

Bearpit speaker

CIC espouses concept of Canadian autonomy

By DALE RITCH

Radio York's Bearpit session last week featured Dave Gauthier of the Committee for an Independent Canada (CIC). Gauthier presented his views on the Canadian political scene and outlined the aims and tactics of the CIC.

He claimed the CIC was a non-partisan organization, encompassing in its ranks members from all three major political parties. Rather than constituting itself as an independent political party, "The CIC attempts to

bring political pressure to bear on the established parties in order to change their policies."

The CIC, according to Gauthier, espouses a concept of Canadian autonomy, rather than of nationalism. "The crux of this concept is that "Canadians should make decisions for Canadians." Gauthier complained that, at present, "Canadian policies are subordinate to policies outside of Canada."

When asked about the lack of Canadian content in many Canadian univer-

sity departments, Gauthier said this situation developed at a time when there was a shortage of qualified Canadian faculty. He added that this shortage no longer exists and that qualified Canadian teachers should have priority over foreigners when it comes to teaching jobs.

Gauthier received a grilling from the student audience on the energy question.

Gauthier favours a scheme whereby the Canadian government and private Canadian developers would take over the exploration, research and

marketing of Canadian energy resources. In particular, the oil sands would be emphasized as a future source of Canadian energy needs.

"The oil sands can be developed by Canadian government and industry at reasonable prices for Canadian industry and consumers," he commented.

Gauthier, however, opposes any nationalization of American-owned oil corporations at this time. In his estimation, the Canadian public is not ready for such drastic action. Also, he fears the possible repercussions from south of the border in the aftermath of nationalization or abrupt cutbacks in the supply of energy to the American market.

Gauthier thinks the American multi-nationals "should be able to make a reasonable profit on their investment. It would be impossible to cut our economy off entirely from the American economy, as the U.S. is going to be a major market and a major supplier."

When audience members pointed out that 48 per cent of Canadians polled in a recent survey supported nationalization of the energy sector, and that the oil corporations had already recouped their investments many times over, Gauthier refused to budge on his position. Some questioners suggested that stronger action than the strategy outlined by Gauthier was needed to solve Canada's energy crisis.

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