

PC Youth and Alliance set to merge

By Adam Grachnik, Ottawa Bureau

OTTAWA (CUP) - Plans to unite the right wing youth parties were in the works even before the tentative announcement of the merger between the Alliance and the Tories was made last week.

The Progressive Conservative Youth were pro-active and their Youth Organizer Adam Taylor says he met with Canadian Alliance Youth Coordinator Robin Speer three to four times before the tentative deal between the two parent parties was hammered out.

"We knew we had to be ready to combine. We started meeting just after the [Ontario] provincial election," Taylor said, adding that they met on the afternoon of Oct. 16, the day the agreement in principle was announced.

Now, both sides are speaking almost every day and are drawing up a structure for a new young conservative organization, which promises, organizers say, to have 10,000 members, after each party brings roughly 5,000 people.

However, it's a little more complicated considering the Canadian Alliance doesn't have an official youth organization like the PCs or Liberals. They simply have a coordinator who oversees the roughly 48 campus clubs across the country.

On the other hand, the PC Youth have a legitimate structure in place, with an executive and a working constitution. Both sides agree that logistically their will be difficulties, but are confident a fair merger will take place.

Taylor said one of the proposed structures is to each appoint six people to a conservative youth council, but all plans are still up in the air.

The Young Liberals of Canada, known to have the most developed youth system in the coun-

try, welcome the merger, but are a little skeptical. They fear the Alliance might try to quash the movement all together.

"The Alliance has always been strongly against segregating a separate youth wing," said Adam Brown, national director of the Young Liberals of Canada. "I hope they don't have a resolution to quash the party," he said.

Taylor dismissed the fear. "We won't be disappearing," he said. "The Canadian Alliance doesn't have an official youth wing, but this movement of young conservatives now will only get stronger."

Clayton Erickson, president of Carleton University's Canadian Alliance Campus Club did express concern, saying he is "a little worried" about a youth movement and said he is eager to see how the new structure will work.

"There are more people jockeying for the head of the Young Liberals than improving the party," he said, highlighting what he feels are the negative sides of an official youth wing.

Nonetheless, Erickson did say he was ready for the merge and excited to have a unified voice.

Brown said he welcomes the merger because it can trigger more youths to get involved in the political process and any attempts to end it, he says, will only hurt the youth movement.

He's confident in Liberal policies and the party's ability to gain new members, so he wasn't concerned that new stronger youth party would be actual competition.

"The bigger problem on our hand is the lack of interest youth have in the process, so that means working together," he said.

Brown says he's already proposed an initiative where all youth wings will work as one. It's called the

Ontario Liberals banning dwarf tossing

By Jasper Schwartz, The Martlet

VICTORIA (CUP) - It's been just over a year since the sport of "dwarf tossing" came to a crushing halt, with the United Nations upholding a ban on the activity, citing human rights reasons.

The UN ban all but ended the career of Manuel Wackenheim, who, at three feet 10 inches, made his living being "tossed" in bars and clubs.

Before the UN ban, dwarf tossing generally took place in drinking establishments. The dwarf would be placed in a special harness, and people would take turns seeing who could "pitch" him the furthest. Prizes would be awarded to the winner, and the person being tossed would receive a fair paycheck.

To many Canadians even the name "dwarf tossing" brings up horrible images and stereotypes that should have been done away with years ago. Even describing the activity seems barbaric. To its detractors it seems strange that the United Nations would have to place a ban on something unreasonable.

It's easy to imagine "dwarf tossing" as something done in seedy clubs in Europe, especially in France, where the ban originated. Unfortunately, Canada is just as guilty, if not more, than many other countries. In June of this year a Toronto adult Entertainment club made national news when it sponsored a dwarf tossing event. Audience members tossed "Tripod," who measured in at four feet, eight

inches, across the club. The longest throw was over two meters.

The dwarf tossing, which took place at Leopards Lounge and Broil, was hotly contested by Windsor MP Sandra Pupatello. Pupatello, the deputy leader of the Ontario Liberal party, introduced a private members bill to the Ontario Legislature in June that sought to ban the organization of dwarf tossing events. However, Ontario's Conservative government decided that it needed more time to review the implications of the bill. That was in June.

The Lance, University of Windsor's student newspaper, ran an ad in their October first issue for a dwarf tossing at the Leopard Lounge on October 2nd, indicating that action had yet to be taken.

However, with the election of a Liberal government that same night the possibility that Pupatello might reintroduce the legislation, this time as a government bill, seems high.

It seems that a victory for human dignity might well be imminent.

But hopefully not, according to those being tossed. Manuel Wackenheim pleaded with the United Nations to lift the tossing ban. Without the money he earned from dwarf tossing, Wackenheim is without a source of income.

As for Tripod, in an interview with the Windsor Star he stated his case. "I'm an adult and can make my own decisions. I don't need anyone telling me what I can and can't do."

X Campaign and it will have all young parties working together to increase interest in Canada's political system, through education and a model parliament.

Out west, William McBeath, president of the Canadian Alliance campus association at the University

of Alberta, said he hasn't heard of any opposition to the merger.

"The overall goal is to provide a meaningful experience for youth," McBeath said, adding that many of his 214 campus members are provincial members of the Alberta Progressive Conservatives.