

'Economic sanctions needed' — Woods

# Racism crux of South Africa

by Nicola Swainson

On Monday evening Donald Woods, exiled journalist spoke in the SUB about the current situation in South Africa and his own escape from that country. He had been editor of the Daily Dispatch, a South African newspaper which was banned in October 1977.

His discussion laid considerable stress on the misrepresentation of South African affairs in the western media. He explained that this was not surprising in the light of the millions of dollars per year that the government in South Africa spends on peddling propaganda in the west to support their racist regime.

Woods quoted the National Progressive Conservative Party Chairperson Robert Coates (M.P. Cumberland north) who visited South Africa earlier in the year and maintains that criticism of the regime by western countries could only harm race relations and hamper 'progressive' changes in South Africa. In Woods' opinion this attitude is misinformed and "plain stupid."

He stressed that the South African government has in the past decade smashed the basis for peaceful compromise between black and white in South Africa by maintaining the repressive apartheid system through over 300 racial laws. Woods wondered why the western conscience, articulated by people like Robert Coates seem to be concerned

with the survival of 5 million Europeans while ignoring the 23 million blacks many of whom live below the poverty line.

Woods considers that in the light of these facts—the time of western prevarication over Southern Africa should be over—for a decision must be made between investment interests and human lives. Woods is an implacable optimist for he still believes at this stage that there is a faint chance that a peaceful settlement between the races could be reached in South Africa if the west would take a tougher stand and impose economic sanctions. All the nationalist leaders, notable Mandela and the late Steve Biko have argued in favour of economic sanctions being imposed against South Africa. In their view surplus from foreign investment in the country can be siphoned off (through taxes) by the regime and used to buy more arms with which to suppress the black population.

Woods directed a challenge to western organizations such as universities that if they are only concerned with profit levels then they might just as well invest in prostitution or the mafia.

In a way Woods personalizes the South African problem through the character of the dead nationalist leader, Steve Biko. For he was convinced that Biko was the only one who could have



Donald Woods, exiled South African journalist, spoke at Dal Monday night.

Dal Photo/Deyal

three main nationalist organizations in South Africa—the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan-African Peoples Congress (PAC) and the Black People Congress (BPC).

Woods' own personal position became untenable in South Africa when he wrote a series of articles challenging the evidence given by the Minister of Justice with regard to Steve Biko's death. It was necessary for him to flee from South Africa before his book on Biko was published. Woods escaped from South Africa through cloak and dagger circumstances into the Transkei, Lesotho and finally into Botswana from where he flew to England with his family.

Since leaving his country, Donald Woods has been concerned to enlighten the west as to the nature of the racist regime in South Africa. In his view the most important tactic against the regime from the outside is economic sanctions, and he appeals for the western powers to stop vetoing the attempts of the UN to impose such measures on South Africa. Woods asks whether investment profits mean more than ideals—to anyone who has studied the international economy there is an obvious answer!

In his opinion the obstinate policies of Smith and Vorster are promoting Marxism quicker than any communist movement. He concluded his talk by appealing to everyone present to try to assist in some way in achieving the downfall of racism in Southern Africa. For the way in which the problem is resolved, in his opinion, would have wider repercussions on race relations throughout the world.

## Klan in Sackville?

by Tony Kelly

A demonstration and public meeting will be held in Halifax on Dec. 7 to oppose the mounting political repression in Canada and specifically to demand the repeal of the War Measures Act. The activities are being organized by the Halifax Committee to Fight Political Repression. The

It cited as evidence of mounting repression the litany of anti-union legislation passed by both the federal and provincial governments, the active use of the police to smash the CUPW strike, the growth of right wing political groups such as the World Anti-Communist League and the Ku Klux Klan in Sackville, and Trudeau's threat to implement the War Measures Act should the Quebec people decide to separate in the upcoming referendum.

The demonstration will take place at the Parade Square in front of City Hall at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 7. The public meeting will take place on the same day at 7:00 p.m. in the North End Library at 2285 Gottingen St. Daycare and refreshments will be provided. The Halifax Committee urges as many people as possible to attend the activities.

pioneered peaceful change in South Africa due to his exceptional character and leadership qualities. Indeed for years Woods had told the regime that it was in their interests to come to terms with

the nationalist leadership.

On a more analytical plane—Woods believed that Biko had to be removed by the government because he above all others was capable of acting as a link between the

## SUNS of AFS

by Valerie Mansour  
Canadian University Press

Nova Scotia student representatives have called for opposition to any and all tuition fee increases. Delegates from seven post-secondary institutions met November 25 and 26 at Acadia to continue work on the new provincial student organization which is to be called Students' Union of Nova Scotia (SUNS). SUNS has been organized in Nova Scotia to replace the now defunct A.F.S. (Atlantic Federation of Students).

A steering committee was established to prepare a brief to be presented to the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission, and to meet with the province's education minister.

The chair of the committee is B.J. Arsenault, Acadia student union president, who will be the spokesperson for the organization.

Students plan to continue local campus work against cutbacks. "Students should demand that administrations take a stand on cutbacks",

said Gene Long, Atlantic Fieldworker for the National Union of Students. "Administrations have always talked about the quality of education, but then they accept the level of government funding. That's surprising because of the year to year difficulties they face."

Student aid was also a major concern of the delegates. The MPHEC this year will begin a comprehensive study into student aid. The student aid committee will include student representation, although the commission has yet to decide how students will be chosen. The committee will have representatives from all three Maritime provinces.

"If the government is going to raise tuition to an outrageous amount, perhaps we can decrease the increase", said Howard Bashinski of Acadia. But I can't stress the importance of student aid."

Mike MacDonald, Nova Scotia rep on the NUS central committee, told delegates of the need to discuss issues such as cutbacks with the province's labour officials. "It

would be good to get union support", said MacDonald. "Workers' families are most affected by government cutbacks and tuition increases."

John Wiles from King's said that both staff and faculty have vested interests. "They are all affected by cutbacks. If all parties are together we can get more done fast."

MacDonald will be meeting with union people to discuss these issues and report to the next meeting.

Delegates worked out a constitution for the new organization calling for membership by campus referendum with a per student fee levy. Student councils will be discussing holding these referenda in the spring so that the organization can officially begin next fall.

The constitution also calls for the implementation of campus committees to carry out the work of the organization.

The next meeting of SUNS will be Church Point, N. S., hosted by the Université Ste-Anne, the last weekend in January.

THEYVE A RIGHT TO FREE SPEECH, EVEN IF THEY ARE FASCISTS.



Evans

Committee was formed in October following the lead of Operation Liberty in Quebec. Operation Liberty is a large coalition of community groups, unions, and political groups, formed early in 1978 to organize against political repression in Quebec.

In the press release announcing the Halifax activities the group noted that many people do not realize the extent to which civil liberties and democratic rights are being eroded in Canada today.