

LOCAL

Chinese students seek to remain in Halifax

By CAMERON MacKEEN

Five Chinese students living in Halifax will attempt to obtain landed immigrant status in order to avoid having to go home; their lawyer confirmed Monday.

The students, whose names cannot be released, are being represented by Halifax lawyer Davies Bagambiire.

"They fear persecution if sent home, so I will be attempting to obtain landed immigrant status," Mr. Bagambiire said.

Mr. Bagambiire would not give any specifics of the cases due to client confidentiality. He did, however, say that he hoped the students would not have to apply for refugee status but would automatically be granted landed immigrant status.

"Considering the circumstances, I would think we should have a good chance of obtaining what we're asking for," he said.

Employment and Immigration Canada has promised, for the

time being, not to send any students living in Canada back to China. However, some have stated they will not apply for refugee status for fear of being persecuted by the Chinese government if their application is rejected by Canada.

"You can imagine how nervous they must be when they realize they could be sent home," said one Chinese student.

"I can appreciate how tentative the students may be in com-

ing forward. However, the federal government has stated, quite clearly, they will not send anyone home at present," said Greg Mulock, manager of the Halifax Immigration office.

Mr. Mulock said there has been no applications for visa extensions, landed immigrant status, or refugee status from any Chinese student living in Halifax.

"We have had many inquiries, but as of yet, no one has come forward. However, that could change at any time."