

the chinese and n.b. racism

By JAYNE BIRD

There exists today Chinese discrimination in New Brunswick, and the government's treatment of these Chinese is apathetic. At the provincial level it does "not wish to help them in their plight for representation on the Human Rights Commission", said Mr. Gordon Hum, President of the New Brunswick Chinese/Asian Cultural Association. Discrimination is the reason cited by Mr Hum as to why the Chinese in New Brunswick are not being considered for representation on the Human Rights Commission.

The general feeling of the Chinese in N.B. is that they are being discriminated against and not treated equally. They have been overlooked as a minority group for too long, though "the Chinese culture itself is one of the oldest and most artistic cultures in the world, and yet in Canada, it is being slowly shoved down the drain." There is no reason why they should not be recognized.

The Chinese in N.B. fall under two categories. There are those who are academic; who are foreign born and attain a university education. Also there are those who are the proletariat and get no university education, though their aspirations are high.

As compared to other ethnic groups, the Chinese have been the least to deviate from societal norms. Though this is so, they received no representation on a National Brotherhood Week television panel discussion in mid-February. The first time that this minority group was represented was at a panel discussion in March 1971. There were four guest speakers from the Indian, Jewish, Chinese and Black communities of NB and each outlined the highlights of the historical role played by his respective community. During this discussion, Hum announced his intentions of inaugurating a Chinese Association whose functions would be similar to those of the NAACP.

Founders of this association (NB Chinese/Asian Cultural Association-NB CACA) met in April to discuss what is meant by being a Chinese in Canada. They met with representatives from the Federal Government, the Civil Liberties Association, the clergy, business and education. Of all the people invited to attend this discussion of pertinent problems, response was entertained by all except the present provincial government.

A rough draft of the initial programs and functions of this association is as follows:

1. To maintain and educate a minimal-level of Chinese cultural heritage and language.
2. To implement an educational program designed to instruct and give young and old Chinese some basic Chinese education, but more particularly, some basic elementary English education.
3. To support a program-implementation designed to reinforce policies of the Association pertaining to grievances based on prejudice and discrimination from the community and from employment.
4. To implement a program of cultural exchange for all interested persons to gain a working knowledge, insight and understanding of the Chinese culture and its people.



5. To implement programs designed to assist Chinese immigrants and transient families to find more comfortable accommodation and their choice of Canadian community.

To date, the objectives of the Association are to preserve the Chinese identity and culture, to prevent total assimilation and fusion of Chinese people living in Canada, and to help those who are trying to adjust to Canadian life.

The NB CACA is trying to achieve representation on the Human Rights Commission, established in 1967. Support has been given to the Association for the Advancement of the Chinese in Canada (NAACP), the United Nations Indian Brotherhood (UNIB), the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, the AC Canada Association, the Chinese Overseas Student Association, the Montreal Chinese Catholic Association, and several other organizations. Several noted individuals noted the presence of Chinese on the Commission, including David Kinsella, MP, Paul Hellyer, MP, Mayor Locke, Mayor McCrae, and Jones of Moncton. Mr. Bird elicited support for formal representation on the Human Rights Commission from Kinsella, chairman of the Commission, who evades the issue by stating that the 53 ethnic groups represented in New Brunswick and no minority has asked for representation.

Mr. Stanfield's support to the Association was not a federal matter, he would support, to the office of the Premier of New Brunswick, if attention was done and Premier Hum was... I considered the Association's representation where grievances were made in the Commission, although the new Commission would welcome consideration.

Hum's comments were that the doors are open to the Chinese on the national scale, but not in New Brunswick. He stated that the Chinese in New Brunswick are a racial minority.