

We need Canadianization

by Glenn Wanamaker

"The problem we face today," said Laurier Lapierre, "is not that of Americanization but of Canadianization".

Lapierre, history professor, journalist and ex-director of McGill University's French Canada Studies Program, addressed the first session of the Americanization conference held last weekend on the subject of the Americanization of the Canadian Universities and Culture.

Lapierre sees the problem in terms of lack of understanding within Canada and not as a result of American influence on Canadian universities and culture.

"The crisis is the *crise d'appartenance*," he said, "in the sense of what one's community life is and in the self-definition of one's traditions, hopes, and work — and the need to have that reflected in one's institutions."

"The failure of the Canadian educational system is due to the fact that we have not been able to bridge the tremendous chasm of ignorance we have about each other," he stated.

In specific reference to American influence, Lapierre prefers Canadian professors to Americans, particularly in the social sciences and humanities. Invariably, when discussing political systems and social problems, Americans use American examples.

"Last year at McGill in a sociology class of 800 students writing a major essay, only ten chose to write about a particular Canadian problem and of that ten, only four wrote about their Quebec environment. It is in that light that we have to pursue a policy of Canadianization."

In explaining the system of alienation which has taken place in Quebec, Lapierre includes the changes that have evolved, particularly since 1960, in fields of education and culture. It wasn't until the beginning of the Quiet Revolution that the Quebecois discovered that their educational and cultural systems did not function beyond a folkloric one, because it had become highly bourgeoisized and centralized by a very few, namely the Roman Catholic Church.

He said that "les canadiens français" were given three choices: submit to assimilation, disregard the importance of the masses of people who controlled them, or combat the yoke of English Canada.

Since assimilation had already made inroads (they were forced to speak English in their work), the decision to combat it was made.

"Le point de liason," says Lapierre, "is to the degree that we can unify ourselves positively, not in a uniformity type of unity, but in a unity of what life is all about, whereby we can live a *deux*."

Thus, it is not a question of Americanization but of Canadianization, concluded Lapierre. "It is the people themselves who should determine for themselves what it is their life is going to be."

"If the people of Quebec have done nothing else, and I don't say that they have not, at least they can demonstrate to you that until, and unless, you are masters of your own destiny, of your own life styles, and of your own options, tragedy, alienation, and perhaps death is all that will come at the end."

Watkins gets support

Teach-in leans left

by Fred Jones

It was billed as a debate on "Americanization" and "Atlantic Underdevelopment". The roadshow — Watkins, Mathews, Lapierre, McClelland — plus some local academics; the topics — the university and culture, labour, the economy and Atlantic underdevelopment; the audience — the "Teach-In set"; in short, four sessions of the colonials roasting the Yankee presence in Canada. And then everybody would go home.

But what emerged from last weekend's Teach-In was not a debate over how American imperialism dominates every facet of our economy and daily life, but how Canadians are going to fight back. Most of the audience seemed to favour some type of socialist solution. One floor speaker after another failed to see the viability of a capitalist strategy for reclaiming the country, and particularly the Maritimes.

"We have had enough of the Clairtone, heavy water, Scott paper type of development", said an outraged member of the audience.

All of the panelists did not share this view. Harry Flemming, executive vice president of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC) said repeatedly that Canada and the Maritimes needed more, not less, American capital.

He accused the "Upper Canadian" economic nationalists, such as Mel Watkins, of trying to block Maritimers from enjoying the "benefits" of American capital.

University of California economics professor Terry McGrath, formerly of The World Bank, could not understand why Canadians were so upset about

American control. His reading of the statistics showed that U.S. control was decreasing rather than increasing.

McGrath wondered whether Canadian nationalism was not an attempt to smooth over and hide internal contradictions, such as the recent situation in Quebec.

Toronto publisher Jack McClelland said he wanted an independent Canada but favoured a capitalist solution. The Committee for an Independent Canada, (CIC) the organization he recently founded with former Liberal cabinet minister Walter Gordon, Peter Newman, editor of the *Toronto Star* and Claude Ryan, editor of *Le Devoir*, takes the same position.

A leaflet distributed at the teach-in by CIC calls for the federal government to set up a Canada Development Corporation "to provide domestic investment funds", to safeguard Canadian control and content in the media, develop a distinctive Canadian foreign policy and many other measures. According to McClelland the politically non-partisan organization will get off the ground in January 1971.

IF AT FIRST...

However McClelland admitted under pressure near the end of the teach-in that if a capitalist solution wouldn't work he might accept a socialist solution.

Robin Mathews? The aggressive little English professor from Carleton University came across as a rampant Canadian nationalist but was never specific about how independence would be won. He is a member of both the CIC and the NDP.

Rejecting the present model of economic development for the Maritimes — subsidizing foreign industries through grants and

loans, refusing to set limits on foreign capital inflows and failing to employ the talents of Maritimers to the fullest — several speakers denounced Flemming and APEC as "apologists for the Maritimes ruling class" who did not wish to understand the inherent contradiction in capitalist economies which creates an underdeveloped region to serve the heartland.

GOD HELPS THOSE...

Alan Story, 3rd year Sociology, wondered why the \$10 million given to the British-owned Acadia Fisheries, which has been on strike since April, could not instead be given to the Canso fishermen directly to establish their own co-operative fishing industry.

Flemming replied, "Well, everyone should do their own thing."

It was University of Toronto political economist and socialist Mel Watkins who seemed to get the most vocal support from the audience. He was also the panelist most attacked by the pro-capitalist panelists.

Watkins, who spoke on two panels, was the author of the 1966 federal government report on the structure and ownership of Canadian industry and was a founder of the Waffle Movement, the left wing of the New Democratic Party.

When asked whether we would not lower our standard of living if we nationalized or bought back foreign industries, he cited the example of Japan which has the tightest restrictions on foreign capital inflows of so-called Western countries. They haven't done too badly, he said.

Ontario Watkins, in the Atlantic Underdevelopment panel, delineated the position of

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Wanted — An independent socialist Canada



photo by Jim Haggarty

Melville Watkins is the chief spokesman for the "Waffle Group" of the N.D.P. and is the author of the *WATKINS MANIFESTO* on the extent of foreign domination of the Canadian economy. Watkins spoke this weekend at the "Americanization of Canada" conference at Dalhousie, and was interviewed by *Gazette* reporter, Don MacLennan.

GAZETTE — One can generally perceive the American influence in our economy. What is the nature of the American influence in our other social structures, and to what degree do you see this?

WATKINS — It is very clear that it has permeated the economy, the statistics on foreign ownership in general and American ownership in particular are very high. It is also very clear that what happens to the economy, who owns it and controls it, is very basic to all other aspects of our lives. If you get the kind of branch plant economy we have in Canada, it is not surprising that we have branch plant unions, international unions, and branch plant universities apeing foreign models, especially American models with

professors mostly concerned with developments going on outside Canada.

We can see this influence in our cultural life which is intimately related to the importance of advertising. We see the spillover effects of American advertising, virtually putting Canadian magazines out of business. We also see the increasing commercialization of Canadian television. So once the economy gets to be taken over by private interests, especially foreign private interests, this does in fact pervade every aspect of our lives.

GAZETTE — If we maintain that the structure of our economy and culture is a fact, through what political structures do you think we could fight for a Canadian identity? It is obvious that the present government is not doing much to convey the need for a Canadian identity.

WATKINS — The issue is not so much one of political structures, as one of political processes. One of the most thoroughly Americanized and emasculated sectors of our economy is that of business, and the governments are closely allied with it.

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