

NEW GROUPS HELP EXILES IN CANADA

Finding Work for U.S. Draft Resisters Is Hardest Task

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TORONTO, May 10—On the eve of what United States draft resisters and deserters in Canada hopefully predict will be a heavy summer influx of newcomers, two new Toronto committees to assist the exiles have been formed, one has disbanded and one is fighting an eviction notice.

An outbreak of factional bickering has subsided, partly because two strong-willed leaders—an 18-year-old girl and a man in his 40's—have left the scene. The committees now make diligent efforts to praise and get along with one another. A meeting of exile leaders from several Canadian cities is scheduled for May 30 in Montreal.

As always, raising money, helping the newcomers qualify as permanent immigrants to Canada and finding jobs for them are the biggest problems.

With unemployment rising in Canada as in the United States, the job outlook is not promising. "We just don't get jobs for these kids, what they need most," said Sylvia Tucker of the Toronto Antidraft Program.

20,000 Resisters in Canada

A few Americans have established small businesses or gone into farming. Most of the 20,000 so draft resisters and deserters in Canada live in major cities and have jobs or are looking for them. A few are fulltime students.

Efforts to line up jobs and contributions to exile-assistance committees were damaged in April by a front-page story in The Globe and Mail of Toronto. Its headline said: "Some U.S. Draft Dodgers Turning to Crime, Even Suicide, Toronto Woman Tells Committee."

The woman was Naomi Wall, an American in her middle-20's who has been working with draft resisters and deserters for more than two years. According to The Globe and Mail, she told the Federal Government's Committee on Youth that exiles were finding it harder to qualify as immigrants and to get jobs,

that two had committed suicide and that the Toronto Antidraft Program had bailed out exiles arrested on drug, shoplifting and vagrancy charges.

Mrs. Wall's colleagues have said her purpose in citing these problems was to plead for more Government help for immigrants. The story exaggerated the problems, the associates said.

"Most of the guys who walk in here are nice people," said Mrs. Tucker. "We get a lot of fine upstanding citizens in here. Once in a while we get a bum — he's got problems. He needs our help as much as anyone."

The Antidraft Program is fighting a notice to vacate its basement premises at 2347 Yonge Street until it can find new quarters and a landlord who does not mind unorthodox office decor and lines of young people trailing out into the corridor.

The Antidraft Program, the oldest of the committees, now devotes itself exclusively to immigration counseling. It has transferred to the newly-established American Deserters Committee at 75 Huntley Street the responsibility for finding temporary housing for newcomers. The A.D.C. and Red White and Black, a new group at 44 St. George Street, are applying to Canadian organizations for financial support.

Plans Courses

Red, White and Black, a service group, occupies basement rooms used by the defunct Union of American Exiles. It is applying for grants from private, provincial and municipal agencies. They would finance seminars on Canadian history and politics, instruction in French and other courses. The courses are meant as a response to criticism by Canadians that American exiles don't bother to learn about Canada.

The name Red, White and Black has no official meaning. "Each of us found some symbolism in it," replied Ted Steiner, a 22-year-old draft resister and one of the founders.

Red, White and Black directs young people, including Canadians, to medical clinics, social services, odd jobs and lawyers.

Some observers and leaders of the exile-aid committees believe that the young men who are now coming to Canada are less committed to staying than were those who came two years ago. "Most coming now think they are coming to wait for a while," said Judy Merrill, a middle-aged American science-fiction writer who helps to direct Red, White and Black.

"They are not really aware that it's a different country," she said. "They think that they're going to the suburbs."

Miss Merrill said that deserters who have been in Canada from three to six weeks find "all sorts of reasons to go back—a girlfriend, to pay a debt—and they are in a state of mind that guarantees they would get caught by the police."

Many other sources have said a large proportion of the deserters, possibly up to half, return to the United States from Canada.

The basic problem, Miss Merrill indicated is homesickness. "They had done all their thinking in terms of ethics and politics and hadn't realized they couldn't go to the corner drug store," she said.