

Discrimination In Canada Disappointing

FREDERICTON (CP) — "Many African students are disappointed to find the Canadian people racially discriminating after being told at home this didn't happen," says the secretary of the University of New Brunswick human rights group.

Mrs. Ludo Abrecht says: "In Africa, Canada has a very good reputation because the people think Canada is a quite different country from the United States, but they discover quickly this is an exaggeration."

Most students encounter the first serious discrimination when they begin looking for accommodation. In an at-

tempt to encourage the University of New Brunswick to exclude the names of discriminating landlords from the official accommodation list, the human rights group conducted a pilot project this spring to locate specific instances of discrimination.

Mrs. Abrecht says it was difficult to encourage African students to join the project because they feel embarrassed and hurt to admit they are discriminated against, and want to avoid encountering further prejudice.

In the first project, 15 houses on the university accommodation list were visited. Eight students—five whites, one Chinese, one Indian

and one West Indian — requested accommodation.

Of the 15 houses visited, three practised outright discrimination, the group reported.

"Mr. K. K., a student from India, applied at the house of Mrs. A. His application was turned down. Ten minutes later, Mr. H. B., an Austrian-born student who grew up in Canada, applied for the same room. He was immediately accepted."

Mrs. Abrecht, distressed to find such a high percentage of discrimination, said the report on the project, with complete names and addresses, was sent to the newly-formed New Brunswick human rights commission.

An official of the commission said the report will be kept on file, but further action cannot be taken at this time. He said the commission had anticipated that Section 6 of the provincial Human Rights Act would cover the rental of rooms in private houses.

But the commission asked for a legal opinion and was told the section could not be interpreted as including housing. As a result, the minister in charge of the commission, H. W. Williamson, said an amendment to the act, expected to cover housing, will be made.

Dr. Noel Kinsella, chairman of the commission, said the university has decided to stop asking landlords if they will accept foreign students.

"I think we are making very positive inroads," he said. "Attitudes are changing."

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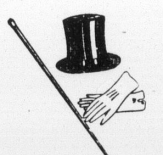
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