

Neo-nazism on rise

reprinted from the Charlatan
Morris Illyniak

Beware—neo-nazism is on the rise.

Though it is still an element of the lunatic fringe in our society we should remain vigilant in curtailing its menacing growth.

This was the main theme of a symposium on the neo-nazi movement attended by over 30 people Sunday at St. Patrick's College. The symposium was sponsored by the Liberal Religious Society and the Jewish Students' Union of Ottawa.

Keynote speakers were Sheldon Filger, a 4th year religion student at Carleton, and Ben Kayfetz from the Canadian Jewish Congress.

The ideology of neo-nazism is overtly militaristic, racist, and anti-semitic, said Filger. He also described neo-nazis as "fanatics" who worship Hitler.

Filger spoke mainly about the Nazis in the United States. While already active in the '20s with the Ku Klux Klan, the ultra-right experienced its greatest success during the McCarthy era in the '50s.

Such groups as the John Birch Society and the Minutemen appeared on the political scene, although these groups were not openly racist or militaristic.

The more militant American Nazi Party was founded in 1959 by George Lincoln Rockwell. A commercial artist and a former officer in the U.S. Navy, Rockwell was plagued with numerous emotional and personal problems. Mental disorder was the common

thread linking many of the ultra-right leaders, Filger said.

In the early '60s, Rockwell distributed leaflets which said Second World War "holocaust" was a hoax. A later campaign was for the "repatriation" of blacks to Africa.

The party reached its height in the mid '60s and was rocked by scandals and purges. Before Rockwell was assassinated in 1967 by a rival, he appeared in a *Playboy* interview which catapulted his views into national prominence.

A rival group calling itself the National Socialist Movement was founded in 1975 by James Mason.

"Ultra-right groups," said Filger, "sometimes hate each other more than anyone else."

The Nazi Party is now called the National Socialist White Party of America. The name change was mainly due to the influence of its new and controversial fuehrer Matthew Koehl.

The party used traditional tactics, however, when it held a march against blacks and Jews in Skokie, Illinois last year.

The two groups tried unsuccessfully to obtain a court injunction to block the march.

"A Skokie Illinois would not occur in Canada," said Kayfetz, "because of the lack of an adulation of a constitution as in the U.S." He was referring to the American Civil Liberties Union's persistent defence of a universal right to free speech, even that of fascists.

Canada has had an "anti-hate" law in the criminal code since 1970, but there has only



been one conviction under this statute. Hate messages by telephone are not considered a criminal offence.

Kayfetz concentrated most of his talk on the history of neo-nazism in Canada. He said that activity of the ultra-right can be traced back to 1963 when 18 year-old David Stanley tossed hate leaflets from buildings in downtown Toronto.

Later Stanley recanted his racist views.

The conservative Edmund Burke Society was the forerunner of the radical right in the '60s. It was infiltrated by extremists and transformed

into the more familiar Western Guard, said Kayfetz.

The leader of the Guard, until his recent arrest and conviction, was Don Andrews.

One of the conditions for bail set on the appeal of his conviction was that Andrews was to disassociate himself from the Guard. Andrews did, but then formed the Canadian Nationalist Party.

The best known ploy of the Canadian Nationalist Party, as described by Kayfetz, was to collect 12,000 signatures to make it a registered party prior to the last federal election. Later investigation found most of the signatures

to be fraudulent.

A group recently active on some Canadian campuses is the North American Labour Party. Kayfetz said this group is extremely secretive.

It claims, among other things, that the Queen is part of a Zionist plot against fusion energy. The party also advocates that Quebec join the United States.

A display of neo-nazi literature was also on hand at the symposium. One magazine featured "Anita Bryant for president" on its cover. Another had the slogan of one of the nazi groups on its cover: "Our race is our nation."

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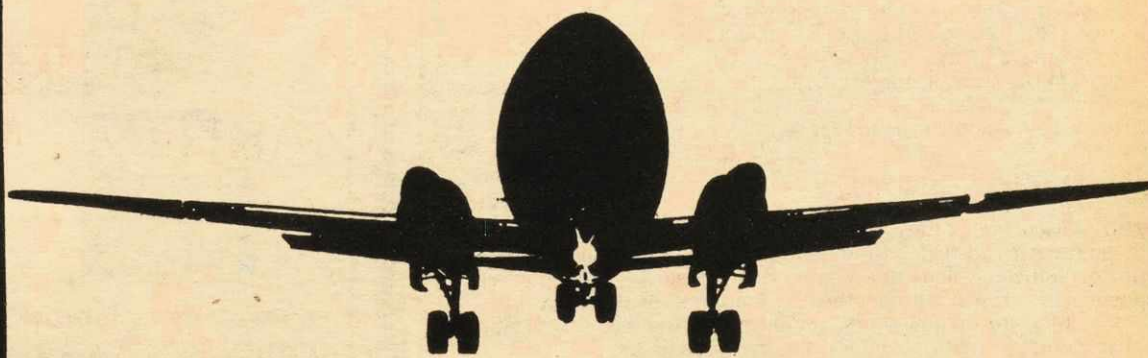


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