

Support demands against racism

# Students hold two floors in Sir George protest

Student occupation of the ninth floor Computer Center at Sir George Williams University was expanded Monday Feb. 3 to take in the Faculty Lounge on the seventh floor. The university is contained in a single 13 storey building with 200 protestors holding two floors.

The protestors are occupying the building in support of five demands submitted to the administration dealing with racism on campus. Biology professor Perry Anderson has been accused of practising racism. Three black students also have been arrested for forcibly making J.W. O'Brien sign a statement of support in connection with racist charges aimed at Anderson.

Brien, Vice-President of Sir J. George Williams University was prevented from leaving his office until he agreed to sign the statement and charges were laid against the black students for their part resulting in added

tension.

The five demands are:

\*A public rejection of the hearing committee investigating racism charges against biology professor Perry Anderson;

\*A meeting between all parties to lay the groundrules for a reconstituted committee;

\*Freedom from all threats of reprisal and punitive action;

\*Due consideration for the academic status of blacks who have lost study time organizing the protest;

\*A dismissal of civil charges facing three black students.

More than 200 students are staying behind tightly-guarded doors, determined to remain until the five demands are met by the administration. Guards allow only supporters to come and go, and the press is only permitted entry when releases are distributed.

Opponents of the action are allowed to speak their mind — but only outside the

occupation site. Leaders are allowed to argue at length, but they will not allow their security to be breached and speak only outside the center.

Organizers stress the occupation has set a new direction for the movement. They emphasize black-white radical unity and an anti-administration position, saying they are not interested in developing a racial conflict between black and white.

The occupants are fairly evenly distributed on racial lines. There are whites and blacks sitting throughout the centre in full support of the action.

Late Wednesday night, sociology lecturer Pat Pajonas resigned saying she could not, in good conscience, "ally myself with an institution whose administration has perpetuated, through ineptitude and secrecy, such injustices which have occurred."

She cited the legal actions

taken against the three blacks and the "illegitimacy" of the hearings as the major injustices. She also charges the administration with making decisions on the basis of "fear, ignorance and self-interest."

L'Union Generale des Etudiants du Quebec also came out in support of the students Wednesday night and demanded the charges be dropped and the committee reformed.

That support was more than the student council at Sir George was willing to provide.

The executive committee of the student council announced Thursday it was sending food to the occupation because the occupants were "human beings", but it refused to endorse or condemn the action.

The council, however, has suggested the committee be dissolved and replaced by a three-man arbitration board. Each side would choose one representative and the third would be selected by both.

Though administrative

offices were open Thursday, officials were still in seclusion in a downtown Montreal hotel. Late Wednesday night, the hearing committee announced from the hotel suites that it was unwilling to dissolve itself.

The hearing committee meets in private due to a major disturbance during the Jan. 29 meeting. The proceedings are televised through the self-contained campus via closed-circuit TV.

The students are prepared for eventual police action, and they have threatened the computers should police try to remove them.

A major faction is willing to fight it out with the police. The authorities would be forced, should police be called in, to clear the centre under difficult circumstances — the entrance and passage ways are narrow, and the centre consists of many, easily-blocked rooms.

There was no indication Thursday evening that the administration was planning to call police in, although acting principal Douglas Birms Clarke did not dismiss the possibility in a press release.

Clarke took a firm line in the release: He said the hearing committee will not be reconstituted but will "continue its work... its sessions will resume shortly."

He also outlined three principles to govern a "just resolution" of the crisis, including:

Racial discrimination cannot be tolerated;

Charges of racism must be investigated and the investigation must satisfy "justice";

The University community must function with the "rules of law."

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