

Communists fear Tory win

by Jeff Harrington

"Canadians are facing a critical choice in the forthcoming election. No less than the future of Canada is at stake," says Miguel Figueroa, the federal Communist Party candidate for Halifax.

Figueroa, a former Atlantic representative of the Canadian Federation of Students, said the free trade agreement, the Meech Lake Accord, the Tories' defence policy and privatization add up to a "suicidal neo-conservative agenda."

"Free trade and Meech Lake will totally undermine the basis for regional development in the east, while militarization and privatization will bring long-term pain in terms of job loss to the region," said Figueroa, who feels voters may not grasp the implications of a Conservative victory.

"The Tory cabinet acts like the executive committee for the monopolists." He is referring to the Business Council for National Issues (BCNI), a lobby group composed of the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the

150 largest corporations in Canada. It was the BCNI, said Figueroa, that came up with the blueprints for the free trade agreement, the White Paper on Defence and other positions adopted by the Mulroney government.

Together, the companies that belong to the BCNI control \$700 billion in assets and employ 1.5 million Canadians. Many leftists feel its influence on the government is all-pervasive, resulting in policies that benefit the corporate sector at the expense of the working class and the poor.

The Communists' chances of seeing their candidates elected are slim. In a recent interview with the leftist weekly *The Canadian Tribune*, the party's national leader, George Hewison, said

"Communists are participating in this election to sharpen the focus and attack on the Tories as the pro-U.S., anti-Canadian, anti-people party ... and to make a specific contribution to an alternative program and strategy to guarantee Canadian independ-

ence."

Their 'alternative program', dubbed 'Survival, Sovereignty, and Social Justice', combines anti-militarism, environmentalism and economic independence

with more traditionally socialist concerns for economic rights.

The Communists have candidates nominated in over 50 ridings across the country. Where

they have no candidate, they have urged voters to support the NDP.

The last Communist campaign in Halifax was in 1979 when Scott Milsom was the candidate.

Interview



Figueroa: "Canada's future is at stake"

Fresh from an anti-free trade rally in Halifax last Friday, Miguel Figueroa talked to the Gazette. The following are excerpts from his comments on a number of subjects.

On post-secondary education

As the federal share of funding has diminished, more pressure has been put on the provinces to increase funding, especially the have-not ones such as Nova Scotia. Inadequate financing puts certain pressures on the administration to cut back on wages and classes. The end result (after tuition increases to offset the lack of funds) is an attack on universality and accessibility.

We support free education ... and a full grant-based system of student aid, as opposed to loans,

We'd like more money spent on student housing, especially in a city like Halifax, where the situation is so awful for students. We support a massive increase in funding for a program of summer employment. Students shouldn't be treated like second-class citizens, either in terms of the quality of their education, or in terms of their working conditions.

On the possible DFA/DSA strike

Professors and staff must have their right to strike guaranteed to ensure that they are fairly paid. I'll probably be on the picket line with them.

On the Meech Lake Accord

Meech Lake balkanizes the country. It was undemocratically continued on page 13



NOTICE TO STUDENTS REGARDING POSSIBLE DFA STRIKE

Most of you are aware that so far the negotiations between the Board of Governors and the Dalhousie Faculty Association have not produced an agreement and that the DFA has conducted a strike vote among its members.

The University does not regard a strike as inevitable and we are taking what steps we can to reach a settlement and avoid a strike. But we know that there is widespread concern among students about the possibility of a strike and the negative effect that one would have on your education. We are as concerned as you about these matters.

To ensure that students' point of view is taken into account, two meetings have already been held between senior administration representatives and the Executive of the Dalhousie Student Union. We will continue to meet on a regular basis with student representatives until the dispute is resolved.

We cannot tell you now precisely how the University would respond to the wide range of issues and difficulties an actual strike would cause for students. But at its meeting on October 7, 1988, the Senate confirmed that

"insofar as regulations of the University or any faculty require attendance at classes and participation in examinations and/or tests ... these regulations (should) not be enforced for the duration of any legal strike"

and that

"to cross or not to cross picket lines in the event of a legal strike is a question of conscience to be determined by each student and ... the student's decision on the matter should not result in any formal academic penalty"

If a strike seems inevitable, we will provide as much detailed information as possible and we will see that it is distributed widely on campus. In the meantime, if you have specific questions and concerns feel free to contact the Student Services office on the fourth floor of the Student Union Building, telephone 424-2404.

Eric A. McKee
Vice-President Student Services

INFORMATION ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A STRIKE, OR LOCKOUT BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS



As you are aware, the D.F.A. Membership has voted strongly in favour of a strike if one is necessary. It is also possible that the Board of Governors would lockout the faculty. Neither of these eventualities can happen until two weeks after the conciliator files his report with the Minister of Labour.

The D.F.A. Negotiating Team continues to be receptive to further proposals from the Board of Governors.

The faculty is concerned that the effects on students be minimized.

At the meeting of the Senate on 7 October the student representatives moved the following motions:

1. *Insofar as regulations of the University, or of any Faculty, require attendance at classes and participation in examinations and/or tests, Senate agrees that these regulations not be enforced for the duration of any legal strike, and requests the Vice-President (Academic) to notify all instructors accordingly.*
2. *That Senate ask the President to send a letter to all Dalhousie teaching staff reiterating unequivocally that to cross or not to cross picket lines in the event of a legal strike is a question of conscience to be determined by each individual student and that the student's decision on this matter should have no academic consequence whatsoever.*

An amendment was proposed by T.S. Cameron, Associate Dean, Faculty of Science and a member of the Board's Negotiating Team, to insert the word "formal" in front of the phrase "academic consequence" in the second motion. The amendment and the motions were carried.

Also, the D.F.A. has been meeting with the Dalhousie Student Union and with several groups of students around the campus. Further meetings with students are planned. If you would like additional information, or you would like to arrange for a meeting contact the D.F.A. Office.