



the Tide

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Parade Square

Not So Square

Every evening at 7pm, anyone interested can gather in Grand Parade Square for a General Assembly. It is here where proposals can be made and problems brought forward. All decisions are made by consensus.
| Photo: Tony Tracy

By CONTRIBUTORS TO THE HALIFAX MEDIA CO-OP

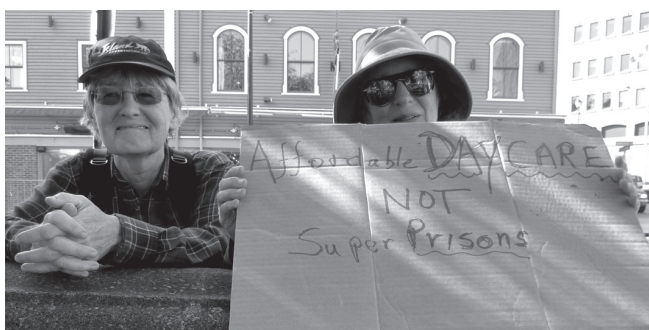
On Saturday, October 15, hundreds of people rallied in Grand Parade Square in Halifax, joining thousands across Canada on the international day of Occupy Together. Participants believe that action needs to be taken against the greed and corruption of the one percent of the world's population that hold the majority of its wealth and power.

Since October 15, Parade Square has been transformed, from an often empty square in downtown Halifax, into a rallying point, camp site, workshop space, and dance floor. Parade Square is now home to a makeshift kitchen serving free food, regular workshops and discussion groups on everything from mental health to capitalism, and daily General Assemblies where decisions are made by consensus.

On October 30, Occupy Nova Scotia participants decided to move to Victoria Park on November 8 to allow the Remembrance Day Ceremony that traditionally takes place in Parade Square to continue undisturbed. However, Occupy Nova Scotia will return to Parade Square on November 12 with a solidarity rally at 11 a.m.



Dozens of people have been camping out in Parade Square since October 15. Occupiers have faced high winds, freezing temperatures and driving rain. Plans are now being made for how participants will stay warm and dry as winter approaches.
| Photo: Tony Tracy



"Affordable daycare not super prisons" is one of the many signs seen at Grand Parade that demonstrate participants' dissatisfaction with the status quo. Reasons for camping out range from student debt to lack of affordable housing to environmental devastation. | Photo: Moira Peters



Participants of Occupy NS, accompanied by allies in labour and anti-poverty organizations, did a walking tour protest of Canada's five largest banks. The Royal Bank, TD Bank, Scotia Bank, Bank of Montreal and CIBC had combined profits of 19.3 billion in 2010. In his speech before the march, Kyle Buott, president of the Halifax - Dartmouth District Labour Council, called for the nationalization of Canada's banks, and for money to be channelled into social programs—like affordable housing—rather than into bankers' pockets. | Photo: Palmira Boutillier



Roger Forest, aka Granite Man, is a street performer and chose to join Occupy Nova Scotia because he doesn't like the direction the world is taking. "Enough is enough with corporate greed, drilling oil, stealing taxpayer dollars," says Forest. "Everything is out of control." Forest worked in the oil fields in Alberta for 12 years before he became a street performer. "I had a huge bank account, lots of money, and was miserable." | Photo: Hillary Lindsay

OCCUPY REPORT CONTINUES...

Representatives of Occupy NS, representatives of veterans, and Halifax Mayor Peter Kelly met in a tent in Parade Square to discuss the request Occupy NS received from the City to vacate the site for the Remembrance Day Ceremony on November 11. At a General Assembly a few days later, Occupy NS participants decided by consensus to relocate temporarily to Victoria Park and return to Parade Square on November 12. | Photos: Tony Tracy

Chalk drawings, communicating why people are participating in Occupy Nova Scotia, cover Parade Square in Halifax. | Photo: Moira Peters



It's anyone's guess where the Occupy Movement will go, but many believe that this is just the beginning.
| Photo: Tony Tracy

Environment Canada Terminates Funding to Environmental Networks

BIGGEST LOSER IS GOVERNMENT, SAY ENVIRONMENTALISTS

By MOIRA PETERS

Grassroots environmental groups and organizers were hit hard by the federal announcement on October 13th that the half-million dollars that funds Canada's environmental networks would be terminated.

For people like Katherine Gagne of Gays River, NS, this means the opportunities she has had to engage with the province of Nova Scotia about the lead and zinc mine in her village have disappeared. But speaking at a press conference in Halifax on Wednesday, Gagne argued that the biggest loser in this deal is government.

"For this tiny amount of money, Environment Canada is shooting itself in the foot," she said, explaining that paid bureaucrats are obligated to use taxpayers' resources to respond to all citizens' correspondence and concerns. "NSEN [Nova Scotia Environmental Network] has shown us how to approach government and community in an intelligent way."

Gagne said that with support from NSEN, she and her neighbours formed the Gays River Valley Environmental Protection Association, and have been working to ensure the lead and zinc mine operates strictly within regulations of the Departments of Natural Resources and the Environment.

The (Réseau) Canadian Environmental Network (RCEN) was established in 1977 to promote and streamline environmental work being done by grassroots organizations and to provide Canadians working on the ground with a platform for engagement with Environment Canada and its provincial departments.

In fact, RCEN plays a critical role in democratic policy-building in Canada, functioning as the formalized mechanism for federally-legislated stakeholder consultations on environmental policy and projects; "meaningful public participation" is called for in the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.

The cuts amount to \$547,000—the entire core budget for the Ottawa office, the 10 provincial networks and the Yukon network. Nova Scotia's allotment—based on

population—would have been \$18,000.

In an October 13 letter to RECN, Environment Canada's Nancy Roberts wrote that the decision to cut RCEN's funding "reflects a broader shift away from providing core organizational funding...as part of Environment Canada's ongoing efforts to allocate its resources in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible."

This cut was announced after letting the network run all fiscal year under the guise that they would be funded under the guise that it would be funded, says the network. Environment Canada sent a letter of intent to RCEN in August, which stated that RCEN's funding was coming. After receiving Roberts letter on the 13th, the RCEN announced that its staff would be laid off as of the following day.

"For 30 years, the federal Minister of the Environment came to our AGMs...and there was lots of time to engage with our members," said NSEN Advisor Sheila Cole. "Only since the current majority Conservative government does the minister not come to our meetings, or even answer our calls."

Simultaneously, while a press conference was being held in Halifax on October 19th by NSEN and associated environmental groups to address the Harper government's \$547,000 cutback to grassroots environmental work across the country, congratulations were being handed out to Nova Scotia's Irving shipyards to whom the federal government awarded \$25 billion dollars to build Canada's new war ships.

The panelists at the NSEN press conference weren't buying the government's fiscal reasoning that cutting funding to environmental networks across Canada would save Environment Canada and Canadians money.

The RCEN member groups represent some 630,000 active individuals and Ninety-eight per cent of the work done in the networks is voluntary.

Janelle Frail, director of Nova Scotia's network says, "Our annual meeting with the province is hugely beneficial to them: instead of having to organize 60 meetings, they have one."

"The knowledge, resources and expertise amassed by 647 environmental groups over 34 years is priceless—you can't buy it," said Cole. "This is the best possible value Environment Canada could ever find."



Youth visiting a clearcut as part of the Ecology Action Centre's (EAC) Standing Tall campaign. The EAC is one of the Nova Scotia Environmental Networks's member organizations. Federal funding for environmental networks across Canada has been terminated.

Tide Contributors: Miles Howe, Palmira Boutillier,
Moira Peters, Hillary Lindsay, Tony Tracy
Editors: Natascia Lypny, Hillary Lindsay, Ben Sichel,
Palmira Boutillier **Layout:** Jonathan Rotsztain

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