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Chinese - Canadians

W-5 "apology" rejected

by Paul Clark

Ad hoc committees against W5 across Canada have refused to accept CTV's "apology" for its W5 program on international students last September 30 which has been widely condemned for five months as racist and inaccurate.

"It is not being taken as an apology" says Tony Chan, coordinator of Nova Scotia's Chinese Ad Hoc Committee against W5.

Chan says the Central Committee against W5 in Toronto sent CTV a brief demanding an apology from CTV and equal time to air a fair and accurate report to repair the damages done by the W5 program, that steps be taken to ensure a similar program does not go on the air, and that W5 inform the public of the contributions of Chinese Canadians to Canadian society.

These demands were not met, however, Chan said, instead "they threw us a lollipop and expected us to take it".

Last week CTV said on the air that "W5 sincerely regrets any offence that may have been unintentionally given to the Chinese-Canadian community" by the program.

It admitted its statistics about the number of foreign students in Canada were wrong and that a "process" was used which confused Chinese-Canadians with Chinese foreign students. CTV also said at a later date it would air another program "letting all sides have their say" on the international student situation.

Ad Hoc Committee spokespersons have said CTV's statement still contained misleading information about the number of foreign students in Canada, did not fully own up to the racism and inaccuracies inherent in the program and did not recognize the protests which have been waged against it.

Chan said the "apology" was partly sparked by the fact that CTV is being sued for libel and slander for its program and that public protests may endanger the renewal of its broadcasting license by the Canadian Radio and Television Commission (CRTC).

"They're trying to defuse the momentum of Chinese-Canadian pressure, but it only adds fuel to the flame of what W5 is doing."

Numerous politicians, university presidents, columnists, committees and associations have objected to the W5 show on the grounds that by manipulating and distorting statistics it erroneously



Peter Chan

depicted universities as being overtaken by "foreign students". In many instances in the film and commentary Canadian students of Chinese origin were mistaken as being Chinese.

CTV's W5 producer Lionel Lumb has said he "strongly disagrees" with the criticisms of the program, but says he refuses further comment because of the libel suit which has been laid against the network.

Ironically, Chan says CTV's misdoings may ultimately be

to the benefit of Chinese-Canadians.

He says the 16 Ad Hoc Committees against W5, representing and defending Chinese-Canadians, will continue after the W5 protest is through. The committees, which represent 50,000 Chinese-Canadians, have formed the basis for a whole Chinese-Canadian movement, he says.

"Chinese are going to be a political power now in terms of lobbying and voting. If a worker gets beat up or a pro-

fessor gets fired because he is Chinese-Canadian, we will support him. In areas where Chinese-Canadians are concentrated, politicians will have to go for the ethnic vote," Chan says.

Chan emphasizes this is not just a radical movement, but made up of "doctors, lawyers and professional people".

The Ad Hoc Committees' protest against W5 will continue until their demands are met, he says.

"They won't answer our

demands because they don't understand the movement is big, big, big..."

Last January 26 over 2,000 demonstrators, including Toronto mayor John Sewell, civil rights leaders and

numerous Ukrainians, Italians, Blacks and French, marched on CTV network's headquarters in Toronto to protest the W5 program.

Similar demonstrations occurred in Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver.

Students decide policy

ANTIGONISH (CUP)—After a year of discussion the Student's Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS) approved its policy objectives at a weekend conference, March 22 and 23.

The organization will lobby the provincial government on behalf of students, investigate student concerns such as the quality of education, post-secondary institution funding, tuition, and student aid, and initiate action when necessary.

Delegates also decided to revamp the organization's campus committees and elected a new steering committee.

"The campus committees—that's where our potential is," said newly elected secretary treasurer Rob MacLellan of St. Mary's University.

"They are going to keep the organization in contact with the students throughout the year," he said.

In theory the committees do research into local cutbacks

and attitudes towards tuition, student aid, and the quality of higher education. They can also become involved in internal situations such as an institution's food service and parking facilities as happened at St. Mary's this winter.

MacLellan said, "this year the committees at St. Mary's and Kings College started up and did a good job but kind of faltered at the other campuses. But next year the SUNS steering committee will be more involved there will be campus committee reports at every meeting so we know what's going on."

John Phillips, president of the Dalhousie Association of Graduate Students (DAGS) said progress was made towards more financial backing of the committees.

At the conference member institutions agreed to make a firm allocation to funding the committees in next year's student union budgets.

A mass advertising and information campaign will be launched during orientation weeks next fall to tap the youth and energy arriving on campus, said MacLellan.

Although SUNS has criticized the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC) for lack of student input into its decisions the organization has not publicly commented on the impending eight per cent raise in tuition. In its funding report for next year the MPHEC recommended tuition be raised according to the increase in the cost of living.

A steering committee member said they are waiting for the MPHEC's student aid feasibility study, scheduled for release in the next few weeks. The study is expected to examine students' ability to pay for higher education and make recommendations concerning the student loans and bursa, parental contributions, and employment.

The steering committee member said SUNS was surprised the Maritime premiers announced the funding levels the same day students were meeting with the MPHEC. This coupled with institutions having March breaks in three consecutive weeks prevented any kind of broad based strategy to be implemented, the steering committee member said.

The SUNS demand of two more students to be appointed to the MPHEC has not met with any response from government. The organization says if it does not receive a reply by May 21 it will refuse to recognize the MPHEC as a legitimate government planning agency.

May 21 is also the opening day of the National Union of Students conference to be held at St. Mary's University.

Delegates elected Lori Mullen of King's College as the new chairperson for the
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