

Local Committee set up

Group pushes for Quebec independence

by Mark King

Nothing short of self-determination will give French and English Canada "genuine strong relations in the future," said David Livingstone, head of the Toronto Committee to Defend Quebec's Right to Self-Determination.

Speaking at Law Hour, Livingstone said his group has a "one-point program." It states, he said, that "Quebec is not a province like the others," its people "possess a strong sense of their own national identity," and therefore should have the right to self-determination.

The history of Quebec has been a "classical confrontation between a dominant and dominated nation," said Livingstone.

If a referendum was conducted at the time of Confederation, he said, the desire for "self-determination might have come through loud and

clear" in Quebec. But, he added, at that time "a referendum was not the British way of doing business."

In Confederation Quebec was granted provincial rights but at the expense of its national rights, said Livingstone. Now, he said, for the first time since Confederation, "Quebec has seized the offensive" to try and regain them.

Livingstone claimed English and French Canadians are becoming increasingly separate entities, saying that the use of English in Quebec is steadily diminishing as is French in English Canada.

French Canadians, on the average, earn less in all parts of Canada than English Canadians, he said. He added that there are more substantial health and education programs for the English in Quebec than there are for the French in the rest of Canada.

Livingstone attributed most of the opposition to self-

determination not to the people but to politicians.

He said that a survey he conducted in his own province of Ontario, where opposition is supposed to be greatest, showed 25 to 40 per cent support for self-determination.

The Peoples' Petition on Canadian Unity, now circulating in Ontario, "must be contended with," said Livingstone. He called the method by which it is distributed—through the mail with the monthly power bill—a "transgression of the public purse and public will."

He also mentioned Nova Scotia Power was considering circulating a similar petition. When asked what the effect on the rest of the country would be if Quebec were granted sovereignty, Livingstone replied: "Our consideration of our options in English Canada is extremely underdeveloped." This he said

resulted from "stonewalling by politicians to maintain the status quo."

Livingstone warned that in the future there may be an attempt to "buy off the PQ" with temporary concessions but said they "will hardly be sufficient."

HALIFAX COMMITTEE

A Halifax Committee to Defend Quebec's Right to Self-Determination has also been formed.

Susan Johnson, spokesperson for the Committee, said the group would try to educate the public through lectures, films and pamphlets that the people of Quebec ought to have the right to decide their own destiny.

She said Quebec ought to have that and condemned "overt and covert" political persuasion to take it from them.

For instance, she said the Liberal government has talked of having army manoeuvres

during the referendum.

She said a decision to distribute People to People petitions with power bills by Nova Scotia Power Corporation might involve a misappropriation of public funds and amounted to using a public institution as a propaganda tool.

"The People to People people are in a different league than we are. We don't have the money to do this," she said.

Don Flemming, manager of corporate relations for Nova Scotia Power Corporation, said Nova Scotia Power had been contacted about sending the petitions with their power bills, and he believed they were waiting for them to call back and indicate whether they had the money to pay for the mailing costs.

He said he imagined the government would be notified to decide if including the petitions was objectionable or not.

"Exchange supports repressive regime"

MONTREAL—A group of students recently returned from Haiti, are charging that the Canadian government's Canada World Youth exchange program does not serve the interest of the populations of the Third World.

The accusation is levelled by Canadian participants in a youth exchange with Haiti, who left after three weeks of a scheduled three month "inter-cultural experience" sponsored by Canada World Youth (CWY).

All but two of the 32 Canadian youths who flew to Port au Prince December 20 returned January 15. Both staff and participants in the project were supposed to stay until April.

"Canada World Youth's existence is not justifiable as a development organization," says a written statement by nine of the Haitian exchange participants.

"Community development through the program is limited or non-existent due to Canada World Youth's emphasis on the participant's development being separate from that of the community (of the country involved)," the statement charges.

Former McGill student Chris Cavanaugh, one of the

signatories of the statement, feels the CWY program in Haiti is used by local elites to bolster their prestige amongst the local population.

"Like many CWY projects the Haitian exchange helps to support repressive regimes," Cavanaugh said.

Among the 14 countries with which CWY organizes exchanges are: Malaysia and the Philippines, both renowned for violations of human rights.

Cavanaugh sees CWY as a "public relations" front for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) which grants CWY 98 per cent of its annual \$4.6 million budget.

The response of CWY officials to the return of the 30 Haitian exchange participants has been patronizing and hostile according to Cavanaugh.

Director of Operations for CWY Raphael Legare said the Haitian exchange participants had taken "a very narrow point of view" towards their experience.

"They focused on the negative aspects of Haiti and failed to realize that they could have learned many positive things in Haiti."

Asked about CWY involvement in repressive regimes Legare responded:

"What is repressive in the context of the Third World?"

Legare denied that CIDA has any influence upon CWY.

"CIDA doesn't tell us where we have to go or what we have to do."

There is little exchange of personnel between CIDA and CWY according to Legare.

However, Canada World Youth Programs are currently under review "at the request of CIDA," Legare said.

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When the star-flight seem to thin
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life in let the life in

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as the star-wells seem to thin
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let both hands on our side have the heim-stolen


I am still When the high star-fish'd schools
-as the star-wells stretch too thin
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