

### 3. Dalhousie's Mission

Concern about access for minority groups is reflected in Dalhousie's Mission Statement<sup>6</sup>. The statement, while taking pride in the role being played by Dalhousie in Canada's intellectual, economic, political, scientific and social development, recognizes that Dalhousie will be "called upon to display a greater commitment than ever before to such social objectives as equitable access to post-secondary and continuing education"<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, Dalhousie undertakes to "pay close attention to the objectives of equity and affirmative action in relation to employment and educational opportunities, increasing wherever possible the participation of segments of society that are at present unrepresented"<sup>8</sup>.

Dalhousie's Mission Statement points to the fact that this institution recognizes the compatibility between equity and excellence, i.e. that the admission of more Black and Micmac students is not contrary to this university's "fundamental commitments to excellence, adaptability, innovation and creativity"<sup>9</sup>. Indeed, the inclusion of minorities can enrich the pursuit of these lofty goals.

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<sup>6</sup> Although minority access is not specifically mentioned in the ten-point statement, it is part of the larger commentary.

<sup>7</sup> Commentary on the Mission of Dalhousie University, p.2.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p.3

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p.4.

The enhancement of minority participation in university life will demonstrate that academic, social and economic responsibility can co-exist effectively. It will also expand the social and intellectual horizons of the university by introducing new perspectives from both the Black and Micmac communities. In turn, these communities will be exposed to university culture, which to many has been quite alien.

The cultural enrichment of Dalhousie's life, which will result from greater access for Blacks and Micmacs, will eventually benefit society at large since Dalhousie is a leading national university which educates a considerable portion of this country's best professionals, academics, scientists, and others. Access for minorities also has a strong economic rationale in the sense that an educated labour force will allow Canada to successfully confront the competitive challenges of the future.<sup>10</sup> By investing resources in the education of Blacks and Micmacs, the government of Nova Scotia may save money in other ways. The numbers of people from these communities who are dependent on welfare, for example, would

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<sup>10</sup>Rod J. MacLennan, Chairman of the Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education (1985), indicated that the present situation is that Black, Micmac and poor families subsidize the university education of the wealthier segments of society, both inside and outside Nova Scotia. Their tax dollars support university education but their children are often not able to have access to post-secondary education. These views were presented to us in our public hearings in Truro on June 1, 1989 and are elaborated in the Report of the Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education (1985), Nova Scotia.

decrease as a result of new opportunities created by education. These groups represent a rich, and largely untapped, source of contributions to many aspects of national life. Nova Scotia and Canada can ill afford not to harness this potential.

#### 4. Dalhousie's Image Problem

Dalhousie's success in the area of access for minorities will be conditioned by the extent to which this university is able to overcome its "image problem" in the Black and Micmac communities. Whether or not it is justifiable, the reality is that most Black and Micmac persons perceive Dalhousie as an elitist institution whose primary purpose is to educate the "cream of the crop", which most frequently has a white, middle-class background. Furthermore, there is a prevailing perception that Dalhousie shuns a more activist social role in the name of academic excellence. Dalhousie is seen to be out of touch with reality in the sense that it fails to respond to the specific needs of minorities and therefore reflects some of the racial elements/biases of the larger society. This negative perception of Dalhousie was presented at many of our public hearings.

The perception Dalhousie has acquired within the Black and Micmac communities can be overcome if this university shows its willingness and commitment to take a leadership role in responding to the educational needs of minorities, particularly Blacks and

Micmacs. In this context, Dalhousie must retain and continue the T.Y.P. and other access programmes, as an expression of its commitment to those communities. Dalhousie must also carry out on-going consultations with the communities to determine their educational needs and allow for community input.

Dalhousie's Access Problem

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## II. RACIAL ISSUES IN CONTEXT: THE NEED FOR AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

### 1. Race Relations In Nova Scotia Today

The work of the Task Force on Access for Black and Native People must not be viewed in isolation. In fact, the mandate of the Task Force assumes a particular urgency when viewed in light of the growing number of racially motivated incidents in Nova Scotia and in the rest of the country. It is important, therefore, that we turn to the communities themselves for a view of their relations with the provincial government and the society at large.

The case of Donald Marshall Jr., a Micmac Indian who was imprisoned for eleven years for a murder he did not commit, captivated national attention and brought to the surface the unfair nature of the legal system in this province. A subsequent Royal Commission looking into the Marshall case heard, amongst other things, that this province is still polarized along racial lines. This polarization has had profound implications of how government creates and implements policies regarding racial minorities. The government's unwillingness to uphold hunting rights for Micmacs, its decision to alter legislation affecting tax policies for Micmacs, and its refusal to set up an inquiry into racism in the education system all illustrate the government's insensitivity to the province's minorities.

The violent incidents at Cole Harbour Regional High School produced allegations that the education system - as a reflection of the wider society - still contains strong racial biases. The school system has been attacked for being neither responsive nor sensitive to the needs of indigenous Blacks.<sup>11</sup>

Racial incidents in Nova Scotia have been occurring with a disturbing frequency. Throughout the country, racial incidents have been on the rise as well. The fatal police shootings of Black youths in Toronto and Montreal have raised fears of further racial polarization in those cities.

The situation in respect to Canada's aboriginal people in general, and the Micmacs in particular, has not been much more encouraging. At the national level, funds for post-secondary education have been cut back at the very time that more aboriginal students are attending university. In Nova Scotia, the government continues to confront the Micmacs on issues such as the moose hunt and the tobacco tax. Throughout Canada, as well as in Nova Scotia, there continues to be controversy about native land claims and the education of Canada's aboriginal people.

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<sup>11</sup>G.E. Clarke, "Reading, 'riting, 'rithmetic and racism" (Cover story.) Atlantic Insight, September, 1989, at pp. 5-7.

## 2. Community Profiles: Living on the Margins

### a. The Indigenous Black Community

Like most other North American Blacks, part of the heritage of Black Nova Scotians is the institution of slavery. Many forefathers of these indigenous Blacks experienced slavery in Nova Scotia itself or fled to Nova Scotia to escape slavery south of the forty-ninth parallel. Even free Blacks in Nova Scotia had a difficult time because they lived on lands which were difficult to farm and ones that were considered undesirable by the majority white society. Black communities struggled under difficult circumstances, and at least one - Africville in Halifax - was eventually destroyed by the white leaders of the province.<sup>12</sup>

Throughout their history, Blacks in Nova Scotia have had to endure a multifaceted burden of prejudices, discrimination, alienation, and oppression. Hostility, racism and indifference on the part of the dominant society forced the Black community into a constant struggle to overcome social and economic barriers in its members' efforts to attain decent and fulfilling lives<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup>Donald F. Clairmont and Dennis W. Magill, Africville: The Life and Death of a Canadian Black Community. Toronto: McLellan and Stewart. (1974).

<sup>13</sup>Early racist incidents are described in Robin W. Winks The Blacks in Canada (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971) pp.38-89.

The hostility and racial prejudices towards Blacks in Nova Scotia are reflected, among other things, in their patterns of residence throughout the province. Over the years, Blacks have been clustered in isolated rural areas on rocky, marginal lands on the fringes of white towns and cities, or in inner city ghettos. Nova Scotian Blacks have historically been forced into a marginal socio-economic position in an economically depressed region. In fact, they have been relegated to the status of second-class citizen.<sup>14</sup>

The origins of their socio-economic and political problems go as far back as 1783 when at least 3,000 free Blacks and 1,200 slaves were part of the wave of about 30,000 Loyalists who immigrated to Nova Scotia.<sup>15</sup> Blacks were usually the last to receive land grants and settlement assistance from the British as promised. When these promises were forthcoming at all "Blacks usually received the least desirable land."<sup>16</sup>

Most of the Blacks who immigrated to Nova Scotia were skilled, i.e. many were blacksmiths, coopers, carpenters, millwrights,

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<sup>14</sup> Donna E. Spicer "Education for Minority Groups In Nova Scotia". (Brief presented to the University Women's Club of Halifax Conference, April 29, 1972) pp.16-17.

<sup>15</sup> Secretary of State, Social Profile of Nova Scotia, August 1, 1985, p.VI-8.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

sawyers, bakers, tailors, and so forth.<sup>17</sup> They were expected to prosper in their new land. Unkept promises of land and assistance, however, prevented Blacks from "acquiring the resources they needed to become self-sufficient participants in the mainstream of the economy."<sup>18</sup> Blacks were, consequently, relegated to an economically dependent position, i.e. share-croppers, indentured servants or casual labourers.<sup>19</sup>

The Blacks of Nova Scotia constitute the largest indigenous Black population in Canada.<sup>20</sup> Despite their long history, however, the number of Blacks living in the province is not definitely known although in the late 1970s most estimates put this number at about 30,000 - 35,000 people.<sup>21</sup>

Lack of economic opportunities are reflected in the relatively high unemployment rates prevailing in the Black communities of Nova Scotia.<sup>22</sup> When employment is available, it is concentrated in

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p.VI-10

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p.VI-10. In Clarke, supra note 1, he states "Black leaders argue that the school system has striven since its very beginning to ensure that Blacks remain labourers. The 1811 Nova Scotia Public School Act gave provincial monies only to those communities which could erect a school and supply a teacher. Most Black and poor white communities went begging."

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.VI-11

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p.VI-13, Table 3

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. VI-11

construction, processing and low-paying services.<sup>23</sup>

In relative terms, the conditions of persistent poverty and marginality that have characterized the history of Blacks in Nova Scotia has not changed drastically over the years. This is evidenced by the fact that Blacks are proportionately under-represented in occupations traditionally associated with power and prestige, i.e. lawyers, doctors, architects, engineers, university professors and so on.

b. The Micmac Community

Like Nova Scotia's Black population, the Micmacs have historically been the victims of oppression at the hands of the majority white society. The Micmacs are the aboriginal people of Nova Scotia and prior to the arrival of the white man, they lived a relatively peaceful lifestyle of hunting and gathering.<sup>24</sup> With the arrival of the British and French in Nova Scotia, the Micmacs became entangled in their wars, usually on the side of the French.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> This section relies heavily on two sources. One is F. Wien's, Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Micmac in Nova Scotia. Halifax: Institute of Public Affairs, Dalhousie University. (1983). The other is an oral "Micmac History Presentation" by Don Julien and Chief Daniel Paul at Keddy's Motor Inn in Truro, Nova Scotia, August 31, 1989. Their presentations were based largely upon primary documents in the Nova Scotia Archives, such as treaties and reports of Colonial Governors. As with the previous section on the Black community, this is only a historical glimpse and makes no claim to depth.

This led Governor Edward Cornwallis, the founder of Halifax, to put a bounty on the scalps of Micmac men, women and children in the mid 1700s.

In order to restore peace, the Micmacs signed various treaties with the British Crown, the object of which was to preserve reasonable tracts of land and their traditional hunting and fishing rights. The 1752 treaty rights in respect to fishing and hunting were upheld by the Supreme Court of Canada in R.V. Simon<sup>25</sup> but the reach of that decision is again before the Nova Scotia courts as we write this Report.

The Micmacs were not very successful in acquiring quality lands for their reservations. Joseph Howe, in an early 1800's report about the plight of the Micmacs in Nova Scotia, suggests that many of the economic problems of the Micmacs could have been prevented if they had been allotted lands which were suitable for farming and hunting. Instead, they had been given small tracts of land which were not appropriate for hunting, fishing or farming. The resulting economic destitution, coupled with the introduction of white man's diseases, such as smallpox, produced an alarming decline in the Micmac population of Nova Scotia in the 1800's.

When the white governors of Nova Scotia did intervene in the lives of Micmacs, it was to convert them to Christianity,

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<sup>25</sup>[1985] 2 S.C.R. 387.

assimilate them into the ways of the white society and as even Joseph Howe suggests, "civilize the savage". A proud people who had lived off the land were now reduced to a marginal status. Both on and off the reserves, they lived in a state of social and economic deprivation.

Micmacs, who today number approximately 12,000 in Nova Scotia, face many social, cultural and economic problems. The effort to preserve and promote their rich heritage in today's society is an increasingly difficult task. Socially, many Micmacs feel out of place in the non-Native society. Stereotypes and misconceptions about Native people do not create an inviting atmosphere. Many Micmacs feel uncomfortable in a white environment, and choose instead to remain in their communities.

From an economic standpoint, Micmac people are at a disadvantage. Reserves are home to many Micmacs in Nova Scotia, but they provide comparatively little, or no economic base. A Native person living on a reserve has limited opportunity to find employment on the reserve, but faces many problems when seeking work off the reserve, only some of which have been outlined above. Unemployment rates for Micmacs are consistently higher than those of the general population. Like Nova Scotian Blacks, Micmacs have been pushed to the margins of white society.

c. Black Education in Nova Scotia

The effects of the racism and differential treatment to which Blacks have been subjected are particularly evident in the education system. Although education has always been recognized as the key to achieving fundamental change in their socio-economic prospects, Blacks have encountered numerous barriers in their quest to use education as a tool for socio-economic and political advancement<sup>26</sup>. These barriers have been partly associated with the marginal residential, economic, political and social status of Blacks in Nova Scotia.

Until relatively recently, education in Nova Scotia was segregated and unequal. In fact, segregation in the province's education system was institutionalized. The Education Act of 1918, for example, allowed school inspectors to recommend separate facilities for different ethnic groups. Although this same Act emphasized that no Black student should be excluded from common schools, it was not until 1954 that all references to race were removed from the Education Act. But it is important to note that, by 1964, separate schools for Blacks in Nova Scotia were still in existence. These arrangements, however, existed due to patterns of residence rather than explicit racist policies<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> Black United Front, "Royal Commission Brief on Education, Public Services and Provincial-Municipal Relations", (November 8, 1971), p.2.

<sup>27</sup> Spicer, op. cit., p.18.

The separate education received by Blacks was inferior to that provided to the rest of society. Segregated schools suffered chronic financial difficulties caused by the Black communities' inability to collect school taxes. This meant that the communities had great difficulty attracting and retaining qualified teachers for their schools. Furthermore, when white teachers were hired, they had difficulty understanding the social and economic conditions, as well as the aspirations of the Black community<sup>28</sup>. Racial discrimination in the education system and the establishment of separate schools in the province, sanctioned by the 1865 Education Act, would seriously handicap Blacks in their ability to compete with other segments of the population for generations to come.

There is no evidence that Blacks are less motivated to achieve the same educational standing as the rest of society. There are, however, important factors that continue to limit their access to universities. These primarily economic factors are compounded by:

a) the alleged practice of "streaming" in the school system. Educators, it is argued, advise Black students to take general rather than academic courses at the high school level, which would grant them access to University. Educational authorities such as Glenda Redden and Queen Elizabeth High School teacher, Barry Fox, who appeared at the North End Library hearings, dispute there is such a practice.

b) under representation of Black teachers in the education system;

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<sup>28</sup> David States (Human Rights Commission) Individual consultation/interview (April 3, 1989).

c) lack of adequate preparation for Guidance Counsellors to deal with the particular problems of Black students, including the difficulties associated with sharing their educational experience with members of a different socio-cultural and economic background;

d) inappropriate curriculum, i.e. the fact that Black students still feel that their ethno-cultural group does not find an adequate and positive place in the existing school programme;

e) lack of models, symbols, and achievements (within the school system) with which Black students can identify themselves<sup>29</sup>.

Recognition must be given to the fact that Blacks, especially youths, need the opportunity to participate productively in society through the attainment of competitive educational training. Due to the long history of discrimination against Blacks there is a need to help Black people realize their aspirations for a full and dignified existence<sup>30</sup>.

While there are some signs that progress is being made with respect to Black education in Nova Scotia,<sup>31</sup> Black leaders, such as Yvonne Atwell and Rocky Jones of the Afro-Canadian Caucus, still maintain that racism prevails in Nova Scotian schools. Jones concludes that the failure of the Nova Scotia government to set up an inquiry into racism in the school system after the Cole Harbour

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<sup>29</sup> Verna Thomas, (Black United Front), Individual Consultation/Interview (April 13, 1989).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> This also appears to be the conclusion of the Black Educators' Association based on statistics collected by its Executive Director, Gerald Clarke. Clarke, supra, note II, pp. 6-7.

incidents is a sign that schools are designed to serve the whites and keep Blacks down. Atwell concludes that nothing will change, until Blacks actively protest and gain control of their own education. She states:

But the school system will never change as long as Black people have to relate to white culture without knowing who they are. Once you have a history, everything else will follow.<sup>32</sup>

d. Micmac Education In Nova Scotia

The Micmac people of Nova Scotia have suffered discrimination, racism, and neglect for many generations. Noel Knockwood, the Director of the Micmac Native Learning Centre, encapsulated the problem as follows:

"the history of whites educating Natives is a story of failure."<sup>33</sup>

This failure also can be attributed to a lack of commitment on the part of all levels of government, to educate the general public about the historical experiences and present realities of Micmacs. There is, consequently, an alarming level of ignorance about the Micmacs in this province. More recently, Micmacs have been making efforts to educate Nova Scotians about their aboriginal history and this is a positive sign.

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<sup>32</sup>Clarke, supra note II, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup>Submission to the Task Force at North End Branch Library, Halifax, June 7, 1989.

When Europeans first came into contact with the Native people of North America in the 1400s or 1500s, they were able to observe, among other things, well-established educational practices. These practices were designed to ensure cultural continuity and, more specifically, to provide the younger segments of the population with the skills necessary to assume a productive role in society.

Under the British North America Act of 1867 (now the Constitution Act, 1867), the Federal Government assumed responsibility for "Indian affairs". But, under the same document, education became a provincial responsibility in respect to all other people. This meant that Indian education was separate and apart from the regular education structure and, as will be developed, of generally lower quality. Provincial involvement in Native education has not been as extensive, even as a delegate of the federal government.<sup>34</sup>

There is also a more fundamental and persistent dilemma concerning relations between Euro-Canadians and Natives. This dilemma has revolved around the choice between inclusion or exclusion of Native peoples in national life. Complete inclusion of Native people in national life might have led to the provision

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<sup>34</sup> This conflict is further developed in Spicer, op. cit., p.4.

of equal governmental services, including education for all. But there was a recognized danger of Native acculturation and eventual assimilation into the dominant Euro-Canadian society. Exclusion of Native peoples from the mainstream of national life would reduce the dangers of native assimilation but would also diminish the possibility of equal services for all.

In the 1880s, the Canadian Parliament enacted its first legislation relating to the administration of its responsibility vis-a-vis "Indians and Lands Reserved for Indians. This Indian Act, administered by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, deals with a number of issues including:

- (a) definitions regarding eligibility of Indians to be registered for purpose of the Act and Regulations thereto;
- (b) establishment and maintenance of Indian Reservations;
- (c) social and economic initiatives;
- (d) education of Indian people; and
- (e) Trust responsibilities, treaty obligations, and related matters<sup>35</sup>.

The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs has carried out a number of initiatives in the area of education. Particularly relevant initiatives include the establishment of Residential Schools, Schools on Reserves, Federal-Provincial agreements on

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<sup>35</sup> Viola Robinson, "Education and the Micmac", (Submission to the Task Force on Access to Dalhousie University for Black and Native People).

education of Indian people in non-Indian schools funded by the federal treasury, and post-secondary educational allowances for registered Indian students attending post-secondary institutions<sup>36</sup>.

In the fulfilment of its responsibilities, the federal government has done little, if anything, to promote Indian education as Indians wanted it. The main thrust of the education policy was, instead, aimed at the acculturation or assimilation within non-Indian educational institutions. There was little effort made, either at the federal or provincial levels of government, to involve Indian people in the decision-making process concerning education<sup>37</sup>.

The discriminatory nature of the Indian Act was felt in many other areas. Section 12(1)(b), for example, accentuates the problem of the "non-status Indian", i.e. Indian women denied registration due to marriage to a non-Indian. Until 1985, when it was finally repealed, this section accounted for, among other things, thousands of Indian students who were left on their own to acquire an education in non-Indian communities<sup>38</sup>, without the support of the Department of Indian Affairs.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

The general public in Nova Scotia is not aware of the difficulties related to Native education in this province. Accounts of the cruelty inflicted upon thousands of Micmac students at the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School, for example, provide a telling reminder of the discriminatory base of education in Nova Scotia.

A magazine article refers to the Shubenacadie School as "a grim, authoritarian regime" which enforced rigid discipline with "brutal harshness, fear, loneliness, confinement, servitude, and occasional kindness"<sup>39</sup>. Shubenacadie was one of eighty Indian Residential Schools in Canada built and funded by the Department of Indian Affairs but run by religious organizations. Although the official purpose of the Schools was to care for orphaned and neglected children and to provide them with an education, these schools became an instrument to "civiliz(e) and Christianiz(e) the Native people . . . it was a form of oppression, of imprisonment, of killing the language, of cultural genocide."<sup>40</sup>

The present socio-economic and political conditions of Micmacs in Nova Scotia demonstrates that they have been excluded from the mainstream of social, economic, and political life. The provision of educational and other services has never reached the levels, nor

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<sup>39</sup> H. Laskey, "Hard to erase bitter memories of school day filled with fear", Atlantic Insight, Feb. 1989, p. 21.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p.22

the standards, readily available to the non-Native population. The indifference, and often hostility, with which the Micmac population has been treated is clearly evident in the high unemployment rates, poverty, illiteracy, and other social ills prevalent within Micmac communities.

It is important to emphasize that education provided on the reserves has been qualitatively inferior to that existing in the rest of Canadian society.<sup>41</sup> This situation has improved with increasing band control over reserve schools. However, many Micmac students are forced to leave their families, friends, relatives and so on, in order to pursue higher education. This, invariably, means going to a much larger urban centre and integration into an alien and, sometimes, hostile environment. Given the conflicting cultural pressures and the number, as well as size, of hurdles to overcome, it is not surprising that there are relatively few Micmac students undertaking university education. It is an encouraging sign that in Atlantic Canada these numbers have been growing in recent years.

Education for Native peoples assumes a cardinal importance if it is viewed in a broader socio-economic and political context. Education is a vital component in a total effort to improve long-term development. Education is the key to success in a multi-

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<sup>41</sup>C. McLeod, "Struggling to improve the education system", Atlantic Insight, May, 1988, p. 23.

pronged attack on unemployment, poor housing, limited medical care, prejudice, poor self-image, and other obstacles faced by the Native community.

The rather sorry history of Blacks and Micmacs in Nova Scotia has been explored to demonstrate why these two communities are prime targets for affirmative action. Their under-representation in post-secondary institutions is a direct consequence of the many racial barriers that they have had to face. They have been the victims of past and present racism and access programmes as a form of compensatory education is not only desirable but just, in both moral and legal terms.

### 3. The Right To Education: International, National and Provincial Perspectives

So far this report has attempted to place the educational experience of Blacks and Natives in historical and socio-economic perspectives. To fully understand the need for a better and more active commitment to education for Blacks and Micmacs, some political and legal considerations must also be taken into account. This will illustrate the point that, by failing to provide adequate education for Blacks and Micmacs, the Nova Scotia Government is not meeting nationally and internationally accepted standards or norms of behaviour regarding the treatment of minorities.

A few years ago racism was an ugly term that was little used

in either political or legal discourse. While individual discrimination was recognized as a major world problem after World War II, it is only in recent years that lawyers and politicians have explored the problems of systemic discrimination that inevitably flow from racism. In this changed climate people at the international, national and provincial levels are more willing to discuss racial barriers and thereby begin the process by which these barriers might be diminished. In asserting their rights to equal educational access, Black and Micmac Nova Scotians have had to overcome barriers imposed because of the colour of their skin.

In the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>42</sup>, Article 26 eloquently sets out the importance of making education available on a basis of equality.

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit. (Emphasis added.)

Few can quarrel with accessibility based on merit and most institutions would claim that this represents their present practice. The real problem is that merit is usually defined by white standards in a way which has systematically excluded minorities. Furthermore, the compulsory elementary and secondary

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<sup>42</sup> U.N. Doc. A/811, 1948.

schooling has often failed Blacks and Micmacs in Nova Scotia - a message which was echoed throughout the Task Force's hearings in all parts of the province. The value of making room for more Black and Micmac voices is emphasized when we consider the article 26 directives that education shall be "directed to the full development of the human personality...strengthening of respect for human rights...understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups."

In the coming year Canada will also become a signatory to the Declaration of the Rights of the Child<sup>43</sup> which further defines the nature of the right to education.

Principle 7 of this declaration states:

The child is entitled to receive education which shall be free and compulsory at least in the elementary stages. He shall be given an education which will promote his general culture, and enable him, on a basis of equal opportunity, to develop his abilities, his individual judgement, and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society....

It is clear, at the international level, that education is not a privilege or a charity, but a right. Although international documents have only persuasive authority in a Canadian court, the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms<sup>44</sup> allows for the

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<sup>43</sup> U.N. G/A Resol. 1386 (XIV), 14th. G.A., 1959.

<sup>44</sup> Constitution Act, 1982, Schedule B of Canada Act, 1982 (U.K.), 1982, c.11

evolution of a constitutional right to education which would be binding throughout the country. This argument has been articulated by academics<sup>45</sup> but suffice it for present purposes to identify section 7 of the Charter of Rights as the basis for this claim.

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person and the right not to be deprived thereof except in accordance with the principles of fundamental justice.

The argument is that in modern society a person cannot attain a decent quality of life, exercise true liberty or have meaningful security of the person without a proper education. Whether education is regarded as a right, privilege or benefit at the post-secondary level, it is clear that it must be provided on the basis of equality and non-discrimination. This is the message of section 15(1) of the Charter of Rights which reads as follows:

15(1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and in particular without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical ability.

As an important addition to the above call for equality,

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<sup>45</sup> W. MacKay, "Public Education in Nova Scotia: Legal Rights, Fleeting Privileges or Political Rhetoric" (1984), 8 Dal.L.J. 137; "The Charter of Rights and Special Education: Blessing or Curse?" (1987), 3 Can. J. For Exceptional Children 118 and W.F. Foster and G. Pinheiro "Constitutional Protection of the Right to Education" (1988), 11 Dal. L. J. 759.

section 15(2) of the Charter of Rights asserts that an affirmative action programme designed to ameliorate the conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups does not offend the Charter. The access programmes described and advocated in this Report are examples of such affirmative action programmes, intended to compensate for the denial of equality to Black and Micmac Nova Scotians in the past. As the Supreme Court of Canada informed us in Andrews v. Law Society of British Columbia<sup>46</sup> equality does not always mean identical treatment but may require different and preferential treatment. This is required to give Micmacs and indigenous Nova Scotia Blacks an equal opportunity to have access to post-secondary education at institutions such as Dalhousie University.

While only Quebec and Saskatchewan expressly include education in their human rights legislation, many provinces have been willing to treat education as the kind of service to which human rights codes should apply. Thus, education must be provided without racial discrimination, even on the basis of provincial statutes. Recently the Supreme Court of Canada has enunciated a broad and purposive approach to human rights statutes and accorded them a status above other statutes. This coupled with the support for affirmative action programmes in both section 15(2) of the Charter

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<sup>46</sup> This was the Court's first decision interpreting section 15 of the Charter of Rights which was delayed until 1985 so the various levels of government could get their houses in order. It was rendered in February of 1989.

of Rights and the courts interpretation of the Canadian Human Rights Act, have added legal clout to the political and moral claims for basic human rights. Education is one of those basic human rights, and it should be broadly accessible to all segments of society<sup>47</sup>. This is the emerging legal position and is not just another cry for political power and moral justice.

Giving racial minorities full access to education is not only a matter of equality, rights and legal obligations, but also a moral imperative in a society increasingly dominated by science and technology and in which the importance of education has increased significantly. Data are available which show, for example, that the education and skill requirements of jobs are going up dramatically; that the monetary returns to education have increased in the last ten to fifteen years; that jobs for those with low education levels are very vulnerable to automation; and that the risks of unemployment and of income declines for those with low education levels have increased. At the same time, racial minorities continue to have education levels well below the norm and employment patterns (when they do find employment) in occupations and industries that are at risk. There is, in other words, an argument to be made at this historical juncture that could not have been made as strongly a couple of decades ago, when

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<sup>47</sup> W. MacKay and G. Krinke, "Education as a Basic Human Right: A Response to Special Education and the Charter" (1987), 2 Can. J. of Law and Society 73. The arguments advanced in respect to the physically and mentally disabled would be equally applicable to Nova Scotia's dispossessed Black and Micmac people.

unskilled and semi-skilled work was more readily available. The time is ripe for educational change.

4. Turning Rights Into Reality: Access Programs Outside Nova Scotia<sup>48</sup>

Education as a basic human right is gaining increasing recognition throughout Canada. Many universities now have specific educational programmes intended to broaden access to higher education for traditionally under-represented segments of society. There are a number of models in Canada and abroad which are turning educational rights into reality. A comprehensive survey of such programmes falls outside the scope and mandate of this study. It is worth noting, nevertheless, some of the general types of access programmes:

- a. Programmes that prepare students for regular degree studies
  - (i) undergraduate (e.g. University of Toronto's Transitional Year Programme)
  - (ii) professional (e.g. University of Saskatchewan pre-university nursing and legal programmes).
- b. Special professional programmes
  - (i) degree (e.g. University of Western Ontario Graduate School of Journalism's communication programme for Native students).
  - (ii) non-degree (e.g. Saskatchewan Indian Federation College).
- c. Native studies programmes (Trent University, University College of Cape Breton).

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<sup>48</sup> For a detailed summary of access programmes for Natives see Jean Knockwood "A Sample of Native Access Programmes in Canada" (presented at the President's Symposium on Undergraduate Education Teaching and Learning Workshop, Dalhousie University, March 4, 1988).

- d. Support systems for minority students in regular degree programmes (e.g. University of Manitoba ACCESS programmes).

The University of Toronto, for example, is committed to "making excellence accessible" through its Transitional Year Programme.<sup>49</sup> Like its Dalhousie counterpart, this programme offers a one-year full-time course of studies to persons who would seek a university education but lack formal qualifications to gain regular admission. The University of Toronto's T.Y.P. is aimed at students who have grown up in communities with few opportunities of access to higher education. Thus, students who did not complete high school - due to financial problems, family difficulties, or other circumstances beyond their control - constitute the main target group of the programme.

The Transitional Year Programme at the University of Toronto consists of a series of courses which provide students with the necessary preparation to successfully undertake university studies. Small group discussion and individualized counselling are emphasized to accomplish the programme's goals. A large percentage of students enrolled in the programme are successful in qualifying for gaining admission into the University of Toronto and other post-secondary institutions. (An average of 65% in the programme is considered "satisfactory".)

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<sup>49</sup> University of Toronto, Transitional Year Programme, 1988-89 Calendar.

The University of Toronto sets no formal academic achievement level which students must meet before admission into its T.Y.P. The Admissions Committee, however, searches for candidates who have previously demonstrated sufficient academic ability to successfully complete a course of studies and who are highly motivated to succeed.

The University of Saskatchewan has access programmes which have been particularly successful in providing pre-university training for Native people in the areas of legal studies and nursing<sup>50</sup>. Students from provinces outside of Saskatchewan also attend these highly-reputed programmes. An eight-week survivor programme in legal studies has been designed to assist Native people to gain admission into regular law studies at any university of their choice. The curriculum includes legal writing and research in various legal fields. Strong academic and financial support is available to students<sup>51</sup>.

The Native Access Program in nursing assists native students to obtain a baccalaureate degree in nursing through a nine-week orientation programme. The main areas of concentration include

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<sup>50</sup> Brent Cotter, (Dalhousie University Law School) Individual Consultation/Interview (May 1, 1989).

<sup>51</sup> Jean Knockwood, "A Sample of Native Access Programmes in Canada", presented at the President's Symposium on Undergraduate Education Teaching and Learning Workshop, Dalhousie University, March 4, 1989.

nursing and social and biological/life sciences. Considerable emphasis is placed on the cultural effects of Native beliefs, caring practices, and their relation to modern health care<sup>52</sup>.

Trent University offers a Native Management and Economic Development Program with the objective of providing to students, managers and administrators the opportunity of receiving management and entrepreneurial training leading to a Diploma or B.A. degree<sup>53</sup>.

The University of Western Ontario's Graduate School of Journalism offers an intensive one-year programme in communication for students of Native ancestry. This programme provides academic and practical skills in communications and develops skills in print and other media for interested native students with a B.A. or equivalent training<sup>54</sup>.

The University of Manitoba's ACCESS programmes offer a similar opportunity to people who, for various reasons, have not been able to pursue university education. A wide range of educational fields are covered by the University of Manitoba's ACCESS programmes, including the Bachelor of Education (University of Manitoba and Brandon campuses), the Bachelor of Social Work (University of Manitoba North and Winnipeg Centre), pre-medical studies,

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

professional health sciences and engineering. These programmes have produced graduates in arts, social sciences, law, agriculture, fine arts, technologies and trade.<sup>55</sup>

The successes of the ACCESS model at the University of Manitoba can be attributed to its integrated student support system and its flexibility in meeting educational needs, while taking into account the student's family commitments.

Students receive tuition, books and living allowances, and an academic and a personal counsellor are also available to them. During the one-year course of studies participants take courses in group dynamics, professional development, cross-cultural awareness, academic remediation and financial budgeting<sup>56</sup>.

It should be emphasized that most of these programmes are of recent origin. Universities have been slow to recognize that they have a duty to make post-secondary education accessible to disadvantaged minorities. It is not enough to refrain from blatant acts of discrimination. Because many barriers to education are systemic in nature they must be confronted in an active and constructive way. This process is in its infancy. The past injustices visited upon Nova Scotian Blacks and Micmacs can only

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<sup>55</sup> Julia Weston, "Disadvantaged Students Given A Chance To Succeed", University Affairs, March 1989, p.2.

<sup>56</sup> Julia Weston, Ibid.

be confronted by affirmative measures. Universities in general, and Dalhousie University in particular, should take the lead.

### III. THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

#### 1. Existing Access Programmes At Dalhousie

This chapter will review programmes for Blacks and Micmacs at Dalhousie and describe a variety of complementary university initiatives. It seems most natural to deal with the Transition Year Programme first because it was the first such programme. The Micmac Bachelor of Social Work Programme, the Micmac Professional Careers Project, the Certificate Programme in Community Health, and the Law School Minority Preparation Programme will be dealt with next in the order of their appearance on the campus. At this point, Henson College's more general approach to access will be addressed. Finally, we will provide an overview of a number of complementary initiatives of importance to our present purposes.

#### a. The Transition Year Programme (T.Y.P.)

The T.Y.P.'s origins can be traced back to the activities of a Black history study group at Dalhousie, which - with the support of some faculty members - took advantage of the political and social climate of the 1960s to press the university into accepting demands for the creation of a programme designed to serve the educational needs of minority students, particularly Micmac and indigenous Black Nova Scotians. These students believed that an

alternative, non-conventional vehicle was needed to facilitate the admission of minority students into Dalhousie University.

Demands for the establishment of T.Y.P. coincided with heightened social and political awareness (e.g. the setting-up of the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission, the Black power movement in the United States, and overall concerns about rising racial tensions) and a recognition of the fact that too few members of minority groups were qualified for university entrance, despite support from some public and private funds available to encourage minority youths to pursue higher education. The T.Y.P. was seen as an important element in attempts to reverse the under-representation of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs in the university's student body.

Dalhousie University instituted the T.Y.P. in 1969 with the primary purpose of "provid(ing) disadvantaged youth with the academic background and financial assistance necessary to prepare them for regular university work towards the Bachelor's degree".<sup>57</sup> The vagueness of this purpose contributed in later years to the misperceptions, lack of directions, and conflicting views of the T.Y.P. The term "disadvantaged youth" is open to various, subjective interpretations. No criteria were offered to aid in the determination, on the basis of social, economic, or other

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<sup>57</sup> Pillay, P.D. et al, Report to the Faculty of Arts and Science on a Transition Year Programme, July 10, 1969, p.1).

considerations, of who was or was not disadvantaged. Furthermore, given the heterogeneity of the targeted population, it was difficult to provide the necessary academic background to the majority of T.Y.P. students in order to equip them with the skills needed to undertake university studies. It was clear, however, that the T.Y.P. was intended to reverse social injustices by providing students with the academic skills necessary to conduct a normal academic life; contribute to the development of a sense of self worth and confidence among programme participants; provide a support mechanism; and increase the participants' ability to operate in a competitive environment.

A number of intangible rewards were envisaged for the university, including a public perception that Dalhousie was fulfilling its "moral obligations" and reaping intellectual benefits from bringing into the university a different human experience than the one existing among the majority population.<sup>58</sup>

There were four components in the T.Y.P. which were expected to contribute to the programme's achievement of its original intent: the selection of students, curriculum, staff capability and funding.

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<sup>58</sup>Pillay, op. cit.

(i) Students

The first class was limited to twenty Black and Micmac students and was open to eleventh and twelfth year high school students enrolled in either general or vocational programmes, students who had dropped out of high school, and students who had completed high school and joined the labour force. Students were selected on the basis of potential success rather than on past accomplishments. It is noteworthy that only the students in the 17-24 age bracket were accepted. Students under 17 were not believed to be mature enough to benefit from the T.Y.P. and students over 25 were encouraged to take adult education classes offered by the Provincial Department of Education. This selection criterion was chosen to increase the likelihood of the students' successful completion of the programme.

A joint committee of faculty and students conducted the first selection process on the basis of personal interviews, aptitude tests, students' educational and/or employment records, as well as recommendations.

(ii) Curriculum

Reading, composition and a community seminar constituted the original T.Y.P. curriculum. The three-hours-per-week reading class was offered to increase the students' level of reading and

comprehension necessary to undertake university education.

In the three-hours-per-week composition class, students were taught how to express themselves and translate their ideas into term papers. The focus of this class was on term paper and exam preparation. Instruction in essay and prose style was emphasized.

The General Cultural and Community Awareness Seminars were held once a week and included lectures on educational or community-related topics. The seminars were intended to introduce students to professional fields within the university, as well as to acquaint them with the operations of community and social agencies providing services to socially disadvantaged groups. Most lectures were delivered by guest speakers and the seminars soon acquired the image of being sessions where disadvantaged students could learn "how to beat the system".

An optional mathematics course was also offered for students who demonstrated an interest in the "hard sciences". The original T.Y.P. blueprint also made provisions for occasional cultural activities organized with an active participation of students.

### (iii) T.Y.P. Staff

A well-qualified and motivated staff was always seen as the key for the T.Y.P.'s successful development. Staff members were

expected to be Dalhousie faculty members and graduate students. The programme director, however, would be recruited from outside the university. Preference would be given to someone with experience in the delivery of programmes like the T.Y.P., poverty and alleviation programmes, and race relations problems. If a person with such qualifications could not be found for the first year, there were provisions to train an individual for the job. In the meantime, a faculty member would be appointed as part-time programme director.

A full-time Dalhousie assistant professor was expected to be appointed to work with the T.Y.P. in the capacity of assistant programme director. This person would also assume advisory responsibilities for individual students. All other teaching positions would be filled by university faculty members. Graduate students would serve as tutors and study advisors for each T.Y.P. student. The T.Y.P. would also have the services of a full-time secretary.

(iv) Funding

An initial budget of \$80,000.00 was requested from the university for the first year of T.Y.P. operations. This sum, later revised to \$102,161.00, was to cover salaries for three full-time staff, individual stipends for each student, and other costs (e.g. the cultural programme, travel, honoraria and counselling).

Funding requirements for the programme were expected to increase at an annual rate of 7%, reflecting inflationary pressures.

The twenty years of the T.Y.P.'s history would demonstrate that Dalhousie has never been totally convinced of the need for or desirability of such programmes on the campus. Faculty and administration members have been consistently divided on the question of whether Dalhousie should be battling poverty among Blacks and Micmacs through remedial access programmes. This basic conflict between accessibility and quality remains unresolved.

As far back as February 22, 1972, the Faculty of Arts and Administration endorsed a recommendation calling for the T.Y.P. to be "discontinued"<sup>59</sup>. The same recommendation proposed that "a committee be set up to develop proposals for fulfilling the remedial function of the Transition Year Programme".<sup>60</sup> A committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. J.C. Misick, was formed to review and propose recommendations for the continuance or redirection of the T.Y.P.<sup>61</sup>

The Misick Review proposed both general as well as specific recommendations. At the general level the review recommended that,

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<sup>59</sup> Senate Council Minutes, March 6, 1972.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> J.D. Misick (Chairman), Preliminary Report of the Review Committee for the Transition Year Programme, March, 1972.

in serving the needs of the Black and Micmac communities, Dalhousie should provide assistance to four categories of students: i.e. those already enrolled in the undergraduate and the T.Y.P. programmes; students who successfully complete high school; those who have demonstrated the ability to succeed in High School but have not done so due to economic or other reasons; and finally, "students of the type now accepted into the T.Y.P."<sup>62</sup>.

This report recommended, furthermore, that Dalhousie recognize the need to make a long-term commitment to the Black and Micmac communities. If such commitment on the part of Dalhousie were "deemed impossible in the long run", the T.Y.P. should be continued for only one more year. Dalhousie was exhorted to inform the two communities about the assistance being offered by the university and encourage other provincial universities to take similar steps. After observing that the educational problems of Blacks and Micmacs are largely separate and dissimilar, the review recommended that minority studies courses be made available as part of the regular university curriculum<sup>63</sup>.

Specific recommendations proposed that Dalhousie should provide financial assistance to all Nova Scotian Black and Micmac students enrolled in this university. But it was also recommended that April 30, 1973 be set as the "termination date of the present

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid. p.2

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

Transition Year Programme"<sup>64</sup>. If Dalhousie decided to continue with the T.Y.P., a new approach was required to take into account Black and Micmac differences, admission requirements, recruiting methods, as well as the duration and content of the programme.

The work done by the Misick committee was the first of many reviews and studies done about the T.Y.P. - its nature, feasibility, and directions. By March 5, 1973, the Senate was again recommending that a committee "be struck to consider the Transition Year Programme and report to the next meeting of Senate Council"<sup>65</sup>. This review committee, chaired by then Vice-President MacKay, found that there was enough support for "the original assumption that there is a sufficient number of financially and/or academically disadvantaged students to warrant the University's offering a Transition Year Programme"<sup>66</sup>.

The review suggested that the continuation of the programme was a result of appeals to the University by Black and Micmac students "and other more obvious reasons"<sup>67</sup> not specified. It was recommended, therefore, that "a long term or continuous commitment

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p3

<sup>65</sup> Senate Council Minutes, March 5, 1973.

<sup>66</sup> E.T. Marriot, Report to Dalhousie University Senate on the Transition Year Programme, 1972-1973, March, 1973, p.4.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

be made to the Transition Year Programme"<sup>68</sup>. On the basis of this review, the Dalhousie University Senate Council carried a motion recommending to Senate that "the continuation of the Transition Year Programme be approved on a continuing basis, subject to review at the end of four years operation"<sup>69</sup>.

On November 8, 1976, the Senate Council agreed that the Committee on Committees should be asked to nominate a Review Committee for the T.Y.P.<sup>70</sup> A Committee chaired by F.R. Hayes (Biology) was approved on December 13, 1976,<sup>71</sup> and presented its report on April 26, 1977. The report concluded that "despite the T.Y.P.'s modest success with Black students, it has fallen far short of its original objectives."<sup>72</sup>

The Hayes Committee proposed a modified and enlarged T.Y.P. which could be more effective if academic departments within the university made a genuine commitment to the T.Y.P. by providing required classes, instructors, and tutors; and if university administrators prioritized the T.Y.P., to the extent that the risk of additional expenditures in times of budgetary constraint could

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Senate Council Minutes, April 2, 1973.

<sup>70</sup> Senate Council Minutes, November 8, 1976.

<sup>71</sup> Senate Council Minutes, December 13, 1976.

<sup>72</sup> F.R. Hayes, Chairman, Report to the Senate of a Committee appointed in December 15, 1976 to review the Transition Year Programme, p.1.

be justified.<sup>73</sup>

The "modified and enlarged" programme would also increase the intake of students, eliminate Black and Micmac history and culture as credit classes, adopt a full programme of academic classes, and benefit from the appointment of a faculty member for the position of the T.Y.P. Director<sup>74</sup>.

On August 1, 1977, after considerable discussion, the Senate Council carried a motion to recommend to Senate for favourable consideration the proposal in the Hayes Report<sup>75</sup> which reads:

"If the risk of incurring additional expenditures is not to be taken, a second option would be to continue to present T.Y.P., but to adopt, as far as is practical within financial constraints, the proposals that this report suggests, especially its programme of studies; the result, in two or three years might be to give an answer to some present unknowns and thereby put the university in a much better position to determine the future of the T.Y.P."<sup>76</sup>

The proposed programme of studies for the T.Y.P. consisted of classes in English, Science, Mathematics, and "a regular university class chosen after consultation with the appropriate department."<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Senate Council Minutes, August 1, 1977.

<sup>76</sup> Hayes, op. cit., p.2.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p.8.

In 1978 attempts were made to implement the recommendations of the Hayes Review Committee, although Senate Minutes are not conclusive on whether or not Dalhousie succeeded. It is clear, in the records however, that "revised administrative arrangements" for the T.Y.P. were intended<sup>78</sup>.

In 1980, Dalhousie's Academic Planning Committee established a sub-committee to review the status of the T.Y.P. which recommended that "the University should not withdraw from the Programme".<sup>79</sup> This recommendation was based on the finding that the programme, with all its problems, was "recognized and valued within the communities it serves in Nova Scotia and beyond. Dalhousie's termination of the programme would be regarded as a serious loss in those communities."<sup>80</sup>

The T.Y.P. became a department in the Faculty of Arts and Science in 1982 and a full-time Director, Prof. K. Waterson of the French Department, was appointed. From 1982-86, the programme managed to carry out its academic and community related commitments, but only because of the extraordinary effort of the

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<sup>78</sup> Senate Council Minutes, March 13, 1978.

<sup>79</sup> Report to the Academic Planning Committee from the Ad Hoc Sub-Committee on T.Y.P., November 17, 1980, p.2.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

Director and staff and the recruitment of external funding which amounted to about one-half of the T.Y.P.'s resources. In the 1986-87 academic year, however, T.Y.P. "suffered drastic financial cuts which could not be justified in the least."<sup>81</sup> Consequently, there was a danger that the programme could do more harm than good due to a lack of financial resources to look after the essential tasks of education and community outreach.<sup>82</sup> These cuts affected the study skills course, tutorials, travel to communities, and a reduction of secretarial services from full-time to part-time. Given all these cuts, the Director resigned in protest in 1986. Since that time, Dr. Peter Rans has filled the position of both Director and Assistant Director.

Since the division of the Faculty of Arts and Science into two distinct units in 1987, the T.Y.P. has operated under the responsibility of the Vice-President (Academic and Research). Dalhousie's most recent attempts to find new directions for the T.Y.P. have not yielded the expected results. In 1987, two contradictory reports, H.F. McGee, Jr., The T.Y.P. as a Natural Symbol: The Final Report of the External Reviewer in the Unit Review of the Transition Year Programme at Dalhousie University, (August 1987) and J.C.T. Kwak (Chair), Faculty of Arts and Science Transition Year Programme Unit Review Report, (September 30, 1987)

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<sup>81</sup> K. Waterson, consultant's interview, May 4, 1989.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

did not solve the conflicts related to the programme. As a result, the university has not yet been able to make a decision about the future of the T.Y.P.

We now turn to a review of the second major access programme undertaken by Dalhousie for a minority group of students, namely the Micmac Bachelor of Social Work.

b. Micmac Bachelor of Social Work (M.B.S.W.)<sup>83</sup>

In September, 1984, after two years of planning and consultations, Dalhousie's Maritime School of Social Work began offering a Bachelor of Social Work degree for Micmac social services staff. The need for such a programme was identified at a four-day workshop on "Social Conditions and Services on Micmac Reserves in Nova Scotia", held in June, 1982, sponsored by the Union of Nova Scotia Indians and the Maritime School of Social Work.

The workshop participants expressed concern about problems facing the Native community, including high unemployment rates, welfare dependency, alcohol and drug abuse and family breakdowns as well as suicide and mental health problems. The M.B.S.W. would help to mitigate some of these problems by training the growing

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<sup>83</sup> This section is based on the 1983 M.S.S.W. proposal for the Bachelor of Social Work Programme for Micmac Social Development Staff and interviews with some of the School's faculty members.

number of individuals working to improve the social well being of the Micmac communities, particularly welfare officers, social counsellors, alcohol and drug workers and community health representatives. Although such individuals possessed considerable practical experience, their formal training was often limited. This hindered their ability to deal with changing social circumstances.

The M.B.S.W. programme was also intended to respond to a growing willingness on the part of Micmac youths to undertake higher education in spite of other professional, family, and community commitments. Thus, the Maritime School of Social Work developed the programme in response to the Micmac community's desire to use education as a tool to improve its effectiveness in dealing with social problems. The main objectives of the programme were to:

- (a) provide relevant and effective education that would improve the quality of services provided by social staff;
- (b) provide an opportunity for professional and self-confidence upgrading of social staff;
- (c) expand the prevention, intervention, and remedial capacities of social staff;
- (d) contribute to a co-operative working environment among various social staff and other community members;
- (e) implement an androgogical teaching approach which recognizes the skills and experiences of the participants.

(i) Students

Forty-nine students participated in this five-year programme. All participants were employees of the sponsoring agencies, i.e. the Native Alcohol and Drug Association, the Welfare Programme, the Native Council of Nova Scotia and the Micmac Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia. Of the forty-nine original students, it is expected that twenty-one will have graduated by the end of programme. The students who did not complete the programme dropped out for a variety of reasons including excessive work-load, employment, family and community commitments, commuting distances, and poor academic performance.

(ii) Structure and Curriculum

The programme was structured around two bi-monthly meetings, alternating between Halifax and Sydney. Decentralization was an important structural component of the programme, necessary to maximize the effectiveness of the intensive two-day study sessions held every two weeks.

To earn a Dalhousie Bachelor of Social Work degree, participants in the M.B.S.W. were subjected to regular admission requirements and workload, and were evaluated under the same academic standards as any other Dalhousie student. M.B.S.W. courses, however, emphasized the unique historical, legal,

cultural, social and political aspects of Micmac life. To this end, Micmac resource persons were involved in course delivery. This emphasis did not, however, lead to neglect of the study of non-Indian subjects. Most courses were general in nature and designed to provide students with the skills and knowledge needed for effective preventive and interventive work.

An important element of the M.B.S.W. was its emphasis on maximizing the natural links between study and work. It encouraged learning through interaction with other students and through other informal methods.

Two advisory committees, which included local and national representatives of the Native community, provided general direction in terms of policy and curriculum.

(iii) Staff

The programme employed two full-time staff: a co-ordinator and an instructor. The M.B.S.W. co-ordinator was responsible for the overall administration of the programme and served as the principal liaison with the Micmac community. Other activities included membership in the Advisory and Curriculum Committees, teaching, organizing field placements, as well as supervision and grading of competency credit papers (essays describing students' previous work and learning experiences relevant to the programme).

The main programme instructor played an important role in detecting and overcoming students' academic deficiencies. The instructor also provided tutoring and counselling, besides conducting research and administrative work.

A part-time administrative assistant was also employed to assume responsibility for clerical and administrative duties.

(iv) Funding

Most of the funding for the M.B.S.W. came from the Department of Indian Affairs, which agreed in 1984, to provide funding for five years. No commitment was made to renew funding at the end of the 1989 school year. Four Native programmes (the Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselling Association, the Welfare Programme, the Native Council of Nova Scotia and the Native Family and Children's Services Association) also provided funding for the programme.

The agreement with Indian Affairs stipulated that it would assume responsibility for student costs such as tuition fees, books and supplies, travel, accommodation, and child care. The co-sponsoring agencies agreed to look after costs relating to instructional development (i.e. adaptation of courses to meet the specific needs of Micmac students), instructors' and committees' travel, as well as other costs involved in course delivery.

Although the M.B.S.W. programme is ending, its social benefits will continue to be felt for the foreseeable future as the twenty-one graduates dedicate their energies to changing the social conditions faced by Micmac people. Another important benefit of the programme is the experience it has provided in developing professional education which meets critical community needs. The Micmac Professional Careers Project, which we now turn to for review, has begun to build successfully on this experience.

c. Micmac Professional Careers Project

The Micmac Professional Careers Project was established in January of 1986 by Dalhousie University, the Union of Nova Scotia Indians and the Native Council of Nova Scotia. The project was created to address the lack of Micmac people in professional programmes. The three major areas on which the Micmac Professional Careers Project concentrates are Law, Health Sciences and Administration. To this end, a project co-ordinator was hired, chosen from the Micmac community to co-ordinate the activities of the Micmac Professional Careers Project Planning Committee. The Planning Committee is made up of representatives from Micmac organizations and communities, as well as representatives from government and educational institutions. The Committee has grown from a provincial one to a regional one, with representation from the Innu, Inuit, Micmac and Malecite population.

The objectives of the programme, as outlined below, are broad in scope and designed to provide flexibility for the project to explore many areas affecting access to professional programmes for Native people in the Atlantic region. They are:

- a) To establish what is being done elsewhere in Canada, the United States and abroad in relation to native educational programming in order to use existing information for the design and development of an effective programme.
- b) To decide on priorities of various professional fields and determine which are most urgent and where most progress can be made.
- c) To consult with the constituency to be served by each programme by entering into discussions on an ongoing basis with prospective students and sponsoring organizations on the design and appropriate programmes.
- d) To enter into discussions and co-operative agreements with various Schools, Departments and Faculties of the University and to address with them issues of pre-admission preparation, curriculum adaptation and support programmes.
- e) To seek funding for specific professional education programmes and to assist in getting them under way.

The initial start-up funding for the programme came from a private foundation - the Joseph S. Stauffer Estate, Toronto, Ontario. This contribution has provided the project with a stable financial base from which other funds have been secured. This foundation money has been vital to the life of the project and the lifeline to other projects, seminars and programmes initiated by the Micmac Professional Careers Project.

The Project has sought to fulfill its objectives in a number

of ways: by consulting widely with its constituencies and with those whose cooperation is needed within the university; by conducting workshops; by developing advisory reports; and by engaging in careful planning of its overall strategy and specific initiatives.

Of special significance in the context of this report is the Project's role in the creation of two important access programmes, namely the Law School's effort to enrol more minority students (discussed in Section E below) and the Certificate Programme in Community Health. The Micmac Professional Careers Project Co-ordinator actually serves as Programme Co-ordinator of the latter programme.

d. Certificate In Community Health

This programme was designed and developed for Native health personnel in the Atlantic Region, and provides academic up-grading in Math and Biology, work-related courses and university-level study to a group of forty-one health workers. It is of two years' duration and is expected to be completed by June, 1990.

The programme was initially designed to be at arm's length from the Micmac Professional Careers Project, but the project eventually assumed responsibility for administering it, for a

variety of reasons.

The two units of the University responsible for the programme are Henson College and the School of Health Services Administration within the Faculty of Health Professions. The School of Nursing, the Maritime School of Social Work and an outside consultant are also involved.

The programme has experienced a number of setbacks and its fair share of growing pains, but appears to be achieving its objectives as well as giving the Micmac Professional Careers Project valuable insight and experience.

e. Law School Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs<sup>84</sup>

On June 30, 1989, Dalhousie's Law School launched a programme to increase the participation of members of minority groups in legal education. It responds to the fact that there are presently only a few indigenous Black law students and less than a dozen practising Black lawyers in Nova Scotia and that only one Micmac person has ever graduated from Dalhousie's Law School.

The Law School's Minority Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Natives is designed to produce more lawyers from these communities,

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<sup>84</sup> This section is based on the Dalhousie Law School proposal of April, 1989, to the Law Foundation of Nova Scotia for a "Minority Participation Program".

as well as to allow their perspectives on the Canadian legal system to enrich legal education at Dalhousie. Thus, the programme will enhance the education of the law student body, as well as being an opportunity for members of the minority communities.

In order to accomplish its objectives, five main tasks have been identified for the law programme:

- (a) recruitment and promotion of legal education in minority communities;
- (b) development of a programme of pre-law training for minority applicants;
- (c) modification of the present legal education curriculum;
- (d) institutional support for minority students who attend law school; and
- (e) recruitment of law teachers from the indigenous minority community, or failing that, from other visible minority communities.

The entire programme will be the responsibility of a Director of Minority Education. There is a firm commitment that the permanent Director will be drawn from the Black or Native communities and that there will be an Advisory Board drawn from both the university and minority communities.

(i) Students

Due to the educational deprivation of members of the communities, Dalhousie's Law School does not expect them to apply for admission using standard procedures. The Law School is in the

process of developing an active recruitment programme to attract minority students, which will begin at the secondary school level and will make students aware of career opportunities in law. Contacts will also be made with university students. The Law School is seeking to arrange financial assistance for students in the new programme.

Seven students (4 Blacks and 3 Natives) are expected to be admitted in the programme's first year. This number will increase to thirty-six by the fifth year. To meet these targets, the Law School will expand existing admission criteria for disadvantaged and mature students. A preparatory LSAT course will be offered to Black or Micmac students who plan to apply for admission.

A six-week pre-law education programme for Black and Native applicants will be offered from mid-July to late August of every year, after this start-up year. This preparatory programme, using the same format as that of the University of Saskatchewan's Law School, will: attempt to reduce the cultural shock suffered by many minority applicants; provide instruction in reading and writing skills; introduce students to the study habits and other requirements of legal studies; provide an introduction to legal education; provide an opportunity to identify academic and career objectives; and so on. Successful completion of the pre-law programme will be a condition for acceptance into the first year of legal studies.

In order to retain the minority students after admission, the Law School will provide tutorial and counselling services; a summer school for criminal law; and new courses on issues of importance to the Black and Native communities, as well as adapting the existing curriculum to address their concerns.

(ii) Funding

The Nova Scotia Law Foundation has provided funding for a Director of Minority Education whose major responsibility will be to address the educational needs and concerns of the Black and Native students. Salaries for support staff, as well as funds for travel, materials and supplies, printing and various other items are also expected to be provided by the Nova Scotia Law Foundation. Funding in the range of \$150,000. has been provided by the Law Foundation for the first two years, with a reasonable chance of renewal thereafter. In any event, Dalhousie Law School is committed to continuation of the programme.

f. Henson College<sup>85</sup>

Henson College was established as a new senior academic unit at Dalhousie in 1984. Building on a 50-year tradition of community development and outreach, action-oriented research, and adult and

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<sup>85</sup> This section is based on Henson literature and interviews with some members of the College's faculty.

continuing education, the College combined the Institute of Public Affairs and the Office of Part-Time Studies and Extension. The mandate of Henson College is to serve as a bridge between the University and the communities it serves, using the tools of teaching, extension, conferences, consulting and research, in making the University's resources available to constituencies beyond its traditional student population. The College, thereby, continues the long-standing partnership that has been built between it and community groups, professional organizations, governments at all levels, and leading individuals, in seeking regional, social, cultural, and economic development.

In a broad sense, Henson College acts both to make the University more accessible to a wider range of students and to involve the University more deeply in the life of the external community. In doing this, Henson College acts as a general access programme, thereby providing a base from which to address the more specific needs of Black and Micmac people.

The College is the major adult and continuing education arm of the University. In carrying out its mission, the College offers a variety of credit and non-credit courses for mature students as well as educational programmes and services to the public sector, business, industry, voluntary organizations and community groups in the region.

Henson College is a faculty of Dalhousie University headed by a Dean and governed by a board whose membership brings together community and University interests. The College is organized into the following main programme units:

i) Professional Continuing Education Programmes

- Advanced Management Centre (A.M.C.)

- Municipal Administration Programme (M.A.P.)

ii) Centre for Continuing Studies (C.C.S.)

iii) Community Development and Outreach (C.D.O.)

iv) Dean's Office - Research and Development (R. & D.)

(i) Professional Continuing Education

Two of Henson College's units are oriented to professional continuing education, one for the business sector (A.M.C.) and the other for the public sector (M.A.P.).

A.M.C. specializes in developing and delivering continuing management education and organizational development services. It offers a wide range of programmes, seminars, conferences, in-house company contracts and consulting. It works with particular groups in designing programmes to meet their special needs e.g. the small business development course for women - Creating Enterprise for Women (C.R.E.W.).

M.A.P. works to improve the quality of public administration in the region, through the development and delivery of educational programmes, with a particularly strong emphasis on municipal administration. Its main vehicles of education are correspondence courses (credit and non-credit) which lead to a certificate, seminars and conferences, consulting and contract programming, and research and publication.

Both of these programmes have the capacity to work more closely with minority communities to make the University's resources more available. This might include the delivery of programmes designed to foster professional development in Black and Micmac communities.

(ii) Centre for Continuing Studies (C.C.S.)

C.C.S.'s main mandate is to develop credit studies programmes and ancillary services for part-time and adult students at Dalhousie, as well as to provide a wide range of non-credit programmes to the community. In this sense, the Centre has a broad mandate to make Dalhousie more accessible to those who might not otherwise be able to take advantage of the resources available at the University. The Centre also provides a wide range of non-credit programmes for members of the community-at-large. Its constituency, therefore, consists of those who wish, through credit or non-credit study, to engage in the process of learning.

Mature students are being served in a variety of ways by the Centre for Continuing Studies. At the policy level, work is being done within the University to adjust the rules, regulations, and procedures in order to better serve the adult student population. The ultimate objective, in this context, is to make the university system as open and flexible as possible. Through proper scheduling, for example, Henson seeks to arrange evening courses which accommodate the working population.

The counselling and advisory role of the Centre is particularly important. A major component of this role is contact with prospective students. Counselling and/or advising helps individual students sort out their educational goals and objectives. These services are often the first contact students have with the university. Counselling and advising may include the provision of information about university procedures, referring students to different departments/units within Dalhousie, or helping students assess their abilities and potential (e.g., whether or not educational upgrading is necessary).

In its role as a champion for the interests of part-time and mature students, C.C.S. looks after the operation of Dalhousie's University Exploration for Mature Students. This programme is a way for mature students who are considering university study to be admitted to the University as undergraduates, without having to

satisfy the usual admission requirements. However, the student may apply to a degree programme once he or she has acquired three full credits with a grade of C- or better, and pursue a normal academic path. This is an access programme which is available to anyone and, therefore, another path for Black and Micmac students to gain access to the University.

The general interest non-credit courses, language instruction, and business and computer courses, offer opportunities to expand knowledge, to develop new skills (particularly for the workplace) and to experience the University. These courses provide a stepping stone on the path to higher education and are part of an effort to make the University accessible.

### (iii) Community Development and Outreach Unit

This unit responds to the educational and research needs of non-profit citizens' groups and community organizations concerned with social and economic issues. Its purpose is to develop innovative educational programmes which will enable them to build a stronger, more informed and active citizenry. Two Micmac programmes (described elsewhere in this report) are housed in this unit: the Native Education Counselling Programme and the Micmac Professional Careers Project.

In fulfilling its mandate, the C.D.O. concentrates its activities in four areas: community animation and development; community consultation; educational workshops; conference and study groups; and building a stronger link between the University and the community. Through all its activities, C.D.O. promotes a common thread of full community participation in the process of social change. Through its efforts to assist and empower grass roots constituencies, and to build linkages with the University, it contributes to making Dalhousie more accessible.

(iv) Dean's Office - Research and Development (R.&D.)

A small staff group operates within the Dean's Office to provide research services to the College, and to provide Research and Development input for new programme development and special initiatives. This group has done research related to the Black and Micmac population in the past and is conducting research related to the part-time and adult student population.

2. Complementary Initiatives

In addition to the programmes discussed above, a variety of complementary initiatives have been undertaken at Dalhousie recently, related broadly to minority issues, including access for Black and Micmac students. In order to round out this chapter on institutional context, we will review some of these.

The Senate Academic Planning Committee Reports on the First and Second Cycles of Academic Planning at Dalhousie University (1986 and 1987) articulated a commitment to educational excellence, equity in access and employment, and justice for visible minorities as part of the University's community responsibility. The establishment and operation of the Senate Advisory Committee on Affirmative Action in Education fulfills a portion of this commitment.

The Black Canadian Student's Association was established just over two years ago and has held cultural, social, and educational events on and off campus. A more recent development is the formation of the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students' Association, which has produced a strong lobby for Aboriginal educational funding.

The Committee on Racial and Ethnic Affairs (C.O.R.E.A.) at the Maritime School of Social Work, has worked for several years to develop and support educational change and the School's affirmative action policy for Blacks, Micmacs, and Acadians. It has been successful in establishing, as a requirement for the B.S.W., a one-half credit course on Cross-cultural Issues and Social Work Practice (1988/89), and in securing the hiring of a tenure track minority faculty member (1990). In addition, it has sponsored well-attended forums, lectures, and workshops on cross-cultural and

minority issues.

Cooperatively with C.O.R.E.A., a younger group, the Dalhousie Multicultural Committee has lobbied for changes in attitudes and approaches to visible minorities at Dalhousie. One concrete result has been the appointment of Advisors to the President on Minorities, Women, and the Disabled.

Some of the more recent changes at Dalhousie have been a direct result of the appointment of the Advisor to the President on Minorities in 1987. She has examined the needs of racially visible and cultural minority people at Dalhousie; assessed whether these needs are being met and how Dalhousie could accommodate institutional change to meet these needs; investigated and initiated discussions on financial support for any necessary institutional change to promote excellence and equity.

The Advisor's involvement in the President's Symposium on Undergraduate Education included a workshop entitled "The Racially Visible Student: Accessibility, Curriculum Adaptations and Student Supports" (1988). Its ten recommendations were included with others submitted to the President, the Committee on Undergraduate Education, the Senate Advisory Committee on Affirmative Action in Education, and the Task Force on Access for Black and Native People. The "Report of the Committee on Undergraduate Education" (January, 1989) and the Senate Advisory Committee's report to

Senate (July, 1989) have addressed a number of these recommendations and others are still being reviewed.

Measures by which Dalhousie could encourage input from visible racial and cultural people were clearly defined in the "How Visible Are We?" workshop initiated by the Advisor to the President on Minorities in 1988. The one-day workshop was attended by approximately seventy participants mainly from Dalhousie, with 80% being visible minorities. It included (but was not limited to) discussions on undergraduate education, cross-cultural relations, and institutional policy in education and employment for students, faculty, staff, and administration. The workshop developed eight summary recommendations which have been forwarded to several committees and groups on campus.

After two years of research and involvement in a variety of campus advisory committees, special sessions, workshops and seminars, the Advisor to the President on Minorities concluded in her report that Dalhousie is in a unique position to combat both educational and employment concerns. In order to accomplish this, however, it is imperative that Dalhousie develop a clear policy statement and a five-year strategic plan to reduce inequities and barriers to education ("Report on Visible Racial and Cultural Considerations at Dalhousie", 1988).

One result of this report has been the development of the Race Relations and Affirmative Action Project. With financial support provided by the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, Dalhousie has had a six and one-half month Race Relations and Affirmative Action Project coordinated by the Advisor to the President on Minorities. This is a concrete step in the development of an institutional plan which encompasses effective programmes and policies for employment equity, educational equity and affirmative action.

The Race Relations and Affirmative Action Project was designed to give administrative and financial support to: the Task Force on Access for Black and Native People (chaired by Wayne MacKay), the Educational Access Consultant (Assis Malaquias), and the Affirmative Action Management Consultant (Jon Husband of Hay Management Consultants Limited). A. Malaquias did individual consultations and preliminary research for the Task Force. J. Husband evaluated how Dalhousie can manage affirmative action. His feasibility study investigated institutional structure and methods for monitoring affirmative action over time, especially in employment. J. Jones-Darrell also received some support in the development of a community resource list.

The Race Relations and Affirmative Action Project has supported the need for further action at Dalhousie to combat educational inequities. Future financial support for completing

these tasks is a necessary component of the next step which must involve the Black and Micmac communities which we serve. Institutional structural changes and strategies such as those proposed in "The Report on Visible Racial and Cultural Considerations at Dalhousie University" contain both long-term and short-term recommendations proposed after two years of consultation. If Dalhousie is truly committed to increasing access for Blacks and Micmacs, it will heed these suggestions coming from the communities which it professes to serve.

There are basic aspects of university life at Dalhousie which are not in harmony with the kind of access programmes that we are advocating in this Report. Thus, while there are complementary initiatives, there are also currents flowing in the opposite direction. A good example of this is the tenure and promotion process which places a heavy emphasis on scholarly publications, rather than more broad based writing aimed at social change. There is also little value attached to public and community service of the kind that would make Dalhousie a part of the larger Nova Scotian community. It is this that gives rise to the perception (perpetuated by bodies such as tenure and promotions committees), that scholarship and social action are contradictory. This adds to Dalhousie's elitist image in the Black and Micmac communities. The kind of access programmes advocated in this Report offer members of the Dalhousie community an opportunity to wed scholarship and social action in a way that is beneficial to all.

#### IV. CONSULTATIONS: WHAT WE WERE TOLD

##### 1. Introduction

There is no substitute for talking directly to the Black and Micmac people of Nova Scotia, if you want to learn about their needs and aspirations. One of the important roles of this Task Force was to listen to the voices of the indigenous Black and Micmac communities and accurately report what we were told. As members of a predominantly white university community, we at Dalhousie should be wary of attempting to define the two communities' needs. It is Nova Scotia's Black and Micmac people who have lived the minority experience and know the barriers they encounter in pursuing university education. They also speak eloquently about the short-comings of their educational experiences prior to university.

The limits of time and space make it impossible for us to do justice to what we were told. We have been forced to distil recurrent and major themes from the wealth of information and opinions presented to the Task Force. Appendices B, C, D, and E speak to the range of people who took the time and effort to speak to us in private consultations, public hearings and written submissions. To all these people, we are grateful. While it would have been better to quote extensively and thereby allow you to speak in your own voices, we have been forced to summarize and

encapsulate. We have made every effort to accurately reflect what you told us and to do our best to prevent a distortion of your views.<sup>86</sup>

## 2. Methodology and Process

The mandate of the Task Force called for consultations "with leaders and representatives of the (Black and Micmac) communities, with provincial and federal government officials, and within the University Community". These consultations, it must be noted, had to be conducted within a very short time period since the Task Force was only given six months to carry out all aspects of its mandate.

As a first step in this consultative process, letters were sent to all Faculties at Dalhousie with information about the Task Force's mandate and objectives. These letters also requested faculty and administration input, in the form of written or oral submissions. The Task Force's consultant was made available for private consultations. A similar procedure was devised to inform the Black and Native Communities. Hundreds of letters were sent to individuals and organizations in both the Black and Micmac communities.

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<sup>86</sup>We were warned by numerous presenters, such as Merlita Williams at the Black Cultural Centre on May 3, 1989 that we should listen closely to what members of the Black and Micmac communities had to say and not distort their message by putting our own interpretations into their words.

After all information had been disseminated, the Task Force proceeded to hold public hearings. Three hearings were held on campus. Participants in the hearings included members of the Aboriginal Students' Association, members of the Black Canadian Students' Association, T.Y.P. students (past and present), members of the T.Y.P. faculty, Dalhousie faculty members as well as student counsellors and others. (See Appendices D and E for a list of presenters at public hearings and of written submissions, respectively.)

The second stage of the Task Force's consultation process involved hearings in the Black and Native communities. These hearings attracted an excellent response in terms of both quantity and quality, especially in light of the short notice that was mandated by our time constraints. Hearings were held at the Bloomfield School, the Black Cultural Centre and the North End Library in the Halifax-Dartmouth area. Hearings were also held in Digby, Yarmouth, Sydney and Truro. (See Appendix D.)

The findings, insights, and recommendations in this Report arose from the Task Force's public and private consultations with organizations and individuals in these communities. The importance of a consultative process was made clear in the course of the Task Force's consultations throughout the province. Both the Consultant's individual interviews and the public hearings conducted by the Task Force, revealed the extent of the

communities' commitment to help Dalhousie find the best possible way of enhancing access and educational opportunities. We were also told, on numerous occasions, that this kind of consultation on the part of Dalhousie University was long overdue. The media coverage given to the operations of the Task Force also brought these important issues to a broader public audience.

### 3. What We Were Told

The individuals and groups who addressed us at public meetings, in private consultations, and in written submissions included students at Dalhousie and in post-secondary programmes elsewhere in the province, Black and Micmac educators and educational administrators, graduates of the T.Y.P., members of the T.Y.P. and Micmac Bachelor of Social Work staff and advisory board and many interested members of the Black, Micmac and University communities. What they told us is summarized below. It is unfortunate but inevitable that in the process of summarizing, some ideas have been glossed over and some perspectives blurred. The pages which follow nevertheless convey the major themes which emerged.

#### a. The School System in Nova Scotia

Our mandate does not include an examination of the public schools. Nonetheless, many presenters at our public hearings

throughout the province expressed grave concerns about the education of Blacks and Micmacs. The recent funding cut-backs aside, there were some signs of hope within the Micmac community that things are improving - especially in areas where there is greater band control. This was the thrust of what speakers told us at both our Truro and Sydney hearings. While there is much room for improvement, there are signs of progress.

The message from Black presenters in all our public hearings was more pessimistic. Many speakers described the Cole Harbour incidents as typical rather than aberrant and repeatedly called for a public inquiry into racism in the Nova Scotia school system. Their disturbing stories about streaming of students and racial biases differed from the views expressed by the one white teacher who appeared at our public hearings, and the education and government officials who spoke to us through private consultations. We did not have the time or mandate to amass the necessary data to make a useful finding or recommendation on the degree or nature of racism in Nova Scotian schools. Based upon the information before us, there does appear to be a need for an investigation of the school system and its treatment of Blacks and Micmacs. The clear perception in both these minority communities is that there are significant racial barriers in Nova Scotia's schools that must be eliminated before indigenous Blacks and Micmacs can have access to university education through the normal channels of admission.

The low level of Black and Micmac participation in post-secondary programmes in Nova Scotia was described as a manifestation of deep-rooted problems within the province's schools. Although our mandate is to make recommendations to the University, the people we spoke with stressed that one cannot make sense of the problems Blacks and Micmacs experience in the higher education system without looking at the schools. They described the latter as institutions which are remote from, ignorant of, and - not infrequently - hostile to, the Black and Micmac communities. We were told that many Black and Micmac children experience school as an alien environment, where the curriculum fails to acknowledge their identity, and in which white teachers don't expect them to succeed. At locations throughout the province, we were told of the pervasive practice of "streaming" - whereby teachers and guidance counsellors channel Black and Micmac students into non-academic high school programmes. Few children surmount these barriers to emerge from the system prepared for university. The one white high school teacher and a Department of Education administrator who met with us, argued that it is too simple to depict teachers and guidance counsellors - and even the schools themselves - as the villains of the piece.

In the course of the private consultations, the vast majority of people interviewed expressed the view that the education system in Nova Scotia still contains strong racial biases and that Blacks and Micmacs have, historically, been given limited educational

opportunities. The problems faced by Blacks and Micmacs are manifested in inappropriate curricula; low expectations and little encouragement to excel; low self-esteem and poor self-image. There is also a perception on the part of the larger society that Blacks and Micmacs have no family/community commitment to education. Policies regarding access to higher education for Blacks and Micmacs, therefore, must take into account both the long history of racial discrimination in this province as well as the social, economic and institutional barriers that prevent these groups from realizing their true potential.

In this bleak situation, there appear to be two bright spots. First, there is optimism within the Micmac community about the benefits of Native control of reserve-based schools. Micmac Education Directors and Counsellors told us that those Bands which have assumed control of their schools are managing to improve the educational experience of their children, and thereby enhance their prospects for subsequent academic success. A second reason for optimism - according to individuals from both the Black and the Micmac communities, on the mainland and in Cape Breton - is heightened awareness on the part of parents and students of the importance of resisting the pull of the less-demanding "general programme" and of getting a sound education. Nonetheless, we have been told that there are serious problems in the education system at the elementary and secondary level that need immediate attention.

b. The Role of the Universities

Although those who met with us did not hold the province's universities responsible for the failures of its school system, many argued that there is much more the universities could do. Specifically, they could change attitudes within the school system by reaching out to young Black and Micmac students and their parents and encouraging them to consider university and the career and other opportunities to which it gives rise. Parents' nights in Black and Micmac communities, invitations to an Open House, and peer recruitment are but some of the means which were suggested to "make university a legitimate aspiration for Black and Micmac children". It was recognized that financial incentives and assistance would also be required to enable many Black and Micmac people to realize this aspiration.

To the extent that those we spoke with did blame the universities, it was for inadequately preparing prospective teachers and counsellors to work with students of different ethnicity or race. Insofar as teachers and counsellors behave in ways which are insensitive or racist, Faculties and Schools of Education are said to share the blame. It is time that the universities did a better job of preparing students to live in a multicultural society.

We recognize that the role of the universities in confronting the problems faced by Nova Scotia's Black and Micmac people is less critical than that of the elementary and secondary schools. Many of the people who spoke with the Task Force emphasized that the root of the problem was in the education that students received prior to applying for university. Indeed, many of the Black presenters at the Black Cultural Centre pointed out that the continued need for the T.Y.P. is an indictment of what is happening in the school system. Nonetheless, the universities do have a leadership role to play in giving access to the dispossessed in our society. Dalhousie should build on the experiences with the T.Y.P. to make providing access for Blacks and Micmacs a vital part of its social and academic mission.

c. Dalhousie's Image

Two perceptions of Dalhousie were frequently expressed during our hearings. One was that the university is very remote from the province's Black and Micmac communities. The extent of its perceived remoteness depends to some extent on the perspective of the individual in question. At one extreme, we were told that many young people in the Preston area would regard going to Dalhousie as akin to going to the moon. But even those current and former students with whom we spoke shared the perception of Dalhousie as somewhat alien and remote. The problem is not only that Dalhousie is a reflection of the larger society - and, therefore, that it has

few indigenous Black and Micmac students - but also that few members of those communities hold positions of power or status within the institution, and that their culture and history does not figure in the regular curriculum. Students are also "on their own" to a greater degree at Dalhousie than at other local institutions. Since Black and Micmac students must cope, not only with the difficulties experienced by other undergraduates, but with the different culture of the university community and with racism and ignorance on the part of some of its members, this relatively low level of support for students is particularly problematic for them. (See the accounts of life at university from the perspective of Black and Micmac students in Appendix H.)

The problem is most severe for those Black and Micmac students for whom there is no comfortable social niche within the institution. One of the current strengths of the T.Y.P. is that it provides such a niche for its students. Indeed, in the early years of the programme, Black students who were not in the T.Y.P. joined its Students' Association as Associate Members and participated in the social, community service, and athletic activities which it sponsored. It was suggested to us that the change in the political and social climate and the increasingly marginal status of the T.Y.P., has made association with it a stigma to be avoided. For this reason, the T.Y.P. is no longer a source of support for students in the university's degree programmes.

Native students derive personal, academic and social support from the Native Education Counsellor and the activities based at her office. Micmac students, the Education Director and Counsellors of the Micmac Confederacy, and Dalhousie student service staff all ascribed a recent increase in the numbers and success of Micmac students on campus to the strength they derive from the Native Education Counsellor and their peers within the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students Association.

Members of the Black Canadian Students' Association, formed three years ago, expressed pride in what their association has been able to accomplish as a source of support for its members and as a vehicle for raising awareness on campus about Black Canadian culture and history. But they said that, without support from the University, they cannot organize the range and level of activities and assistance which are necessary in order to attract Black students to Dalhousie and to enable them to succeed here. They advocated that services such as those provided by the Native Education Counsellor be made available to Black Canadian students, in order to enable them to obtain a more secure foothold in this often alien and inhospitable environment.

The second, even stronger, perception that emerged from our consultations is that Dalhousie is not committed to providing higher education for the province's Micmacs and Blacks. This perception appears to have two major sources. First and foremost is the university's treatment of the T.Y.P.

Although Dalhousie has provided some support for the T.Y.P. in terms of salaries, housing, and financial assistance for students, this programme has never been able to overcome its marginal status. The marginalization of the T.Y.P. is attributable to the fact that it was never supported by a well-articulated philosophy. It was experimental in nature, and consequently, this programme lost legitimacy within the university community and became "ghettoized". This reinforced the perception, within the Black and Micmac communities, that Dalhousie did not have a serious commitment to the T.Y.P. Chronic lack of both financial and human resources, which could allow the T.Y.P. to develop into a better mechanism to facilitate access to Dalhousie for Black and Micmac students, are further signs of the lack of commitment.

Present staffing levels in the programme, for example, are inadequate. All staff, with the exception of the acting Director, are employed on a part-time basis. This creates severe problems because of the intensity of teaching, advising, tutoring and counselling demands of the programme. These demands are particularly difficult to accommodate because most instructors need other part-time jobs to survive. Lack of financial resources are also clearly apparent from the fact that the T.Y.P. is able to hire an administrative secretary on a part-time basis only. This creates a major problem because answers to information requests, as well as routine secretarial work, are often not done in a timely fashion. Lack of appropriate classrooms (classes are often held

at the Killam Library or in the Life Sciences Building) and sufficient office space for faculty also point to the underfunding of the programme.

The negative aspects that have been associated with T.Y.P. notwithstanding, this programme has succeeded in providing students with the academic skills necessary to conduct a normal academic life, contributing to the development of a sense of self-worth and confidence in the participants, providing a support mechanism for students within the university, and increasing the students' ability to operate successfully in society.

According to early participants in the T.Y.P., it was forced upon a reluctant university by a small number of community activists, graduate students and sympathetic faculty members, and was never fully accepted. Over the years, it has been shifted from one administrative location to another, its budget has been drastically reduced, and its continued existence has frequently been threatened. Students and alumni of the T.Y.P. and its supporters within the two communities told us that they have had to lobby on its behalf on numerous occasions. It is probably not an overstatement to say that, in their view, the T.Y.P. exists today, not because of, but in spite of Dalhousie.

Members of the Micmac community have a second reason to believe that Dalhousie is not committed to educating Micmac people.

In their experience, Dalhousie has been responsive to their needs for special professional programmes, but only to the extent that they can secure external funding. Although the university is pleased enough to offer the Bachelor of Social Work for Micmacs and the Certificate Programme for Community Health Representatives - and, incidentally, to take public credit for doing so - it is unwilling to commit any of its own resources to the education of Micmac people.

Thus, officials of the Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs indicated that they are required to pay for the space and any services used by the Native Education Counsellor, in spite of the fact that she contributes to the university at large by providing services to Micmac students who are not members of the Confederacy. They are disappointed and irritated by Dalhousie's calculating approach. Large sums of money (which would otherwise be available to them) are being transferred to Dalhousie by Micmac people. We were told that the university's lack of commitment to Micmac education sometimes leads them to wonder whether - in spite of its other advantages - they should not take their money elsewhere.

#### d. The Transition Year Programme

Because the T.Y.P. is well known and of long standing - and a central part of this Task Force's mandate - much of the testimony we heard related to it. Although space does not permit us to

capture all that was said, it is possible to identify the major points raised and issues addressed. It should be stated at the outset that there was almost universal support for the continuance of the T.Y.P. in some form.

(i) The Value of the T.Y.P.

The current T.Y.P. students with whom we met spoke highly of the programme and recommended that it be strengthened and continued. Many of the problems they identified originated in the T.Y.P.'s setting within the university rather than in the programme itself. Of particular concern to them were the programme's poor image and marginal status on campus. The inclusion of the T.Y.P. in orientation activities, the provision of better classrooms, and making the T.Y.P.'s Black and Native Studies class into a credit course were some of the measures suggested to raise its profile and "bring it into the mainstream" of the university.

The position that the programme should be fortified and continued was also taken by the Black Canadian Students' Association, the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students' Association, and the Dalhousie Student Union (D.S.U.). The D.S.U. also suggested that it be expanded to include individuals who face other types of barriers to higher education, such as poverty and physical handicaps. This is a matter worthy of serious consideration but beyond the mandate of this Task Force.

Although Black and Micmac people outside the University shared some of the students' views, they were in general more critical of the programme's effectiveness and of its effects. Criticism of the programme's past effectiveness (i.e. of its record of preparing students for university) was particularly strong from Micmac educators and educational administrators, who said that both data and anecdotal evidence reveal high drop-out rates and a poor record of preparing Micmacs for university. The Education Directors for two Cape Breton Bands suggested to us that the T.Y.P. is of little or no value to them. The primary reason for this is that family and community support is such an important factor in their students' academic success that it is far better for them to attend local schools and the University College of Cape Breton than to come to Dalhousie. From their point of view, the rationale for Dalhousie's involvement in preparing Micmacs for undergraduate studies is also questionable. Band-controlled schools can provide much better education about their history and culture than could the university, and - as for the academic component as Clarence Smith said, - "you don't need professors to prepare people for university".

While representatives of the Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs were equally critical of the T.Y.P.'s record, they - and the Native Council of Nova Scotia - maintained that the programme does provide benefits which their members cannot obtain elsewhere and it can be effective with their input. They also were much happier with the

T.Y.P. in recent years. This was attributed to good administration and a growing willingness to consult the bands' Education Counsellors on admissions to the T.Y.P.

People who had participated in the T.Y.P. in its early years had a different perspective. They argued that it is inappropriate to measure the T.Y.P.'s effectiveness by the percentage of its students who have gone on to get university degrees. These people advocated a broader definition of success. We will return to this issue below in the section on the T.Y.P.'s purpose.

The issue of the T.Y.P.'s effectiveness was distinct from that of its effects on Black and Micmac education. Thus, some people who acknowledged that the programme had given or could give individuals opportunities otherwise unavailable to them, nevertheless maintained that its larger effects are profoundly negative - and, in particular, that it legitimizes separate and unequal education for Blacks and Micmacs in Nova Scotia. The T.Y.P. was described as a "band-aid, segregated approach to education", a "bastard programme" and an "excuse for the provincial education system". Two basic concerns underlie these descriptions.

The first concern is that the T.Y.P. functions as a sort of "safety valve" for the province's school system and, in doing so, reduces the pressure for reform of that system. Insofar as it fulfills this function, the T.Y.P. was said to perpetuate systemic

discrimination within the schools. This would be a point worth pursuing in an examination of the Nova Scotia school system and its treatment of Blacks and Micmacs.

The second, related, concern is that by offering the T.Y.P. in its current form, Dalhousie may actually be drawing Black and Micmac students away from its regular programmes into a segregated, marginal one. We were told that this may happen in a number of ways. First, students who cannot afford to attend university and fear accumulating debt may be attracted to the T.Y.P. because of the financial support it provides, even though they are capable of entering first year directly. Both Black students and Micmac students who are ineligible for federal funding may be tempted to apply to the T.Y.P. for this reason. The staff of the T.Y.P. indicated to us that they try to ensure that they do not accept into the programme anyone who is capable of succeeding in first year. Nevertheless, we heard numerous anecdotes in the course of our consultations within the Black community, in particular, of students who were drawn into the T.Y.P. for financial reasons.

Students capable of entering first year directly may be drawn into the T.Y.P. for other reasons, as well. It was suggested to us that some teachers and guidance counsellors assume that, since the T.Y.P. is for Black and Micmac students, it must be appropriate for all Black and Micmac students. This assumption leads them to encourage students who should be preparing themselves

for admission to an undergraduate programme to consider the T.Y.P. We were told that the T.Y.P. undermines high school students' motivation to study even if they are not encouraged to consider the T.Y.P., because they come to believe that if they don't do well in high school, they can always get into university through the T.Y.P.

These negative effects would be of serious concern, even if the T.Y.P. were a central part of the University. But most people we spoke with - both in and outside the University - perceived the T.Y.P. as marginal. The cutbacks in its budget and staff, its physical location, the repeated reviews - were all cited as evidence that Dalhousie does not regard the T.Y.P. as an important part of what it does. We were told that to draw Black and Micmac students into the T.Y.P. in these circumstances is to marginalize and stigmatize them.

A number of solutions to this problem were suggested to us in the course of our consultations. One very popular suggestion was that Dalhousie reach out to recruit Black and Micmac high school students into its undergraduate programmes. Another was that Dalhousie commit sufficient resources to the T.Y.P. and integrate it more closely into the University. But many felt that changes in the mandate of the T.Y.P. are also required to make it a positive force in the education of Blacks and Micmacs.

(ii) The Future and Purpose of the T.Y.P.

The most radical change suggested was to close down the T.Y.P., but immediate closure was advocated by only a few individuals. Many more people suggested that the T.Y.P. be phased out as the conditions which necessitate an alternative route into university for Black and Native people are addressed. This is not likely to occur in the next few years. A second possible change - advocated primarily by people who had participated in the T.Y.P. in its early days - was a return to the original objectives of the programme - in other words, to the practice of admitting into the programme individuals who had dropped out of high school or who had completed the general programme, but who now wished to strike out on a different path. A third possible change in the T.Y.P. - advocated most strongly by the Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs - was to limit admission primarily to mature students. (See Appendix F on the age breakdown of students in recent years.) Finally, one person advocated opening the T.Y.P. up to people other than Blacks and Micmacs, thereby making it into something like the Transitional Year Programme at the University of Toronto.

We encountered different perspectives, not only on the types of students the T.Y.P. should serve, but also on what it should give them. As is mentioned above, many of those who met with us argued that the T.Y.P. is successful to the extent that its students go on to undergraduate programmes and complete their

degrees. Representatives of the Micmac community and educators from both communities were strong proponents of this view. People who had been involved in the T.Y.P. in its early years said that it is inappropriate to judge the T.Y.P. by this narrow criterion. These individuals, most from the Black community, advocated taking account of the T.Y.P.'s contribution to its graduates' subsequent accomplishments in life and service to the community, and warned of the consequences of fixation on degrees earned. To assess the T.Y.P. solely on the basis of degrees obtained would be to ignore less traditional avenues to success.

Not surprisingly, the staff of the T.Y.P. said that the lack of consensus about the purpose of the programme creates difficulty, because it is judged in the light of multiple and conflicting expectations. Clarification of the objectives of the T.Y.P. was high on the list of things they hoped this Task Force would achieve.

Another aspect of the T.Y.P.'s purpose discussed in some of our consultations was whether it should continue to be a programme for Blacks and Micmacs. The general feeling appeared to be that something would be lost if the programme were opened up to members of other groups. Most people who addressed the merits of having a programme for both Blacks and Micmacs were students in or graduates of the programme, or individuals reporting students' views. They said that the participation of students from both

communities is valuable because it enables them to learn about another culture and to acquire a new perspective on the experience of racial and cultural minority groups in this society. Members of the T.Y.P. staff to whom we addressed this question said that providing the programme for both Black and Native students is difficult because it involves teaching in a 'tri-cultural' mode, but that there were counterbalancing advantages. It is our view that there may be tensions between the Black and Micmac students in the T.Y.P. which people did not feel comfortable discussing with the Task Force.

(iii) Admissions

The different perspectives on what the criteria for admission into the T.Y.P. should be were noted above. People also spoke to us about the admissions process. A couple complained about an interview and testing process that was more intimidating than encouraging. Several people who had not been accepted into the programme complained that the admission criteria were vague and that they had never been able to find out why - after, in some cases, coming several hundred miles for a day of interviews and tests - they had not been accepted.

This impression differed from that which we received from the staff of the T.Y.P. - who described a more thorough and systematic selection process than exists in most units of the university, and

indicated that they are careful to explain to students who are not accepted why that is the case. Indeed, the admissions process is an extensive one involving not only all the T.Y.P. staff but also representatives from some communities.

(iv) The Curriculum

A number of people who met with us made general comments about the curriculum. Several people with experience teaching in the programme stressed that the T.Y.P. curriculum should be different from those of most of Dalhousie's undergraduate Faculties, because it is not sufficient to offer the T.Y.P. students a series of discrete classes and to expect them to make the connections. The classes which make up the T.Y.P. must be tightly integrated in order to enable students to reap the benefits. Since effective teaching within the T.Y.P. also requires individualized instruction and cross-cultural education, the teaching staff within the programme are faced with a formidable challenge in the area of curriculum design.

It would be even more difficult to meet this challenge while satisfying the desire expressed by students and community members for closer integration with the University's undergraduate curricula. Although the students were not specific about how this should be achieved, they were generally opposed to the idea that the T.Y.P. should be self-contained at the curricular or any other level.

Comments were also made on the specific classes which make up the T.Y.P. curriculum. Both students and staff indicated that it is not possible to meet the needs of both mature students and students who have recently left high school through one class in math. Their needs are simply too diverse. For some mature students, the expectation that they achieve a grade 11 level of proficiency in math within one year may simply be unrealistic. It was suggested that reconsideration of this requirement, individual instruction and tutoring, subdivision of the existing math class into two components and pre-T.Y.P. math instruction may be possible remedies.

We were told two things about the study skills class - one, that it is very useful, the other, that it should be better integrated with the other classes in the T.Y.P. Some students felt that they were being spoon fed or "babied" while others felt it was vital.

It was suggested that a science class be added to the curriculum, but not all the students agreed that this would be desirable, and the Education Director and Instructors indicated that they would be concerned if the addition of such a class interfered with students' ability to bring their skills up to university standards in English and math.

Different opinions of the desirability of having the T.Y.P. students take a regular undergraduate class as an elective were also in evidence. Members of the Counselling and Psychological Services staff expressed the concern that this simply sets the students up for failure. On the other hand, students said that the elective enables them to get a first-hand sense of what university classes are like and to be part of the undergraduate student body. Instructors within the T.Y.P. also indicated that the elective is valuable because it gives students a taste of undergraduate life and makes them aware of the expectations they will be required to meet.

The class which was discussed the most during our consultations was the Black and Native Studies class. Students proposed that it be opened up to undergraduates and that it be offered for credit. Although some others echoed the suggestion that the class be accredited, current and former teachers within the programme said that it is preferable not to have T.Y.P. students study their history and culture in a competitive context at this stage in their academic careers. Everyone agreed that there should be one or more classes in Black and Native history in the undergraduate curriculum.

On balance, it was felt that many of the students who entered the T.Y.P. need to learn about their history and identity in the smaller and more secure context. To open the course up to the

general student body would force the T.Y.P. students to listen to the majority white student body discuss their Black and Micmac histories. They would be spectators and victims in an exploration of their heritage. We were told that many students need the present restricted class to come to terms with their own identity.

(v) The Staff

The people who met with us voiced many expectations of the staff of the T.Y.P., some of which are difficult to reconcile. On one hand, we were told that it is important that teaching within the T.Y.P. be provided by 'real faculty members'. Students were among the proponents of this view. The basis for this view appeared to be two-fold. First, the involvement of members of the faculty would make it clear that the T.Y.P. is not marginal. Secondly, such individuals have experience of teaching in other programmes at the university, and this is valuable to the T.Y.P. students. On the other hand, other people (including current and former teachers within the T.Y.P.) told us that the qualifications for being a faculty member at Dalhousie differ from those needed to be an effective teacher within the T.Y.P. Teaching within the T.Y.P. is more intense and personal, requires more cultural sensitivity, and is at a more basic level than that which takes place in most units of the university. Thus, regular faculty members are not necessarily the best people to teach in the T.Y.P.

Another point that was frequently made is that instructors within the T.Y.P. should be racial and ethnic role models for the students - and, preferably, from the province's Black and Micmac communities. Students, and educators and other people within the Black and Micmac communities stressed that students learn most quickly and easily from people who share their culture and who they can aspire to emulate.

Many people - both within and outside the University - told us that the appointments of teaching staff within the T.Y.P. do not reflect the amount of work required of them. In particular, the percentage of the instructors' time allocated to the T.Y.P. was described as too low. Instructors who are cross-appointed to other units of the University find that they are spending a disproportionate amount of time on the T.Y.P., and those who are part-time at the University find that the compensation they receive is meagre compared to their effort.

The problems created by the reduction of the T.Y.P.'s administrative secretarial position to a half-time appointment are evident to people both within and outside the University. We were told that the lack of a full-time position reduces not only the programme's internal efficiency and effectiveness, but also its responsiveness to people outside the university.

(vi) Location

Most people we met with were concerned that a permanent administrative home be found for the T.Y.P., but did not have strong views on what that location should be. One former instructor in the T.Y.P. described its early association with the Department of History as positive, and said that its move to Student Services had the effect of marginalizing it. Members of the current staff said that membership in the Faculty of Arts and Science had been beneficial in some respects, but produced negative budgetary consequences. It was felt that a physical and administrative home within Henson College would have a number of advantages, but that such a move would have to be carefully planned and accompanied by a commitment of resources to the T.Y.P. Although unable to comment on the appropriateness of a location within Henson College, the Education Directors and Counsellors of the Micmac Confederacy advised against a return to membership in one of the disciplinary Faculties.

vii) Resources

As was mentioned above, everyone who favoured the continuation of the T.Y.P. urged the University to give it sufficient resources to be effective. Some suggested that, with the resources currently available to it, the T.Y.P. is close to doing more harm than good. Among the areas of need (other than staff resources) most

frequently mentioned were tutors and counselling. Several years ago, the T.Y.P. had sufficient resources both to hire tutors for students who needed them and to engage Counselling and Psychological Services. We were told that it is crucial that funds for these purposes be restored. Other resource requirements that were identified in the course of our consultations were better classrooms, a more suitable building, and more access to computers.

(viii) Community Involvement

According to some people we spoke with, the T.Y.P.'s connections with the Black and Micmac communities have withered in recent years. The T.Y.P. Board no longer functions and lack of resources constrains interaction with the communities. The Education Director and Counsellors of the Micmac Confederacy said that they have been working closely with the T.Y.P. for the last year to good effect, but others suggested that the T.Y.P.'s relationship with the communities is far from what it should be. Greater community involvement and input was expected to be very beneficial for the programme itself. Among the specific benefits cited was the ability to draw upon role models from the Black and Micmac communities to assist the students.

We were clearly told in both private and public consultations that the original link between the T.Y.P. and the Black and Micmac communities has been lost. Not only has there been little

community input into policy making for the T.Y.P., there has been little use of valuable resources in the two minority communities. This view was more strongly expressed by the members of the Black communities. The people who spoke with us from the Mainland Confederacy of Micmacs, felt that their Counsellors had been more actively involved in recent years. There was universal agreement that on-going consultation with the affected communities is vital to the success of the T.Y.P.

e. Other Commitments Sought

A point made time and again in the course of our consultations was that the T.Y.P. is not a substitute for measures to increase Black and Micmac participation in other programmes of the University. It was argued that it is only by taking such measures that Dalhousie can become a truly positive force in the province's Black and Micmac communities and in the education system.

Most people who spoke with us addressed what Dalhousie could do to attract young Black and Micmac students into its undergraduate programmes and to counteract the barriers to education they face in the schools. The measures suggested to us included:

- a) a programme of outreach to Black and Micmac primary and secondary school students and their parents. We were told that Dalhousie could play an important role by encouraging students to consider and prepare for

university at a young age. It was suggested that the university take steps to enable both high school students and their parents to become familiar with the university environment before the former reach grade 12. Invitations to Open House, "parents' nights", peer recruitment and off-campus lectures were some of the means suggested.

- b) scholarships for Black and Micmac students. Many people suggested that the University structure its financial support to students in a way which supports and fosters academic achievement. The idea of granting scholarships to Black and Micmac students and of offering any student who failed to maintain the required grades the option to continue with an equivalent sum in loans, found widespread favour.
- c) an undergraduate class in the culture and history of Nova Scotia's Blacks and Micmacs.
- d) measures to encourage the development and hiring of Black and Micmac faculty members.
- e) university courses offered by Dalhousie at locations within the Black and Micmac communities. This would make Dalhousie less foreign to students from these communities, as well as their parents and support networks.

f. Other Access Programmes

While the T.Y.P. was at the centre of both our private and public consultations we were the beneficiaries of opinions on some of Dalhousie's other access programmes. The programme which received the most positive reviews was the Micmac Bachelor of Social Work Programme. One of the aspects of this Programme which was most frequently praised was its advisory community board which has been actively involved in the operations of the Programme. This involvement extends to matters of hiring faculty, setting curriculum and general matters of policy. Their model with respect

to community involvement has been followed in the Law School Programme.

The Law School's new Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs, while only launched on June 30, 1989, has been very positively received. The process by which it was created involved members of the Black and Micmac communities as well as University people and the Law School is committed to hiring a Black or Aboriginal Director for the Programme for the 1990-91 term. We were told that this is a positive development in two respects. First, access programmes should where possible, be directed by people who come from the target communities or at least the same racial group. Second, the Director will be a full-time and tenure-track member of the Law Faculty and as such will provide a role model for either Black or Aboriginal students in law and elsewhere. The value of Black and Micmac role models was stressed in most of our consultations. It is hoped that other professional faculties such as dentistry and medicine may pursue their own access programmes and we were told that the Law School has set an important precedent in this regard. The expectations for the Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs is high and the challenge is to deliver on the high promise of this initiative.

The genesis of the Law Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs also highlights the Micmac Professional Careers Project which, under the able direction of Cathy Martin, has spawned many

important professional programmes that are discussed in the previous chapter. It was the Careers Project which was involved in the original design of the Law Programme in 1986, although the most recent initiative came from Black Nova Scotians and the heightened consciousness of racial problems in the Nova Scotia justice system engendered by the Marshall Inquiry.

In the responses to our letters to the Deans of the various university faculties there were expressions of interest in faculties such as the Medical School, but some chose to respond briefly, or not at all. It should also be noted that the role of Henson College in promoting outreach programmes and access for non-traditional university students was praised in many of our public and private hearings. The nature of its past role is discussed in Chapter 3 and its proposed role in respect to the T.Y.P. programme in the recommendations which follow in Chapter 5.

Finally there was widespread agreement among those who spoke to the Task Force that there needed to be a wider range of access programmes at Dalhousie. The T.Y.P. should not be seen as the only route to Dalhousie for Black and Micmac students and it cannot meet the needs of all these students. There was less agreement upon where these new access programmes should be, but there was a strong view that professional schools such as Medicine and Dentistry are important areas for future development. The clear challenge to Dalhousie was to expand the range of its access programmes as well as the funding and quality of those it presently administers.

g. Lessons From What We Were Told

One of the main conclusions that we draw from what we were told is that a large number of people in both the Black and Micmac communities care deeply about the education of their children. Access to higher education is seen as an important way to gain a more equal place in Nova Scotian life. Another conclusion is that people are tired of studies and recommendations which collect dust. They want to see concrete action to reduce the barriers that confront Black and Micmac children.

Consultation with the Black and Micmac communities and a genuine effort to listen to what they have to say, are vital to the credibility of any access programmes at the university level. Not only must this consultation be meaningful, it must be on-going. If the university does not know the needs and aspirations of the Black and Micmac communities, how can it properly implement programmes to assist them in coping with university life?

In consulting with Nova Scotia's Black and Micmac populations, it is not enough to invite some representatives to come onto the campus. The university's agents and emissaries must go into the communities and seek their opinions, on their own turf. This is not only a matter of courtesy and respect for these communities, but also an excellent way to build bridges to the university. It is also a wonderful opportunity for university decision makers to

get a fresh perspective on problems. The insights of the people who spoke with us set the stage for the recommendations which follow.

## V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the course of our consultations within the University and the Black and Micmac communities, a wide range of issues was raised and suggestions advanced. The deadline for the submission of our report has precluded us from exploring most of these in the detail they deserve. Thus the strategy recommended by the Task Force is limited to articulating the basic framework and components for promoting Black and Micmac participation in the University's programmes.

To realize the objective of making Dalhousie a genuinely more accessible institution for indigenous Black and Micmac students, we acknowledge that the process started by this Task Force and other initiatives referred to above must continue. This is necessary both to answer the many questions raised by the interested communities and to allow time for the difficult task of bringing about change at the University.

Despite these caveats we believe that the directions and framework outlined are essentially the correct ones.

### 1. Problems Arising From Dalhousie's Current Approach

We emerged from our consultations deeply concerned that Dalhousie may be unintentionally reinforcing the problems

experienced by Black and Micmac people in the province's education system. The source of the problem, as we see it, is the fact that the University has, to date, concentrated its support for Black and Micmac students primarily in the Transition Year Programme - a programme widely perceived to be marginal. This focus on the compensatory aspects of education for the province's Black and Micmac people does not make a great deal of sense in terms of Dalhousie's role in the regional higher education system. And it has effects which are perverse. It means, for example, that Dalhousie reaches out to the Black and Micmac communities, not to promote its undergraduate, graduate and professional programmes, but to create awareness of the T.Y.P.! It means that the University offers more resources and support to Black and Micmac people who do not meet its admission criteria than it does to those who do! As was pointed out to us on several occasions, this hardly fosters educational achievement. Two things are seriously wrong with it.

The first is that it may steer into the Transition Year Programme students who should be going into first year. Estimates of the extent of this problem vary greatly. We heard many anecdotes from members of the community about young Black people going into the T.Y.P., not because they were unprepared for university, but because they needed the financial support it

provides.<sup>87</sup> On the other hand, members of the T.Y.P. staff say that they try to ensure that students capable of entering first year directly are not accepted into the programme, and that very few of the students they accept demonstrate that they might have done so. In their view, the number of Black students, in particular, who say that they entered the T.Y.P. for financial reasons attests more to the stigma associated with the programme than to flaws in the admission process. In our view, even if only a very small number of students are steered into the T.Y.P. for financial reasons - or because a guidance counsellor hears about a programme at Dalhousie for Black and Micmac students and says: "this must be for you!" - the number is too high. To the extent that Dalhousie's practice of concentrating resources for Black and Micmac students in the T.Y.P. diverts students into that programme, it contributes to the marginalization of members of those communities.

Unintentional steering of students into the T.Y.P. would be serious even if the programme were perceived as part of the mainstream of the University - but it is not. On the contrary, the T.Y.P. is believed by many, if not most, members of its student body, its staff and of the Black and Micmac communities to be marginal to the University. To some extent, this is a reflection of reality: a programme designed to prepare people for university is inevitably on the margin of a university. But the widespread

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<sup>87</sup> Native students eligible for funding from the Department of Indian Affairs would not face the same dilemma.

perception that the Transition Year Programme is marginal is also in part attributable to the budgetary cutbacks and lack of concerted administrative attention which the programme has experienced during the 1980s. Most units of the University are suffering the consequences of financial restraint, but it is arguable that - owing to its small size, its structure and its unique mission - the Transition Year Programme has been particularly hard-hit. We believe that the Programme has been left with insufficient resources to be effective. The budgets for recruitment and tutorials have been eliminated, the programme can no longer afford the services of the University's counselling staff, it has insufficient administrative and secretarial support and, most seriously, it is unable to employ qualified teaching staff on a basis which would enable them to give their students the attention they deserve. The overall effect has been to weaken the ties between the Transition Year Programme and other units of the University and to send students, staff and others associated with the programme the message that the activities in which they are engaged are unimportant. This has been reinforced by the fact that the programme's extraordinary nature has made it difficult for the University to find an appropriate administrative home for it, and that it has been 'parked' in one location after another. Without sustained administrative support and with insufficient resources, the Transition Year Programme has indeed drifted onto the periphery of the University. It is the view of this Task Force that by allowing this to happen, Dalhousie has replicated at the

post-secondary level the situation which many students in the Transition Year Programme experience in the province's schools.

The University's practice of concentrating resources for Black and Micmac students primarily in the T.Y.P. is problematic for a second reason. Even if it doesn't actually divert qualified students from entering first year directly, it may discourage high school students from obtaining the necessary qualifications. According to Kathy Knockwood, Education Director for the Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs, the T.Y.P. is becoming known among high school students as the "back door to university". They come to believe that 'it's okay to fool around in grade 12 because, even if you fail, you can always get into university through the T.Y.P.'. This, in itself, would seriously undermine efforts to encourage academic achievement. Even more disturbing is the possibility that, by offering the T.Y.P. in its current form, Dalhousie is suggesting to the young Blacks and Micmacs that it doesn't expect them to aspire to or qualify for its degree programmes. In either case, the effect of Dalhousie's focus on the compensatory aspects of education for Black and Micmac people is to undermine efforts to encourage achievement within the schools.

We recognize that the focus is changing - with the introduction of the Micmac Bachelor of Social Work Programme, the Certificate Programme for Community Health Representatives, and the Law School's new Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs - and we

applaud that change. However, since the latter programme is very new and the former ones are offered under contract, we are not convinced that these developments signal a fundamental change in the University's approach. We believe strongly that such a change is called for.

## 2. A New Approach

Dalhousie's new approach to the education of Blacks and Micmacs should avoid the problems arising from a disproportionate emphasis on the T.Y.P., by capitalizing on the University's distinctive capabilities and features. These include not only its programmes of graduate and professional education, but also its size and reputation. These could make Dalhousie a powerful force in encouraging and supporting Black and Micmac secondary students in the pursuit of higher education. In sum, we advocate a role for Dalhousie in the education of the province's Black and Micmac people which complements the University's particular mission, rather than consisting of things which other institutions do, or could do, as well or better. The essence of this role should be to encourage and assist Black and Micmac people to enter and successfully complete the University's programmes, and particularly those which no other Nova Scotia university offers or could offer.

Fulfilment of this role will require a strategy with four basic components:

- a. encouraging and assisting indigenous Black and Micmac people to enter and complete the University's undergraduate degree programmes;
- b. restructuring and revitalizing the Transition Year Programme;
- c. promoting Black and Micmac participation in professional programmes.
- d. developing a university policy on educational equity, race relations, and affirmative action in education which complements Dalhousie's employment equity through affirmative action policy.

We explore what each of these components will entail in the sections which follow.

a. Promoting Black and Micmac Participation in Undergraduate Programmes

Three of the barriers to higher education we heard most about in our consultations were lack of information and encouragement, lack of money and lack of support. It is obviously not in Dalhousie's power to eradicate these barriers, but we believe that the University can assist Nova Scotia's Black and Micmac people to overcome all three.

1(i) Outreach and Recruitment

We were told in the course of our consultations that many Black and Micmac students within the province's schools are not told about university programmes or the occupational and personal opportunities to which they give rise. Moreover, they are not encouraged to believe that these programmes also are intended for them. In our view it is appropriate for Dalhousie and other Nova Scotia universities to provide the information and encouragement which these students currently lack. It will not be sufficient to rely on reaching Black and Micmac students through regular high school liaison and recruitment channels, because most children decide whether or not to pursue a path which leads to university long before grades 11 or 12. Efforts are therefore required to reach students as early as elementary school and no later than junior high. We suspect that printed information or standard presentations will not be enough. Real encouragement will involve enabling prospective students to become familiar with the campus and to interact with current students and alumni from their communities. It is unlikely to be sufficient to contact the students alone. Recruitment efforts should also involve raising awareness among parents and the larger community of what the universities have to offer their children. We recommend that:

- 1 (a) Dalhousie mount a programme of outreach and recruitment within the province's Black and Micmac communities.

This programme should be coordinated by the Registrar's Office as part of the University's larger recruitment effort and should comprise features such as:

- (i) the involvement of Black and Micmac students and alumni in recruitment efforts;
- (ii) "parents' nights" in Black and Micmac communities;
- (iii) invitations to campus functions such as Open House;
- (iv) "scholarships" to attend Mini-University and the Summer Orientation programme.

Some of the resources that the Registrar's Office will want to draw upon to assist in outreach and recruitment are the Community Outreach and Development Unit of Henson College and the Transition Year Programme.

1(ii) Financial Incentives and Assistance

However strong their desire to come to Dalhousie, many Blacks and Micmacs would be precluded for financial reasons from doing so. The problem is not simply lack of funds, but fear of debt - fear justified by appallingly high Black and Micmac unemployment rates. It is particularly acute for Micmacs who are ineligible for federal funding and for Black students who graduated from grade 12 with less than a 75% average and are therefore ineligible for a scholarship from the Black Incentive Fund. In order to assist some of these people to come to Dalhousie, we recommend that:

1 (b) the University establish a number of renewable scholarships for Blacks and Micmacs.

Any students who did not maintain grades sufficient to keep their scholarships should have the option of completing their programmes with loans of equivalent size.

In addition, we recommend that:

1 (c) the Awards Office ensure that Black and Micmac students in financial difficulty have access to bursary funds.

The University could also assist Black and Micmac students to overcome the financial barriers they face by helping to arrange on-campus summer employment opportunities, for example under the SEED programme of the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, and off-campus job placements through alumni and other employer contacts. We recommend that:

1 (d) the Vice-President (Student Services) seek to arrange summer and part-time employment for Black and Micmac students.

The types of employment offered should, wherever possible, give the students valuable professional or academic experience as well as connections within the University or the labour market.

1(iii) Student Support

Financial problems are by no means the only barrier to a successful and enjoyable university career. The Black and Micmac students who met with us spoke eloquently of feeling isolated and powerless in an institution which is large, alien and difficult to comprehend. In these circumstances, it is crucial that they have a source of comfort and support. The benefits Native students reap from the services of the Native Education Counsellor are readily apparent. Notwithstanding the profound differences between the Black and the Micmac communities, we agree with the suggestion of members of the Black Canadian Students' Association that they would benefit greatly from a similar arrangement. We recommend that:

- 1 (e) the Vice-President (Student Services) arrange the appointment of a Black counsellor to provide advice and support to Black Canadian students on campus.

This person should have experience in both counselling and working with young Black Nova Scotians in a university or related environment. The Black counsellor should be a member of the Counselling and Psychological Services Staff.

One of the ingredients of the Native Education Counsellor's effectiveness are the physical surroundings in which she works. The availability of space for study and for socializing gives

Micmac students a niche within the University. Recognizing this, we recommend that:

1 (f) the Vice-President (Student Service) establish a resource centre for Black Canadian students on campus, comprising adequate space to meet, study, and house the students' Counsellor.

The presence on campus of the Native Education Counsellor is of great value to Dalhousie. Although funded by the Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs, the office contributes significantly to the success and experience of all Micmac students on campus. Indeed the value and effectiveness of the existing Native counselling operations can provide a model and should be reinforced in its present form. We believe that this contribution should be recognized by the University and recommend that:

1 (g) the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) provide adequate University facilities and services at no cost to the office of the Native Education Counsellor, thereby reflecting the value of that office's contribution to the University.

By encouraging and assisting Black and Micmac students to enter and complete its degree programmes, Dalhousie will supplant what has been described to us as a "segregated, band-aid approach" to education with an approach which fosters and supports the achievements of Blacks and Micmacs. However changes in the T.Y.P. itself are also required to correct the problems created by the way in which it is currently offered. In the section which follows, we look at the nature of those changes.

b. The Future of the Transition Year Programme

In the course of our consultations, a number of very fundamental criticisms of the T.Y.P. were expressed. It was described as the "back door" to university for Blacks and Micmacs, as a "segregated, band-aid" approach to education, and as an excuse for the failures of the school system. We were told that its existence undermines efforts to encourage Black and Micmac students to achieve academically in the schools, and that a university is not the place to prepare students for university. Although we find these concerns persuasive, we believe that the measures proposed above for encouraging and assisting students to enter and complete degree programmes by the "regular route" will substantially alleviate them. We also believe that the day has not yet arrived when all Black and Micmac students can enter degree programmes directly. Even if the experience of Blacks and Micmacs in the primary and secondary schools improved dramatically, there would be many people who wanted to resume their education after having been out of school for some time. Although universities are probably not best equipped to prepare students for university, the T.Y.P. does give these people educational opportunities unavailable elsewhere in the local area. For all these reasons, we recommend that:

2 (a) Dalhousie commit itself to offering the Transition Year Programme as a programme of access to university for indigenous Black and Micmac people for a period of at least ten years.

That said, we are convinced that it is of utmost importance that the T.Y.P. not be a "back door" to university for Black and Micmac students. The T.Y.P. staff has tried to ensure that students are not diverted from regular admission, but - if what we have heard during our consultations is correct - their efforts have not been completely successful. The only way we can see to ensure that the motivation of Black and Micmac high school students to qualify for and seek regular admission is not undermined is, as proposed by the Micmac Confederacy and many of the members of the Black community who were involved in the early years of the T.Y.P., to limit admission to the T.Y.P. primarily to mature students.<sup>88</sup> We therefore recommend that:

**2 (b) the University make the Transition Year Programme an access programme principally for mature students.**

This would require intensified recruitment within the Black community and changes in the curriculum (such as redesign of the math component). Many presenters told us that the T.Y.P. was originally intended for mature students so this recommendation might return it to its roots.

While the issue was not directly raised in the presentations to the Task Force, the Director of the Transition Year Programme asked that we address the question of who should have priority in

<sup>88</sup> People who are at least 23 years of age and have been out of school for at least 4 years.

admission to the programme. More specifically, he has sought guidance about whether it is appropriate to admit a non-indigenous (outside of Nova Scotia) Black or an aboriginal student other than a Micmac student to the T.Y.P. At present there appear to be no clear guidelines or direction on this issue. Dr. Rans did not advocate a particular position, but merely sought guidance.

At a June 28th information meeting at the North Branch Library in Halifax on the Dalhousie Law Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs, Jean Knockwood suggested that the priority of aboriginal applicants should be based upon region of origin-that Micmacs be given first preference, Malecites from New Brunswick, second; and only if neither of these groups had qualified applicants, should aboriginal people from elsewhere in Canada be admitted.

In a time of limited resources and limited spaces in access programmes, it appears sensible to first meet the needs of Nova Scotians, secondly Atlantic Canadians and thirdly Black and aboriginal people from other parts of Canada. This is not to deny the clear benefits to the T.Y.P. of having perspectives from outside the province, but the key point is that the number of available spots is limited. As elaborated in Chapter 2 of this Report, the history of Blacks and Micmacs in Nova Scotia does justify the kind of affirmative action which gives them a preference - even over other dispossessed groups.

Accordingly we recommend that the limited spots in the T.Y.P. should be allocated in accordance with the following guideline.

2 (c) First priority for the position in the T.Y.P. should be given to indigenous Blacks and Micmacs. If positions are vacant after all qualified members of the foregoing groups have been accommodated, they should go to Blacks and Aboriginal people from Atlantic Canada. If after these four groups have been accommodated, there are still positions, Black and Aboriginal students from elsewhere in Canada should be considered.

Whether or not the T.Y.P. is made into a programme for mature students, three basic things will be necessary to enable it to be effective over the next ten years. They are additional resources, integration into the University, and expanded community ties and support. The following sections address what is needed in each of these areas.

#### 2(i) Resources

It is clear from our consultations within and outside the University that cutbacks in the resources available to the T.Y.P. have seriously eroded its effectiveness. A significant number of those with whom we spoke expressed the view that, with the resources currently available to it, the T.Y.P. is not only ineffective but counterproductive. All were of the opinion that if Dalhousie is going to offer T.Y.P., it should do it right. We agree and, therefore, recommend that:

2 (d) Dalhousie commit itself to supporting the Transition Year Programme at a level consistent with the effective performance of its role.

The T.Y.P.'s most important resource is its staff. We have found its current members to be highly committed to the Programme, in spite of the very demanding nature of the work and the lack of apparent support from the University. They are involved in offering a programme which is in many respects more demanding and intense than most of the University's teaching programmes. To succeed in preparing its students for university, the T.Y.P. must give them much more personal attention and intensive instruction and counselling than is common in most departments. The different classes and other components of the programme must be tightly integrated to enable the students to reap their full benefits. The programme as a whole must bridge the cultures of the students and that of the University. Even the administrative and clerical requirements of the programme are unusually intense.

In our view, the current staffing of the programme does not reflect this. Although the members of the staff appear to be meeting the demands upon them as best they can, their appointments and compensation levels do not reflect the extent of their effort. This gives rise to feelings of exploitation and much remains undone. In order to address this, we recommend that:

2 (e) the appointment of an Administrative Secretary for the programme be restored to a full-time basis;

2 (f) the Transition Year Programme have both a director (with a half-time appointment) and an assistant director (with a full-time appointment);

2 (g) the appointments of teaching staff within the Transition Year Programme recognize (in terms of time commitment, remuneration, qualifications and experience) the multiplicity and intensity of the instructional, advisory, administrative and cross-cultural demands on them; and

2 (h) a member of the staff of Counselling and Psychological Services - preferably a Black or Micmac - be cross-appointed to the Transition Year Programme in order to offer the Study Skills Class, to participate in instructional development and coordination, and to be a source of advice and support to students.

It also will be necessary to give the staff of the programme additional resources in order to enable them to perform their work effectively. We recommend that:

2 (i) the budget for the Transition Year Programme be increased in recognition of the need for effective recruitment, individual tutoring, and staff training and to provide financial support for more than one "non-status" Native student.<sup>89</sup>

The space and other resources required by the programme will be touched upon below.

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<sup>89</sup> The TYP is currently able to provide support for ten Black students and for one Native student who is ineligible for funding from the Department of Indian Affairs. Other Native students accepted into the programme must qualify for such funding.

2(ii) Integration

The argument made most frequently in the course of our consultations, especially by students, was that the T.Y.P. should be more closely integrated into the University. The perception that the T.Y.P. is marginal arises from a number of factors. Some are unavoidable, given that the purpose of the T.Y.P. differs considerably from that of other units of the University, but in our view, many others can be addressed and new ties can be forged.

Although the fact that the T.Y.P. reports to the Vice-President (Academic and Research) does enable it to get senior administrative attention, we believe that it also contributes significantly to the programme's sense of isolation and marginality. It means that the T.Y.P. is not part of a group of programmes, departments or other units and that its staff and students are relatively isolated within the university. Because of the demands on the Academic Vice-President, it also means that the programme does not receive the level and continuity of attention that it should.

There are really four possible alternative locations for the T.Y.P.: the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, the School of Education, Henson College of Public Affairs and Continuing Education, and Student Services. The option of linking the T.Y.P. with the School of Education was explored in 1986, and we do not think that it should be pursued again. Those who addressed the

subject during our consultations feared that linking T.Y.P. with Student Services would reduce its academic content and reinforce its marginal status. Although some early participants in the T.Y.P. looked with favour on its original connection with the Department of History, people with experience of the T.Y.P. when it was part of the Faculty of Arts and Science tended to feel that to put the T.Y.P. in a Faculty is to force it into an inappropriate mould. We agree with the latter concern and believe that the best option is for the T.Y.P. to become part of Henson College. Our reasons for believing this are that:

- a. Henson College is responsible for access programmes in the University, such as Explorations, and looks out for the interests of mature and part-time students at the University;
- b. the College's responsibilities for community outreach and continuing education are complementary with those of the T.Y.P.;
- c. the Native Education Counsellor and the Micmac Professional Careers Project are located within the College; and
- d. Henson College is the only Faculty of the University governed by a Board on which members of the external community are in the majority.

For these reasons, we recommend that:

- 2 j) the Transition Year Programme become part of Henson College of Public Affairs and Continuing Education, reporting to the College's Dean, and through him to the Vice-President (Academic and Research).

In order to take advantage of the capacity for responsiveness built into the College's structure, we also recommend that:

**2 (k) representatives of the Black and Micmac communities be appointed to the Board of Henson College at the earliest possible opportunity.**

In our view, this change in the T.Y.P.'s location should be accompanied by a budget safeguard and by counterbalancing links to departments outside the College.

Henson College operates with a single envelope which it distributes amongst its operating units. At the end of the fiscal year any unit surpluses are first used to subsidize deficits in other units or to retire past debt. Appropriate as that is, we think that the T.Y.P.'s entry into the College will be smoothest if other units are neither required to subsidize it, nor subsidized by it. The former possibility might make the College's other units less receptive to the T.Y.P.'s presence than they would otherwise be. The latter one would create suspicion that the College saw in the T.Y.P. a source of funds. To avoid either of these perceptions from arising, we recommend that:

**2 (l) the budget of the Transition Year Programme be separate from those of other units in Henson College.**

One disadvantage of making the T.Y.P. part of Henson College is that it may be seen as taking the programme further away from

the mainstream of the University, namely the academic departments. In our view, the most effective way of making links between the T.Y.P. and departments is through cross- or joint appointments. Such appointments benefit the individuals involved by giving them an academic home within the University and enabling them to interact with colleagues. They benefit the programme by enabling it to draw upon the resources and support of other departments. We would also argue that they benefit the departments, because of what can be learned from the educational process which takes place at the T.Y.P.. Finally, such cross- or joint appointments benefit the T.Y.P. students because they will have some assurance that their teachers speak from a broad experience of the university. This line of reasoning leads us to believe that an effective step in integrating the T.Y.P. into the University would be to ensure that the director is a member of an academic department. The obvious problem with this, in the short run, is that the he or she would be unlikely to be an indigenous Black or Micmac. In this respect, the desire of the T.Y.P. students and of members of the Black and Micmac communities that the T.Y.P. be integrated into the University is at odds with their desire that the programme's directors be minority community role models.

In our view, the desirability of having a director of the T.Y.P. who is a member both of the academic community and of either the Black or Native community justifies a new appointment. We recommend that:

2 (m) the Vice-President (Academic and Research) initiate a search for a Black or Native Director of the Transition Year Programme with academic credentials which would justify cross-appointment to an academic department.

If the University is unable to attract a Black or Native candidate with these academic credentials to the Directorship of the T.Y.P. at this point in time, we recommend that:

2 (n) the Vice-President (Academic and Research) initiate the appointment of a faculty member who has worked with the Black and/or Micmac communities to the Directorship on a half-time basis for a period of three years, and then search again.

Once the new Director is in place, we recommend that:

2 (o) a search be initiated for an Indigenous Black or Micmac to serve as Assistant Director for the Transition Year Programme on a full-time basis.

In order to further strengthen the ties between the T.Y.P. and academic departments, we recommend that:

2 (p) the Vice-President (Academic and Research) assist the Transition Year Programme in arranging cross- or joint appointments with academic departments for members of its teaching staff.

It is important that not only the staff, but also the students in the Transition Year Programme, feel that they are full members of the University community. The T.Y.P. students have told us that

one reason they do not feel that way at present is that they are taught in classrooms which are too small or otherwise unsuitable and out of the way. Assigning better and more central classrooms to the T.Y.P. would be a simple but effective way of improving the students' morale, so we recommend that:

**2 (q) those responsible for classroom scheduling ensure that suitable classrooms are made available for instruction in the Transition Year Programme.**

The students will also be well-served if the T.Y.P. is better integrated with general University services and functions. At the present time, the Micmac students' sense of being part of the University is enhanced by participation in the activities sponsored by the Native Education Counsellor. We hope that the resource centre and Counsellor for Black students recommended above will fulfil the same integrating function for them.

There is also potential for improvement in the areas of recruitment, admissions and orientation. Although the T.Y.P. will have to engage in its own recruitment efforts, especially insofar as it seeks to attract mature students, these should be coordinated with those of the Registrar's Office, and the T.Y.P. should be presented as but one of a number of options at Dalhousie for Black and Micmac people. Greater coordination is likewise desirable in the admissions processes. In particular, we suggest that all

applicants be considered for admission either as regular or as mature students, before being considered for admission to the T.Y.P.. This would ensure that all who are qualified to enter first year directly do so. We recommend that:

2 (r) the Registrar and the Assistant Director of the T.Y.P. take steps to further integrate the recruitment and admission processes of the undergraduate Faculties and the T.Y.P..

2 (iii) Community Connections

Although the primary purpose of the T.Y.P. is to prepare its students for university, the university alone cannot give them what they need to succeed. The input and support of the Black and Micmac communities are vital. Restoration of the staff and other resources available to the T.Y.P. will in itself allow the programme to forge ties with the two communities. In addition, we recommend that:

2 (s) an advisory board be established for the Transition Year Programme, consisting of representatives of the Black and Micmac communities, particularly educators, the University, and the T.Y.P. Students' Association.

Individuals from outside the University should be in the majority. The Board should elect its own chair, meet regularly, and offer advice on all major aspects of the programme such as admissions, curriculum, hiring and funding.

2 (iv) Policy Direction

In both private and public presentations to the Task Force the Director and staff of the T.Y.P. asked for some direction on the objectives of the programme. One of the frustrations for those who have worked within the T.Y.P., is that there are many conflicting expectations about what should be happening. In many instances the Black, Micmac and university communities all have quite different views about the proper role for the T.Y.P. Some see the T.Y.P. as a means to compensatory education, others see it as a training ground for social activism, while still others see it as a place to develop the self-esteem and the identity of the students. Many see it as being designed for all three purposes and many more.

In our view, the primary purpose of the T.Y.P. is to enable students to succeed in regular undergraduate programmes. This statement does not mean that the T.Y.P. should seek only to instill academic skills.

Nor is it an attempt to diminish the accomplishments of people who entered the T.Y.P. and either did not complete it or completed it, but did not pursue further university education. Many of these people went on to become leaders in their communities, and their success is as great as that of other T.Y.P. students who subsequently earned university degrees. The primary consideration, as we see it, is that the T.Y.P. is particularly well-equipped to

prepare people for university, whereas other organizations and groups are as good as or better than it can be at enabling people to succeed in other ways.

That said, we have not been able to spell out in the time available to us the specific policy implications of this general purpose. We therefore recommend that:

2 (t) the advisory board recommended above, assist the T.Y.P. in developing a detailed set of policies conducive to attainment of the goal of enabling students to succeed in regular university programmes.

c. Promoting Participation in Professional Programmes

Dalhousie offers many professional programmes which are unique in the province and in the region. Whereas many Maritime universities can and should promote Black and Micmac participation in undergraduate programmes, Dalhousie has a unique role to play in facilitating access to the professions. We think that Dalhousie should adopt this as a fundamental aspect of its role in the education of Black and Native people from the region.

The 1980s witnessed the development of two programmes at Dalhousie designed to meet the Micmac community's need for professional personnel i.e. the Bachelor of Social Work for Micmacs and the Certificate Programme for Community Health Representatives.

The fall of 1989 will mark the beginning of the Law School's programme for indigenous Blacks and Micmacs, which consists of adjuncts to the regular programme designed to contribute to the success of degree candidates from these communities. The Micmac Professional Careers Project, the objective of which is to promote the development of Micmac legal, health and management professionals, initiated (and administers) the Certificate Programme for Community Health Representatives and developed the initial proposal for the Law Programme, along with members of the Law School and later the Black community.

We recommend that:

3 (a) the Faculties of Medicine, Dentistry, and Management strike committees to identify:

(i) the extent of current Black and Micmac participation in their programmes;

(ii) measures which might be taken to enhance this participation;

(iii) needs of the Black and Micmac communities for training which is not provided in regular programmes;

(iv) means of meeting the above needs through specially-designed programmes, perhaps involving distance education; and

(v) potential sources of funding for these initiatives.

The Faculties should draw upon the expertise of the Micmac Professional Careers Project, people involved in the Micmac B.S.W. and the Community Health Certificate, and the Law Programme for

Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs, educators and leaders within the Black and Micmac communities, and members of other professional Faculties.

We also recommend that:

3 (b) the senior administration of the University assist the Faculties to implement plans for increasing Black and Micmac access to the professions.

### 3. Complementary Initiatives

It is difficult to effect change at an institution as large and complex as Dalhousie. Time has not permitted us to devise a comprehensive strategy for making the University more responsive to the Black and Micmac communities. It is nevertheless vital that Dalhousie aim to develop an effective policy in which the needs of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs are addressed, promoted, valued, and integrated into the decision-making, teaching, and research process. A clear direction and commitment to the elimination of education barriers faced by Black and Micmacs at Dalhousie should be initiated and introduced to the communities Dalhousie serves. We recommend that:

4 (a) The senior administration give priority to the development of an effective overall process, implementation policy and strategic plan with special emphasis on the access of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs to Dalhousie.

The recommendations made above are all intended to enable Black and Micmac people to reap the benefits of what Dalhousie has to offer. Beneficial as these measures may prove to be, we believe that Dalhousie is more likely to become and remain responsive to their needs if members of the two communities hold positions of influence within the University. We therefore recommend that:

**4 (b) the membership of the Board of Governors include members of both the Black and the Micmac communities.**

However, it is equally important that there be indigenous Black and Micmac members of the University's faculty. A major obstacle to achieving this is the dearth of individuals who have managed to surmount the barriers to higher education and to obtain the necessary academic or professional qualifications. For this reason, we recommend that:

**4 (c) the Senior Administration assist and encourage departments and schools to recruit and hire Black and Micmac faculty members.**

**4 (d) Dalhousie establish a number of graduate fellowships for indigenous Blacks and Micmacs.**

This measure is desirable not only to assist Black students and Micmac students who do not have funding from the Department of Indian Affairs, but also because changes in federal financing of Native education threaten to impede all Micmac students from obtaining graduate degrees.

In addition to being represented on the Board and in the faculty, Black and Micmac communities should be in a position to provide input and advice to the University through advisory bodies.

We recommend that:

**4 (e) the Black and Micmac communities be represented on the new Community Relations Council.**

Making Dalhousie more responsive to the province's Black and Micmac people requires, not only that the latter participate in the University's decision-making and advisory bodies, but also that other members of the University community become more aware of their history and culture. In order to enable students to gain this awareness, we recommend that:

**4 (f) the Faculty of Arts and Social Science offer credit courses in the history and culture of indigenous Black and Micmac people.**

In order to make faculty members and, in particular, departmental advisors, more aware of the needs and experience of Black and Micmac students on campus, we recommend, as was suggested by the Black Canadian Students' Association, that:

**4 (g) the Office of Instructional Development invite the Black Canadian Students' Association and the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students Association to co-operatively develop and participate in a workshop for departmental advisors and other faculty members on the experience of Black and Micmac students at Dalhousie.**

Although our task is to make recommendations to the University, we heard a lot during our consultations about the deficiencies of the province's school system. Members of the Black and Micmac communities told us that it is beyond the power of this or any other University to remedy these deficiencies, but that Dalhousie should - at a minimum - ensure that it does not contribute to the problem by graduating teachers who behave in ways which are insensitive or racist. Just as the Marshall Inquiry has prompted the Law School to examine its own role in the province's legal system, recent racial strife in the school system should prompt the schools of Education at Dalhousie and elsewhere to question themselves. Since our purview is limited to Dalhousie, we recommend that:

**4 (h) the School of Education take steps to improve the cross-cultural and race relations education component of its teacher training programmes.**

We also think that the School of Education and Henson College in view of the latter's role in public affairs, community outreach and continuing education, should take the lead in initiating discussion and encouraging the study of the problems encountered by Blacks and Micmacs in the province's schools and universities. To this end, we recommend that:

**4 (i) Henson College and the School of Education organize a major conference on the experience of Blacks and Micmacs in the province's educational system which brings together students, educators, members of the Black and Micmac communities,**

representatives of the province's schools, universities and government, and others.

By sponsoring this conference, Dalhousie can not only advance its efforts to provide higher education to Nova Scotia's Blacks and Micmacs, but exercise leadership in the education system as a whole.

4 (j) Dalhousie explore the feasibility of offering credit and non-credit courses in the Black and Micmac communities to encourage future university participation. Every effort should be made to hire Black and Micmac instructors and to coordinate these initiatives with those of Henson College, the School of Education, and other universities and community colleges.

#### 4. Funding

Although we have not attempted to calculate the total cost of implementing our recommendations, we recognize that it will be substantial. Readers of this report who are aware of the extent of Dalhousie's financial difficulties may question whether our recommendations are realistic or even fair. Are we not raising expectations which Dalhousie cannot afford to meet? Might we not sow the seeds of resentment by recommending that resources be reallocated to support for Black and Micmac students at a time when faculty salaries are not nationally competitive, student services are thinly stretched and staff numbers are being reduced?

We recognize that Dalhousie's financial problems are severe and have produced frustration and strife within the University community and seriously undermined morale. We also appreciate that these circumstances make it difficult for the administration to reallocate large sums of money from existing uses to new activities. But this is not an excuse for inaction.

Developments at the provincial, national and international levels referred to in the early sections of this report have raised awareness of not only the desirability, but the social and economic necessity of ensuring that members of racial and ethnic minority groups in Canada are not relegated to the periphery of the economy and society. This increase in awareness is reflected in increased willingness on the part of governments and private agencies to provide funding for projects which improve the educational and employment prospects of socio-economically disadvantaged groups. The ability of the Law School to attract external financial support for its Programme for Indigenous Blacks and Micmacs is evidence of this.

Why, then, has external funding for the Transition Year Programme decreased in recent years? In our view, the primary explanation is not that external funds are unavailable, but that the University's lack of commitment to the T.Y.P. has undermined efforts to attract these funds. At least one federal department has indicated that it would be willing to provide financial

assistance to the T.Y.P. if there were evidence of a sense of direction and commitment from the University.

What we are asking, then, is that the University maintain and increase its commitment of operating funds to the education of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs and that it exhibit initiative and leadership in attracting additional external support. We recommend specifically that:

**5 (a) the senior administration provide leadership in raising funds for the measures recommended in this report which are needed to increase Black and Micmac participation.**

Although the uses to which external and operating funds are put will depend on the availability and interests of external sponsors, it is in general desirable for the University to devote its operating funds to activities which enhance the participation of Blacks and Micmacs in regular degree programmes. We recommend that:

**5 (b) the University increase its financial commitment to the education of indigenous Blacks and Micmacs and use its operating funds, to the greatest extent possible, to increase their participation in regular degree programmes.**

## **5. Implementation**

Consultation with interested individuals and groups within the Black and Micmac communities was the basis for this report and is

a practice the University should continue. The Black Canadian Students' Association and the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students' Association have indicated to the Task Force their desire to be consulted by the President concerning the contents of this report. We believe that this would be most appropriate and recommend that:

**6 (b) the President consult both the Black Canadian Students' Association and the Dalhousie University Aboriginal Students' Association about the recommendations made in this report.**

Although it would be inappropriate for us to attempt to prescribe the precise manner and timing of the implementation of our recommendations, we feel that it is important to provide a general time-frame. Our recommendation is that:

**6 (b) every effort be made by the appropriate administrators or units:**

- i) to provide the financial, social and other forms of support for undergraduate students recommended in section 1 above by September 1990 and to launch the suggested programme of recruitment and outreach in the fall of that year;
- ii) to reorganize and revitalize the Transition Year Programme by September 1990;
- iii) to develop plans for increasing Black and Micmac participation in the programmes of the Faculties of Dentistry, Management and Medicine by May of 1990;
- iv) to secure both Black and Micmac representation on the Board of Governors within one year;
- v) to establish graduate fellowships for indigenous Blacks and Micmacs by May of 1990;

- vi) to ensure that there are Black and Micmac members of the new Community Relations Council from the outset;
- vii) to provide credit courses in the history and culture of indigenous Black and Micmac people beginning in September 1990;
- viii) to arrange the suggested workshop for departmental advisors on the experience of Black and Micmac students during the academic year 1989/90;
- ix) to make improvements in the cross-cultural education and race relations component of Dalhousie's teacher training programmes by September 1990; and
- x) to sponsor a major conference on the experience of Blacks and Micmacs in the province's schools within one year of the submission of this report.
- xi) to articulate the University's role in the education of the region's Black and Micmac people in its mission statement, the statement of its role and capacity, and in other appropriate policy documents.
- xii) to develop a policy and strategic plan for educational equity, affirmative action in education, and race relations by May, 1990.

These findings and recommendations represent a broad outline of what must be undertaken by Dalhousie in order to effectively serve the Black and Micmac communities. Many details remain to be worked out and, therefore, implementation depends on the University community viewing this report as the basis for an on-going process.

The University must demonstrate its commitment to access for Black and Micmac students by putting into place the recommended measures and by continuing to evolve into a more open and caring institution. This is a challenge we think is fully consistent with the mission of Dalhousie University and its dedication to excellence.

VI. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Discrimination will likely always be here but like dusting a lamp in a hurry - you just dust around it.<sup>1</sup>

In this deceptively simple but elegant statement, Mrs. Eleanor Elms, a retired school teacher from Digby, Nova Scotia, raised a number of profound questions. Who is to do this dusting? Mrs. Elms herself stressed that Black and Micmac people will have to work harder than more privileged segments of Nova Scotian society and strive for the highest standards in education. We agree that there is no substitute for hard work in surmounting the barriers to university education in Nova Scotia, but the burden should not rest only with the students and their support networks in the Black and Micmac communities. Dalhousie University, the Nova Scotia Government and the majority white society must assist in dusting away the ugly residue of discrimination and racism.

Do we have the luxury of dusting in a hurry around the lamp and leaving the proper cleaning of the lamp to a future day? In light of the problems exposed by the Marshall Inquiry, the Cole Harbour High School controversy and the on-going confrontations between the Nova Scotia Government and the Micmacs, we think the answer is a resounding "no". Dalhousie University should lead the

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<sup>1</sup>Public presentation to Task Force by Mrs. Eleanor Elms, May 24, 1989 in Digby, Nova Scotia.

way in not only dusting the lamp of discrimination but also in setting new standards of cleanliness. It is hoped that this lead will be followed by the Nova Scotian and Federal governments and other social institutions, in a genuine effort to cleanse our society by reducing and ultimately eliminating barriers that deny full access to Nova Scotia's Black and Aboriginal peoples.

We are acutely aware that multi-faceted problems faced by Nova Scotia's Black and Micmac people will not be solved even if Dalhousie implemented all of the recommendations in this Report. Having set the context of our endeavour broadly, to include barriers to access at all stages of education and in other segments of Nova Scotia's institutional structure, we have targeted Dalhousie University's role in post-secondary education for prompt action. This is consistent with our mandate and the view that what is needed is not more broadly-worded policies but positive steps by Dalhousie to put its own house in order.

While it would make more sense to focus attention on the elimination of barriers to primary and secondary education, that is a task for another day. Our mandate is to recommend improvements for post-secondary education and this necessitates a top-down rather than bottom-up approach to compensatory education. There are also many other institutional structures with barriers to equality, but they will be addressed by the Marshall Inquiry and other such endeavours. To admit that we are only addressing one

aspect of a larger problem should not detract from the importance of taking constructive action.

Education is central to the hopes and dreams of Nova Scotia's Black and Micmac people and this underscores the wisdom of proceeding on this front. One lesson that we have learned in this process is the value, indeed the necessity, of consulting with the affected minority communities in designing and operating access programmes at Dalhousie. In order for such programmes to work there must be open channels of communication so we do not once again impose a white majority view of what Black and Micmac people need. The dangers of such an approach are tragically illustrated by the history of how Nova Scotia has "educated" its Micmac people. It is time for Dalhousie University to listen and to act. Let us give the final word to the Micmac poet, Rita Joe.

I Lost My Talk

I lost my talk  
The talk you took away.  
When I was a little girl  
At Shubenacadie school,

You snatched it away:  
I speak like you  
I think like you  
I create like you  
The scrambled ballad, about my word,

Two ways I talk  
Both ways I say,  
Your way is more powerful.

So gently I offer my hand and ask,  
Let me find my talk  
So I can teach you about me.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Rita Joe, Song of Eskasoni: More Poems of Rita Joe,  
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- Waterson, Karolyn. (1988). Comments on the transition year program unit review reports. Submitted to Dr. T. Stanley Cameron, Associate Dean, Dalhousie University.

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## APPENDIX A

### TASK FORCE ON ACCESS TO DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY FOR BLACK AND NATIVE PEOPLE

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE

As one element in the development of an overall programme of affirmative action at Dalhousie University, a Task Force has been established to address the University's role in the education of the region's Black and Native people.

The mandate of the Task Force is:

1. to review existing programmes and resources at Dalhousie which serve Native people and the Black community.
2. to consult with leaders and representatives of these two communities, with provincial and federal government officials, and within the university community.
3. to propose by June 30, 1989 a strategic plan whereby Dalhousie can most appropriately serve the needs of the Black and Native communities, and the role which the Transition Year Programme should play in the fulfilment of this plan.
4. to contribute to the evolution of an overall University policy on affirmative action and to the awareness of the University and the wider community concerning access to education.

February 24, 1989

APPENDIX B

PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS

1. Black Canadian Students Association  
March 28, 1989
2. Mr. Gerald Clarke  
Executive Director  
Black Educators Association  
May 15, 1989
3. Professor Brent Cotter  
Dalhousie University Law School  
May 1, 1989
4. Dr. Lesley E. Haley  
Chairperson  
School of Education  
Dalhousie University  
April 11, 1989
5. Mr. Burnley A. Jones  
Founding Member, Transition Year Programme  
April 11, 1989
6. Dean Ted Marriott  
Dean of Student Services (Retired)  
March 16, 1989
7. Micmac Bachelor of Social Work Advisory Committee  
May 10, 1989
8. Ms. Jackie Pace  
Co-ordinator  
Micmac Bachelor of Social Work Programme
9. Dr. Paul Pross  
School of Public Administration (M.P.A.)  
Dalhousie University  
June 28, 1989
10. Dr. Peter Rans  
Acting Director  
Transition Year Programme  
March 8, 1989

PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS

- 11. Ms. Glenda Redden  
Curriculum Department  
Nova Scotia Department of Education  
March 29, 1989
- 12. Mr. David States  
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission  
April 3, 1989
- 13. Ms. Verna Thomas  
Black United Front  
April 13, 1989
- 14. Professor Arnold Tingley  
Former Registrar of Dalhousie University  
March 22, 1989
- 15. Mr. Vanroy Tobbit  
Vice-Principal  
St. Stephen School  
May 1, 1989
- 16. Transition Year Programme Native Student Association  
April 12, 1989
- 17. Ms. Dawn Upshaw  
Dalhousie University student and former Transition Year  
Programme student  
March 17, 1989
- 18. Dr. Karolyn Waterson  
French Department  
Dalhousie University  
and  
Former Director  
Transition Year Programme
- 19. Dr. Bessa Whitmore  
Co-Chairperson  
Committee on Racial and Ethnic Affairs (C.O.R.E.A.)  
Maritime School of School Work
- 20. Ms. Ann-Marie Woods  
Transition Year Programme Student  
March 29, 1989

APPENDIX C

GOVERNMENT CONSULTATIONS

Provincial

Mr. Allan Clark  
Co-ordinator of Indian Affairs  
Nova Scotia Department of Community Services

Mr. Joe Clark  
Deputy Minister  
Nova Scotia Department of Advanced Education and Job Training

Dr. P. Anthony Johnstone  
Executive Director  
Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission

Mr. Gerald MacCarthy  
Chairman  
Nova Scotia Council on Higher Education

Ms. Kathy Swenson  
Executive Director  
Youth Initiatives  
Nova Scotia Department of Advanced Education and Job Training

Federal

Mr. Gilbert Daye  
Social Development Officer  
Nova Scotia Regional Office  
Secretary of State of Canada

Ms. Sylvia Hamilton  
Acting Regional Director  
Nova Scotia Regional Office  
Secretary of State of Canada

Ms. Janice Walsh-Ward  
Social Development Officer  
Nova Scotia Regional Office  
Secretary of State of Canada

APPENDIX D

ORAL PRESENTATIONS TO THE TASK FORCE

Dalhousie University

March 28, 1989

- Black Canadian Students Association

Dalhousie University

April 12, 1989

- Dr. Bessa Whitmore  
Maritime School of Social Work
- Ms. Theresa Muise  
Aboriginal Students' Association
- Transition Year Programme Instructors/Staff
  - Mr. Leslie Choyce, English
  - Mr. Alan Surovell, Mathematics
  - Ms. Jane Hester, Study Skills
  - Ms. Susan Clarke, Administrative Secretary
- Ms. Judy Hayashi and Ms. Sandy Hodson  
Psychological and Counselling Services

Halifax - Bloomfield School

May 2, 1989

- Dr. John Arneaud  
Former Medical Director, Camp Hill Hospital

Dartmouth - Black Cultural Centre

May 3, 1989

- Ms. Merlita Williams  
Dalhousie University Law School
- Dr. B. Pachai  
Director, Black Cultural Centre
- Mr. Hamid Rashid
- Mr. Davies Bagembire  
Parent/Students' Association of Preston
- Mr. Wayne Desmond

Watershed Association Development Enterprises (W.A.D.E.)

- Mr. Irvine Carvery  
Former T.Y.P. Student
- Mr. Robert Upshaud  
Teacher, Graham Creighton Junior High School
- Mr. Calvin Ruck  
Nova Scotia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People
- Mr. Wilfred Jackson  
Executive Director, The Nova Scotia Home for Coloured Children

Digby - Digby Fire Station

May 24, 1988

- Mrs. Eleanor Elms

Yarmouth - The Grand Hotel

May 25, 1989

- Computer Upgrading Students, Crawley's Management Training  
(Total Number of Students - 11)

Sydney - Keddy's Motel

May 31, 1989

- Ms. Heidi Marshall  
University College of Cape Breton Micmac Students' Association
- Dr. A.S. Ibrahim
- Mr. Clarence Smith  
Director of Education, Eskasoni School Board
- Father Vincent Waterman
- Mrs. Anita MacIsaac and daughter Aileen
- Mr. Brian Arbuthnot  
Director of Education, Wagmatcook Reserve
- Chief Deborah Robinson  
Acadia Band

Truro - The Stonehouse Inn

June 1, 1989

- Mr. Rod J. MacLennan  
Chairperson  
Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education - Nova Scotia
- Mr. Ralph Willis  
Education Chairman, Community Enhancement Association
- Mr. Leonard Byard
- Ms. Tina Jordan
- Ms. Kathy Knockwood  
Education Director, Confederacy of Mainland Indians
- Mr. Spencer Wilmot  
Education Youth Counsellor, Native Council of Nova Scotia

Halifax - Northend Library

June 7, 1989

- Ms. Lynn Jones  
President, T.Y.P. Alumni Association
- Mr. Burnley Jones  
Founding Member, T.Y.P.
- Mr. Dave Shannon, Ms. Kim Vance, Mr. Ken Green, and Mr. Darrell  
Bowden  
Dalhousie University Students' Association
- Dr. Barry Fox  
Teacher, Queen Elizabeth High School
- Mr. Noel Knockwood  
Micmac Friendship Centre
- Mr. Rodd Mapp

## APPENDIX E

### WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED BY THE TASK FORCE

- Choyce, Leslie, English Instructor, Transition Year Programme.
- Hayashi, Judith L. and Sandra Hodson. Counselling and Psychological Services, Dalhousie University, Presentation to the Educational Access Task Force. Dalhousie University: Counselling and Psychological Services.
- Sandi Howell, Pay Equity Officer, Equal Opportunities Department, Canadian Union of Public Employees.
- Jackson, Wilfred A., Executive Director, Nova Scotia Home for Coloured Children.
- Knockwood, Jean C., Native Education Counsellor, The Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs. Senate Committee on Affirmative Action in Education.
- Micmac Professional Careers Project, Submission to Task Force to Examine Access to Dalhousie for Black and Native People.
- Muise, Theresa, President, Aboriginal Students' Association, Dalhousie University. Native Students' Input (T.Y.P.),
- Rans, Peter, Acting Director, Transition Year Programme. Transition Year Programme,
- Sodhi, S. S., School of Education, Dalhousie University. T.Y.P. (Transitional Year Program), A Unique Program in Canada for Helping Powerless Youths (Black and Natives), Strategies of Making It a Success.
- Surovell, Alan, Mathematics Instructor, Transition Year Programme.
- Whitmore, Bessa, Co-Chair, Committee on Racial and Ethnic Affairs, Dalhousie University. Summary of Remarks (March 30, 1989),

APPENDIX F

STATISTICS ON T.Y.P.

<u>Ages</u>	Black				Native			
	18-19	20-22	23+	Total	18-19	20-22	23+	Total
<u>Year</u>								
1984	7	1	3	11	3	4	2	9
1985	3	5	2	10	1	4	5	10
1986	6	2	3	11	3	4	3	11
1987	6	4	1	11	2	3	2	7
1988	3	7	1	11	3	2	6	11

<u>Gender</u>	Black		Native	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
1984	3	8	5	4
1985	4	6	6	4
1986	3	8	2	8
1987	5	6	1	6
1988	5	6	5	6
Total	20	34	19	28

## Influence of the Dalhousie University Transition Year Program on the Work Patterns of Its Alumni

*Bernice Moreau and Peter Rans*

The idea for the Transition Year Program was first conceived in the fall of 1968. Many groups and individuals within the Black and Native communities, together with university groups such as the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students, pressed Dalhousie University to establish a program to meet the educational needs of Nova Scotian minority groups, particularly Blacks and Micmac Indians. In recognition that Black and Native students were proportionately and artificially underrepresented at the university, the Transition Year Program was established after a recommendation by an ad hoc university committee. The program began in September 1970 as a pilot project with an initial enrolment of twenty-three Black and Micmac students, according to the documents we have. (Burnley "Rocky" Jones, one of the early instructors in the program, believes this figure to be an underestimate and suggests that the initial intake was twenty-eight.)

Though some of these early students sought entrance to the Transition Year Program out of intellectual curiosity, most were motivated by the hope that post-secondary education would enhance their employment opportunities. The curriculum was initially comprised of (1) communication skills, (2) culture and community awareness seminars, (3) introduction to the student's group history (e.g., Black and Native history), and (4) a general mathematics course (later supplemented by individual lectures given by professors in sciences such as chemistry and biology). It appears that the curriculum was geared more to meeting the student's needs for better social- and community-oriented employment than for immediate entrance into the full range of undergraduate and professional degrees offered at Dalhousie University.

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Of the approximately 140 students who attended the Transition Year Program between 1970 and 1980, we have been able to determine that fifty individuals obtained undergraduate degrees, three obtained M.S.W.'s, one a Master of Education, and one an M.A. in sociology. Of the undergraduate degrees, twenty-eight were B.A.'s (mostly majoring in sociology), ten were B.Ed's, five were B.S.W.'s, four were B. Comm.'s, two were Bachelors of Physical Education and one was a B.Sc. We have also heard an unconfirmed rumour that one of our alumni completed a Ph.D. in Ontario. The figures I have just presented you with are what we know for certain; they represent a minimum. We have not always been able to find out whether a number of our former students completed degrees at other universities in Nova Scotia or in other provinces, or under different names when they married. The records at Dalhousie and other universities were not computerized or cross-listed until recently.

Our information has been largely obtained from the official records we do have access to, by word of mouth and by completed questionnaires. Understandably, many of our former students feel they have been overstudied and, like many people, do not enjoy filling out our questionnaires even when we are able to obtain their current addresses. In the past the understaffing of the program made this kind of background research virtually impossible, the people involved quite frankly focusing their energies on their teaching commitments. Even now it is still very difficult to find time for this research.

Occupationally, entrants seem to have been recent high school students, workers primarily employed in the service industries, or unemployed persons before they came to the Transition Year Program. Most of them were in the 18-20 age bracket. After they left the Transition Year Program, whether they completed university or not, those students we have been able to obtain information about have tended to concentrate in such occupations as human rights officers, R.C.M.P. officers, federal Outreach Program counsellors, teachers, data processors (Assembly of Nations), parole officers, training officers and education counsellors in the Department of Indian Affairs, Band counsellors, Band managers, chiefs, managers, and businessmen. The common thread in most of these careers is that they often involved service to the community either through community organizations or through federal, provincial and municipal departments providing services to the Black and Native communities.

The figures I quoted previously concerning the students' degrees suggest a concentration in disciplines such as sociology, psychology, history, social work, and education. These disciplines would naturally lead to the kind of occupations I just listed.

It is important to consider what a "successful student" means in the context of the Transition Year Program. Both in 1970-80 and now in 1986, simply adding up the degrees obtained by the individual students is an insufficient measure of what was achieved. The Transition Year Program must, by its nature, consider the needs of the Black and Native communities while also attempting to satisfy the academic requirements of the university of which it is a part. A successful student is one who:

1. completes a degree;
2. attends the Transition Year Program and either leaves part way through the year or finishes the Transition Year Program and decides not to go on to a first-year university program on the basis of first-hand knowledge and personal choice;
3. increases his or her skills in numeracy and literacy and, in response to community demand, chooses to apply these new skills to community organizations rather than to finishing a degree; and
4. strengthens and broadens his or her educational background, attends other vocational or post-secondary institutions, and/or returns to learning many years after being in the Transition Year Program.

It should be noted that some of the students of the years 1970-80 have often returned to university years after entering the Transition Year Program. This in turn makes anticipating their educational progress and timetable difficult. This delay in going on from the Transition Year Program is often directly attributable to lack of resources to finance a degree, and to a natural reluctance to take out loans that they are unsure of being able to repay.

In 1982, after a brief period when the university debated what to do with its pilot project, the Transition Year Program was restructured and became a department within the Faculty of Arts and Science. This enabled some of the staff to be given cross-appointments between their respective departments (English, Mathematics) and the Transition Year Program. The director was also appointed from an academic department within Arts and Science. To some degree this stabilized the program, because staff members were no longer placed in the position of regarding the Transition Year Program as volunteer work, often inadequately paid and with no contractual security.

The curriculum was revised to include core courses in Mathematics, English, Black and Native Studies, Student Skills, and one elective chosen from a variety of subjects in Arts and Science. This core curriculum was intended to enhance long-term job prospects and to place equal emphasis on access to science and professional degrees as well as to the more traditional arts and social science degrees previously pursued by Transition Year Program alumni.

These kinds of decisions, I think, are partially in response to changes taking place in the Black and Native communities. There is a growing desire to prepare students from these communities for careers in law, medicine, dentistry, public administration and other professions. The curriculum also reflects a tightening of university regulations in terms of grade point averages, earlier withdrawal dates without academic penalties, and a host of small changes intended to make university degrees more competitive because of growing enrolments and shrinking budgets. We have to prepare our students for this reality whether or not we approve of these developments. On the positive side, students who complete the Transition Year Program now have a greater range of potential degrees to choose from; they only have to do degrees such as sociology if they really want to, and

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many are exploring entry into equally valuable fields in which the Black and Native communities are still artificially underrepresented.

On the whole, the Transition Year Program places different academic demands on its students than its counterpart in the 1970s, since it emphasizes equal skills in core subjects such as Mathematics and English and Social Sciences. At the same time, the program continues to try to be responsive to community aspirations through means such as its Community Liaison Committee, and through its guest speakers from the Black and Micmac communities who serve as role models. To lose this dialogue with the communities it serves would be to lose an essential component of the program.

Over the last one and a half years in which I have been involved in the program, I have noticed an encouraging diversity of occupational ambition among the students. In addition, an increasing number of applications have come from mature students (those aged 23-50) who have applied to the program and been accepted. This trend mirrors what is happening in the current workforce where people change their careers two or three times during their working lives. Such flexibility within the changing conditions of the marketplace is only possible for people who have a variety of student skills, including a basic mastery of literacy and numeracy.

APPENDIX H

MULTICULTURALISM ON CAMPUS

Counselling and Psychological Services  
Dalhousie University

Judith L. Hayashi  
Sandra Hodson

presentation to the  
Educational Access Task Force

April 12, 1989

(Appendices to submissions on "Multiculturalism On Campus")

APPENDIX B

MULTICULTURALISM ON CAMPUS

Counseling and Psychological Services  
Dalhousie University

Appendix 2

Black and Native Student  
Presentations to the  
Atlantic Association of  
College and University  
Student Services

March 2, 1989

Saint Mary's University

**Presentation to the Atlantic Association of  
College and University Student Services  
"Responding to the Non-Traditional Student"  
March 2, 1989 Saint Mary's University  
Darrell Bowden, Dalhousie University  
President, Black Canadian Student Association**

Initially, I think that it would be important for me to give you some background on myself so that you can get a better understanding of the life of a Black Canadian Student at University.

Originally from New Glasgow, I am the second youngest of eleven children. My father has received grade 6 and is employed at Lavalin as a Machine Operator. My mother is a housewife and entrepreneur, who completed grade 7.

Being the second youngest of eleven, and witnessing the achievements of my siblings three of which graduated high school, two who were a few credits short of graduation, four who never completed high school, no one expected that I would attend University. Having achieved the goal of getting here, no one expected me to succeed.

In my case in high school I was encouraged to do academic courses so long as they were arts related and not sciences. I opted to do the academic courses I thought I would like and was encouraged, but more often than not discouraged with the idea that these courses were too difficult for me. In these cases teachers were pleased with mediocre performance and did not encourage me to excel. Few of my teachers believed in my determination to continue on in my academic career.

Assistance from my parents was to be unlimited in terms of their love and caring, for they wanted me to succeed, but they had no basis of which they could use to understand the step I had taken. Their feelings alternated from pride in their son the future psychiatrist to confusion of why I was leaving the family.

Once in University, when I visited home there was not alot of interest in what I was doing in terms of my educational advances. No one bothered to try to understand why I would want to or need to study on weekends. And the family certainly did not understand the need for quiet to do my studying. The concept of University held by my family, based on stories and TV programs, was that it was one big party. My father's only words of advice as I departed to enter Dal were "Do some studying, along with the partying."

As for my friends, they told me that they never knew that I was considering University after graduation and that I would miss years of fun partying at home. It's little wonder that I have lost touch with most of them. They all stayed home and took on

jobs, now we have little in common.

Poor high school academic preparation caused me to seek entrance into Dal by way of the Transition Year Program (TYP), a special one year program for Native and Black students who do not meet the regular entrance requirements.

TYP had both advantages and disadvantages. Being in an access program labelled me as someone who had a higher than usual chance of failure, and many people at the university considered us as not measuring up to the norm.

On the other hand, TYP offered a small supportive group of people of whom I could identify; skill development in Math (my weakest high school subject), English and Study Skills. Most importantly TYP offered for me, a opportunity to study Black history and culture through a Black history course, something to which I had never before been exposed. This course provided a strong sense of identity as a Black person, and as a result greater confidence and determination to succeed.

Not all of the Black Canadian students enter University through TYP and may for the first time find themselves thrust into a community predominantly white with them being the only Black person in many of their classes. This was no surprise to me for I had attended the rural schools of Pictou County, where my family represented the only Blacks, but to students from other areas such as Preston and Cherrybrook this maybe a shock, for these school areas are predominantly Black.

What is it like to be the only Black student in a class?

One of the first things I noticed, in my first year as a regular student when entering a class, classmates sometimes physically draw away from you as if you have some sort of contagious virus. Also, I witnessed that I was very often the last person chosen to participate as a lab partner or as part of a group. Not identifying with the group, that being the white students, striking up conversations seldom occurs. Therefore you feel very ISOLATED.

This isolation is amplified for many in Halifax, for many Black students live with family in the far side of Dartmouth. Commuting by bus takes 1 1/2 - 2 hours to get from home to campus, limiting use of campus resources and social activities.

Another complication of Black post secondary life is financial problems. Many of our families simply cannot afford to contribute any money to assist covering the costs, so many of us hold parttime jobs in addition to taking out student loans. The jobs have to occur with the loans, because if you live at home, you are not expected to need as much to live off of. This loans process is quite frightening because after completion of one the most complex application forms, there is not a guarantee that you

will be employed upon graduation, therefore the fear of not being able to pay back the money. If you think the job market is tough for white middle class students, imagine what the low income Black student faces.

Coming from areas where we are used to close contact with entire communities and close knit families makes the university bureaucracy very intimidating. At home, generally everyone is known to the other, creating the sense that everyone knows who does what to be able to assist when a problem occurs. You know where to go when looking for help in ironing out a wrinkle in the system. Then at University, you are confronted with tasks like completing student aid applications, reading the course calendar, and following the registration procedure - It would be easy to quit after the first week!!

An additional and more intimidating burden occurs in the classroom. As soon as a racial issue arises, you feel as though you are being put on the spot, everyone is staring in your direction. Often, you hear your professor lecturing with inaccurate information pertaining to Black issues and people. Here, often you will encounter subtle, or even open, racist remarks. You sit there and wonder whether or not to speak out, feeling alienated, inadequate, and intimidated by the professor. It seems as though in order for us to be equal we have to always be better.

Sometimes the pressure reaches such intense levels we often want to give up but we can't quit. We can't fail. We are often the first in the family or at times in the community, to attend university. Everyone, family and friend alike is counting on us to make them proud.

That's a bit about my experience and that of other Black Canadian students at University. It's not all bad, and in many cases we adapted and learned to cope within the already established system.

The factors which interfere with our comfort and achievement in this system are factors that I would like to highlight. In your small group discussions, I'd like for you to consider these issues:

1. Inferior and biased high school programs.

High school preparation is key in enabling students to succeed in university. Black students must be encouraged by counsellors to take academic courses and motivated to excel and expect to go on to university.

As student services professionals, are there ways in which you could influence teachers, counsellors and our parents, to set higher goals and expectations on us.

Contact with the University, especially for Black students, must be made long before they decide to attend, probably as early as junior high. This would allow them to experience and witness different aspects of University life, so as to make the campus more friendly and not as alien as many may think. Perhaps this could happen through funding of mini-university experiences.

## 2. Alienation on arrival at University

Black Canadian students need a support service designed with them in mind. Ideally this could take the form of a Black Student Center staffed by a Black Counsellor. This person could conduct a Black student orientation, organize a student association, connect students with remedial courses, tutoring, mentors and role models, provide student services, financial aid assistance, and assist with cutting the red tape.

It would provide a central meeting place where experiences as Black students could be handled, because all would be aware of where you are coming from and what you are dealing with. These are just a few of the basic ideas, many more could be connected.

Along this line, at Dalhousie we have the Black Canadian Students Association, a support group of students in all faculties that provides educational, cultural and academic education to both new Black students and to the entire University population as a whole.

## 3. Inadequate Student Supports

As I mentioned before, Black students typically come from a supportive family or community system, and may miss this at University.

Better use of available students services may well occur when students are personally introduced by someone in the area with whom they can identify; in this way they have a friend already there before the need arises.

Another important aspect of student supports is that student service staff must be skilled at cross cultural communication and counselling.

Training sessions, on these skills and Black culture could be set up. With a large enough Black population programs such as study skills or budgeting, might be set up for them as a group.

## 4. Stigmatization of students in access programs such as TYP

Black students do not want to feel they are inferior to

their white counterparts and therefore do not want to be involved in substandard programs. An important component of access programs is that they be quality programs accepted and supported by the University administration. Good public relations both inside and outside the University is also a necessity.

One aspect of this public relations program may include a mentor program, where graduates return both to serve as models for the current students and as evidence of the program's success.

5. Unavailability of courses on Black history and culture, specifically

TYP was a real eye opener for me. I had been raised and educated in predominantly white schools in the rural Pictou County, NS area. The only Blacks I encountered were those with whom I lived, brothers and sisters. TYP's Black Studies course opened a new world for me as a Black person, for it exposed me to an accurate and positive view of Blacks through history. I believe that such a course would also benefit non-Black students by providing a more realistic view of Blacks and eliminating the stereotypes.

Material presented in this course or any other must be accurate and honest. Professors should be encouraged to consult with or bring in Black experts to present the topics. Too often white professors do not recognize the bias in their resource materials.

6. Inadequate financial support for students who come from lower economic backgrounds

Too often low achievement of Black students is the result of study time being spent in parttime employment to make ends meet. Easing the financial burden will facilitate an increased number of Black graduating students. Financial situations being what they are (weak) leaves us nothing to fall back on. Scholarships and bursary programs designated to assist Black students will allow us to devote our best attention (time) to succeeding academically.

7. Lack of cultural sensitivity on the part of the administration, staff, faculty and students at the University

I've suggested earlier that different areas of the university would benefit greatly from workshops on cross-cultural communications, cross-cultural counselling, and Black culture. These could be reinforced by cultural events planned by the Black Canadian Students Association

- eg. - Martin Luther King, Jr. Night
- Black History Week

- Involvement with Cultural Awareness Youth  
Group of Nova Scotia Activities

Being Black Canadians, more specifically Black Nova Scotians, it is important that we are not to be categorized with all minorities or even other Blacks in the same terms. There is a significant difference between growing up as a Black majority in Africa than growing up as a Black minority with a slave history in Canada.

These are the issues the Black Canadian Students Association identified as relevant to Black student success in University. You may think of others, and I hope you do.

In your small group discussions, I hope you can find ways to develop practical solutions.

Thank You

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ed. - Martin Luther King, Jr. Night  
Black History Week

Speech Given To The A.A.C.U.S.S. Winter Workshop  
Thursday, March 2, 1989,  
St. Mary's University  
"Responding to the Non-Traditional Student"  
By Cheryl M. Nevin, Mt. St. Vincent University

As mentioned prior to this, I am from the community of Indian Brook, which is located about ten minutes from the village of Shubenacadie. For us the closest place for shopping would be in the town of Truro, which is about thirty miles from the reservation. The majority of native people come from reservations located in secluded areas. Can you imagine the overwhelming feeling we go through when we move from our rural communities to a city such as Halifax?

Many aspects of the city are confusing, especially the methods of transportation. Metro Transit can be so confusing, trying to learn the routes and remembering to get transfers. For most natives the only buses we have seen are our school buses and the Acadian Lines Buses which pass through the nearest village or town. An ideal recommendation to solve this problem would be to offer a course in learning how to use the Metro Transit System efficiently.

Along with dealing with the problems of moving into a city, we bring with us pressures from our home. For most native people they are the first in their family to go to university. They feel an incredible pressure to succeed in university.

The native communities are very family orientated, sometimes we are faced with making a very difficult choice between looking after family situations and pursuing a university degree. I know first hand of a young lady who had to face this dilemma. Her father wanted her to stay at the reserve level and take care of her grandmother until she passed away. That was ten years ago and her grandmother is still alive today. Luckily she chose to go to university. She now has one degree under her belt and is in the process of furthering her education.

I myself am only eighteen years old in my first year of university, and going back to the reserve now, it seems really weird. University has opened the doors to a vast amount of knowledge, ideas and different points of views. When I go back to the reserve, I want to tell my friends about what I learned in school, or issues discussed in one of the various organizations I'm involved in. But in the case of my reserve the students my age are still in junior and senior high school. They don't want to know about what is happening at the university level or issues discussed at meetings. One time someone even commented to me "Here's a quarter, call someone who cares." If they would only take the time to sit down and listen, they would find something interesting.

One day recently, my sister had the day off so I took her with me to Halifax to several meetings. When we attended the AACUSS planning meeting, she listened, but didn't find it very interesting because she wasn't really sure what it was about. Later the same day the Student Advisory Council had a meeting with our Regional Chief Allison Bernard to discuss the issue of Aboriginal post secondary education. She became very interested in the issues brought up at the meeting. She is now planning on doing a project in her Maritime Studies class, dealing with the issues. This just stresses my point that if you sit down and listen something would be interesting.

One last comment on the additional problems related to reserve and university. The reserve we come from and the people there are very important to us. For most aboriginal people their main intentions for coming to university is not only to improve themselves but acquire a skill or trade which can be brought back to the reserve to help better the communities in which we were raised. But sometimes this can really be scary, because a lot of times, at the reserve level, jobs are not offered which allow you to utilize the skills you have acquired. Such as in my situation, how many reservations have you heard of that have a resident nutritionist. If you are creative, such as I am, you think of ways in which you can create a job position at the reserve level, which would allow you to serve your home community.

With all the pressures from the reserve and the new demands of university life, this is when counselling comes into effect. For native people they find it much easier to talk to a native counsellor. We, the native students in the Halifax area, are very lucky to have Jean Knockwood as our native counsellor. As native students we find it much easier to relate to another native. They are someone from our own background, and knows about the problems we are facing. In our case, we are lucky, because our educational counsellor has gone through the university system herself and knows of the problems which we are facing as Aboriginal university students. Jean not only offers us counselling, but friendship and an area at Dalhousie for a number of activities, ranging from meetings to potluck suppers.

A good portion of the Aboriginal student population are mature students. A lot of these students have families to take care of after they finish classes. Jean's office offers a quiet area for the students to do their school work, read or any number of exercises which are a part of the university curriculum. You don't have to worry about your kids constantly nagging, or neighbors dropping in for a visit, which all take time away from our studies. Even living in residence at a university has it's distractions. The office is a quiet spot to do some studying.

A lot of the Aboriginal students prefer doing their work in

Jean's office, rather than the library. If you go into the next room over, you can find another student who will take the time to proofread your paper and help you with details such as bibliographies and footnotes. How many librarians do you know of, that would take time off their jobs to proofread your papers?

As mentioned before Jean's office gives us a place on the university to call our own. We like to refer to it as our "territory".

The office hosts a number of activities such as D.U.A.S.A. (Dalhousie University Aboriginal Student Association) meetings, Student Advisory meetings and potluck suppers. These potluck suppers have recently involved profs from various universities in the metro area. It allows the students to meet professors who have made a good impression on fellow students, in addition to meeting new people and seeing old friends.

I've been mentioning the Student Advisory Council and D.U.A.S.A., quite a bit, both of these organizations are newly formed this year. The Student Advisory Council has representation from all the universities in the Halifax area, this includes St. Mary's, Mount St. Vincent, Dalhousie, N.S. Art and Design College and TUNS. The focus of the Advisory Council is to ensure effective communications between the Confederacy of Mainland Micmacs Board of Director, Executive, education staff and associate members. The Confederacy is the organization which is in control of our money for university. The D.U.A.S.A. organization has much the same goals except it is orientated to the students attending Dalhousie. The Student Advisory Council and D.U.A.S.A. has gained quite a bit of acknowledgement and respect in the short period since they were formed.

The D.U.A.S.A. organization hosted a symposium on Post Secondary education for all aboriginal people on November 26, 1988 at Henson College. The symposium was called "Teach Me." This symposium dealt with a draft Post Secondary Student Assistance Program developed by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. The draft policy, which comes into effect April 1st, 1989, will create serious problems in areas such as financial allocations, time periods allotted for students to finish university programs and many other issues. Just recently members of the Student Advisory Council and D.U.A.S.A. attended a National Aboriginal Youth Conference in Ottawa. I am very proud of what we accomplished in Ottawa, and so are the members of these two organizations which couldn't be present at the meeting.

We, the aboriginal students, made native people in high political positions recognize that students should have input into issues that directly concern us, such as the proposed draft

policy on Post-Secondary Assistance. We no longer wanted to be just the monkey in the middle; we have ideas and wish to express them.

In conclusion, through our efforts in Ottawa, we are now invited to meetings that deal with issues concerning aboriginal university students. At the present moment these two organizations, which I am a member of, are organizing a National Aboriginal Protest and letter campaign against the draft policy being implemented upon us.

Counselling is not the only area which needs to be looked at in regards to improving the situation for native people, housing, health, financial aid services and chaplain services should be studied.

In regards to housing, aboriginal people have two major problems with residence at a university. The first concern is that universities seldom recognize common law marriages when considering you for married residence. They usually request a copy of a marriage certificate. Within the native communities, common law marriages are a common practice. The second problem is the university residences seldom have single parent accommodations. In our statistics it is proven that the most likely Aboriginal person to succeed in university is the mature female student and single parents. Yet the university offers them no accommodations.

When you consider health services you must remember that a lot of times people are insensitive to native people. By nature most Aboriginal people are not assertive. They are generally afraid of speaking out. Doctors and nurses should take the time to explain the details of the medical services being provided in easy to understand terminology. In addition, they should also make the staff aware of the paper work that goes along with aboriginal people. The majority of natives themselves don't know how the paper work is supposed to be filled out. You should make sure that the university medical services have a list of medical services agencies such eye doctors, dentist and pharmacies which understand the medical papers and would provide prompt and efficient care.

Dealing with financial aid services also creates problems. For native people, education is paid for by the government, the only problem with the government's payments are that they only last for so many student weeks. Our payments are broken down into student weeks, which means a week during an academic university year which we are enrolled in school. When aboriginals enter the financial aid office, they look at us as if we have two heads. They are under assumption that the government will take care of us as long as we're in university, so why are you in the financial aid office. Since 1977 we have been cut

back over 50% of our student weeks. In 1977 we had 384 student weeks to complete a degree, in 1980 we had been cut back to 280 student weeks, and in 1988 the government proposed to cut back even further to 192 student weeks. This comes into effect April 1, 1989. With the reduction in student week allocations, it is preventing many aboriginal students from completing their first degrees in most cases, preventing students from applying for graduate studies, degree programs such as nursing, medicine, law and administration. If we want to accomplish any of these goals we will be forced to go and apply for student loans at the financial aid office.

Another important idea for the financial aid services to consider is offering a course in budgeting. For a lot of natives the money they are receiving now seems like a lot, but it doesn't go far in reality. We need to be taught how to handle our money efficiently.

We should also look at the services Chaplains are offering. The majority of the aboriginal people are Roman Catholics. You should offer a list of Catholic churches in the area, the times, and give directions to these churches. A lot of native people today are converting back to traditional beliefs. You should at least have a name and phone number of a spiritual leader, so they can contact this person.

We not only have to deal with problems with services, but within the classrooms themselves. In Nova Scotia and all across Canada, for most aboriginal people their native language is Indian, in the case of our province the Micmac dialect is used. In most families and community situations the language used to communicate is Indian. To most, English is their second language. A lot of universities are unaware that in some native communities students are allowed to attend a school located on the reserve where the Micmac dialect is spoken throughout the school day. English is their second language, and this fact logically leads to a transition period which would allow the students to reach the university English level. A helpful idea would be to offer writing workshops for aboriginal people to allow them to express their ideas in a verbal and written form acceptable at the university level.

Appearance is another factor which is important. When someone thinks about what an Indian person looks like, they see a vision of a dark complected person, with dark brown eyes, long black hair with a headband across their head in traditional dress. Look at me, do I look like a typical aboriginal person? The aboriginal people of present day come in a variety of shapes, forms and appearances, we even have blonde hair, blue eyed Indians nowadays. Because a lot of us don't fit the typical description of an Indian, people sometimes make comments stereotyping the aboriginal people. I know of a lot of students

who sometimes overlook the situation. They want to be accepted into a group, so they sometimes are intimidated to acknowledge their race.

One comment to students who have been or might someday be in this situation, don't be afraid to acknowledge your race and culture. Be proud of being an Indian, express your views and beliefs and people will respect you for that. In some classes, issues related to aboriginal people are brought up. If your fellow classmates know you are Indian, they look towards you expecting you to comment on it. A lot of times you really don't have an opinion on this particular issue so it isn't fair that people assume since it concerns your people you should remark on it. If it is an issue which you are knowledgeable about, sure, make a comment. But that is true for any discussion in the classroom, even when the issue isn't related to aboriginal people.

When you break into the workshops to discuss the different issues, you must remember that aboriginal people are different. Our traditional beliefs, our culture, our language, our history are different. **Education is an aboriginal right, so it only seems logical to have services that suit our different needs.**

We not only have to deal with problems with services, but within the classrooms themselves. In Nova Scotia and all across Canada, for most aboriginal people their native language is Indian, in the case of our province the Miqmaq dialect is used. In most families and community situations the language used to communicate is Indian. To most, English is their second language. A lot of universities are unaware that in some native communities students are allowed to attend a school located on the reserve where the Miqmaq dialect is spoken throughout the school day. English is their second language, and this fact logically leads to a transition period which would allow the students to reach the university English level. A helpful idea would be to offer writing workshops for aboriginal people to allow them to express their ideas in a verbal and written form acceptable at the university level.

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APPENDIX I

MEDIA COVERAGE

Bateman, Barbara. "Dal Minority Program Gets More Scrutiny". The Daily News. June 14, 1989.

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