

CIC Chairman says:

Pressure Groups Needed

by Margarita Hord

That the Canadian standard of living will drop without foreign ownership is a myth, according to Dr. Robert Page. To the contrary, he predicted it will decline by 1980 due to "hemorrhaging" of our economic strength" from wounds caused by U.S. companies.

Dr. Page, national chairman of the Committee for an Independent Canada, has recently completed a two-day lecture tour at Dalhousie. While here he addressed the faculties of Law and Political Science. He also hosted a public meeting of the local C.I.C. chapter.

The Committee for an Independent Canada, a non-partisan public interest group of 10,000 members and forty chapters across Canada, is concerned about the high degree of foreign investment in Canada.

Bob Page expressed the organization's belief that Canada's economic political and social health are seriously endangered by the strong grip of foreign corporations on its most vital industries.

He pointed to Sweden as a country actively avoiding foreign capital and achieving a high degree of economic dependency, whereas Canada has the highest foreign investment of any developed country in the world. For example he quoted Canada's dependence on the U.S. automotive industry, as compared to the flourishing of Saab and Volvo in Sweden.

Dr. Page discussed the need for pressure groups such as C.I.C. to publicize facts concerning massive projects such as Syncrude that will greatly affect Canada's future. He blamed the companies involved as well as the provincial and federal governments for the communication gap.

The C.I.C. chairman described the recent hearings of the National Energy Board as an "Alice in Wonderland situation" because of the large credibility gap that exists due to the difficulties involved in obtaining accurate facts and figures from multinational corporations.

Page felt the Board does not meet the needs of Canadians. He cited the case of Sherman Clarke of California, who represents the Canadian Petroleum Association. They saw no incongruity in the fact that their company based their report on base-line data gathered in the Bay area of San Francisco, which Page said would be completely inadequate if applied to the heating situation in Quebec.

Page expressed alarm at the government's failure to look at the long-term economic picture for the future. Despite the knowledge that natural gas shortages will soon appear in central Canada, the N.E.B. hearings have called

for an increase in exports. He noted that 45% of Canada's production already goes to the U.S.

Although the decisions made by the National Energy Board will mean an increase of four to five times in future natural gas costs for some Canadians. Page said that the media made no mention of it. He explained that the wage levels cannot possibly keep up with such price increases and that with the energy factor involved in food and other necessities, the standard of living in Canada will decline by 1980.

The speaker strongly advocated public funding for public interest groups like C.I.C. so that they can defend the Canadian point

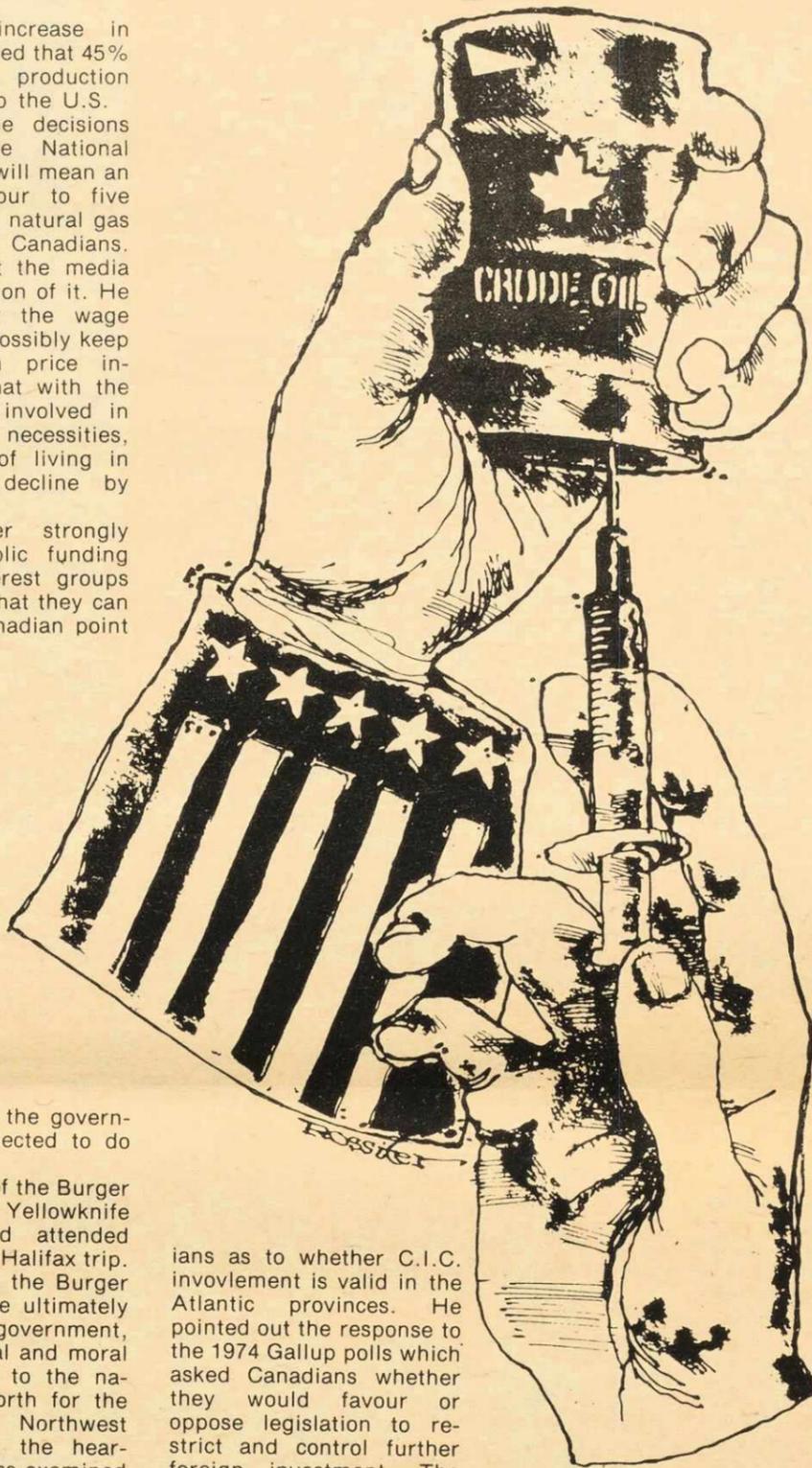
of view where the government has neglected to do so.

Page spoke of the Burger hearings in Yellowknife which he had attended previous to the Halifax trip. He feared that the Burger findings will be ultimately ignored by the government, despite its legal and moral responsibilities to the natives of the north for the use of the Northwest Territories. At the hearings, Page cross-examined Premier Lougheed's brother, who coincidentally is Vice-president of Imperial Oil!

Dr. Page has been challenged by Nova Scot-

ians as to whether C.I.C. involvement is valid in the Atlantic provinces. He pointed out the response to the 1974 Gallup polls which asked Canadians whether they would favour or oppose legislation to restrict and control further foreign investment. The percentage of Maritimers who favoured such steps was equal to the national average: 69%

The new Halifax C.I.C. chapter has formed com-



mittees to investigate foreign investment problems specific to Nova Scotia. One is the exploitation of gypsum by U.S. corporations, which is netting the province a tax of only six cents a ton. Another is foreign land ownership.

The voice of the people is also expressed by Ann Murray in a song from her latest album: "Please Don't Sell Nova Scotia."

A similar attitude is expressed in a prayer quoted by Page:

"For the land we give thee thanks
Until we give it to the Yanks."

Not only land and resources but Canadian books have been monopolized by Americans. The C.I.C. has emphasized the need to boost Canadian publishing companies and recently the fight for stricter controls made headlines.

Government legislation that starts in January 1976 will remove special tax concessions to Canadian companies that advertise in magazines such as Time and Reader's Digest. This will greatly benefit the Canadian publishing industry and media.

The main thrust of Dr. Page's message was that a change in the attitude of Canadians is necessary, not just a change in ownership. He said that the question is not merely one of economics, but of Canadian political and cultural independence as well.

The Canadian economy would not necessarily suffer as a result of nationalization, according to Page. He suggested that we might well be as wary as the Americans themselves, who reacted violently to the idea of Arab investment in American oil companies. He stated that the C.I.C. cannot be considered too radical, considering that "the U.S. is about to bring in foreign investment legislation that will make the C.I.A. look like Girl Scouts"



L-R: David McCreath ; Bob Page, Chairman of CIC

NUS to begin Regional work

by Roger Metcalf

The National Union of Students (NUS/UNE) will be increasing its staff from three to six full time persons over the next three months.

This decision was made at the 18th NUS/UNE central committee meeting during the March 14-16 weekend in Halifax and was based on the fact that NUS/UNE will have an expected budget of \$63,000 next year. The increase in the budget from \$32,000 comes from the success in the NUS/UNE fee increase referenda.

The new staff will permit

NUS/UNE to begin fieldwork on a regional basis. At present NUS/UNE has one fieldworker, responsible for working the whole country.

The need for additional fieldworkers was confirmed by the positive results of Bob Buckingham's recent five week western fieldtrip which resulted in increased support for the NUS/UNE campaigns.

The increase of staff will also permit NUS/UNE to do more organizing on individual campuses.

The NUS/UNE national office is inviting applications for the positions from across the country.