

Politicians Spurn Youth

Youth for Social Justice (YSJ) organized a Political Forum on Saturday, November 8 at the Colonel Gray High School lecture theatre in the hopes of becoming informed on Island politics. We were informed all too well. Cayley McGrory who traveled from Montague to take part in the Forum felt that "We have had an awakening to what the real world is like and it is sad to see that aside from lip service, most politicians do not care about youth."

We visited the headquarters of each of the parties on Nov. 2 and were assured that a candidate from each party would be available to come and speak with us on their stance on issues which concern Island youth.

Later in the week we contacted the parties to confirm that we had a location for our event. We also informed them that, by the request of the PC rep (Janet Wood), there would be an independent moderator to chair the discussion.

The Liberals then informed us, the day before the event was scheduled to take place, that they would no longer be sending a representative, let alone the candidate we requested. We decided to go ahead with the Political Forum despite this lack of participation. Unfortunately, the PC party had also decided that this youth event was not worth their while. They sent Egan Henderson, an unprepared representative as their spokesperson.

Leo Broderick, the NDP candidate, asked why the PC party had not sent a candidate. This caused Janet Wood to instigate a heated discussion with Mr. Broderick, in which she accused him of masterminding the event for his own ends. She also insulted the intelligence of the YSJ organizers and following these comments she and the PC rep stormed out of the room. Her dismissive parting shot was "We're toast!"

In contrast to the Liberals and the PCs, Mr. Broderick

felt that our concerns were important enough to merit his time in explaining his party's viewpoints and answering our questions. Missy Montgomery says "We went to visit the NDP Headquarters and they talked to us as if we were people with ideas, instead of looking down at us."

What we desperately need is a government who takes the time to listen to us, puts people first, and lives up to their commitments. But when is this going to happen?

We the members of YSJ are both disappointed and disillusioned with the treatment we received at the hands of the Liberal and Progressive Conservative parties. YSJ demands a public apology from the PCs and Liberals for what seems to be a standard government practice of backing out on commitments, and excluding the voice of youth.

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Canadian Students Debt Passes American

By Desiree Adib, The Ubysey, University of British Columbia

Graduates from Canadian universities found themselves deeper in debt than their American counterparts last year, according to the initial findings of a postsecondary debt load study.

The study, being conducted by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), says 51 percent of all Canadian undergraduates and 45 percent of all American undergraduates take out student loans.

While the association estimates the average debt-load of American students who borrow at \$13,500 for public institutions and \$16,800 for private institutions, Canadian students faced an average debt-load of \$17,000, the study says.

"When provinces got rid of or reduced their grant systems and the federal government increased its loan limit nobody realised it would

lead to this kind of explosion in the debt rates," said Alex Usher, an analyst for the association. "Now we have to deal with the consequences."

Usher attributed the debt-load gap to the American student loan system, which doesn't give loans as readily as the Canadian system, but makes high-value grants more available.

"People tend to think of American students as being significantly worse off than Canadian students," he said, "I think these numbers show that we should stop assuming that."

Paul Beaudry, an economics professor at the University of British Columbia, says demographics might also be responsible for higher the Canadian debt-loads.

"The number of students who attend postsecondary institutions in Canada has grown much more rapidly than in the U.S.," he said.

"As more people are going to university you might be moving across the income spectrum more and more and getting lower-middle class people coming which might have less family support and [are] therefore relying more heavily on loans."

The average debt load for Canadian students climbed from \$8700 in 1990 to \$17,000 this year; by 1998, federal estimates predict the average undergraduate with loans will owe \$25,000.

It is a situation, Usher said, that will substantially reduce the disposable income of Canadian debt-holders graduating with a Bachelor's degree.

"The value of an undergraduate degree is being questioned and belittled because of the fact that people are borrowing more and they have less of a disposable income," said Usher.

Monday
Mon Night NFL

Wednesday

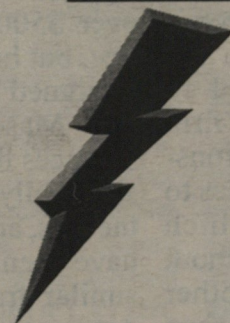
Trivia
Lots of Prizes

Friday

Movie Pub:
Striptease
Independence Day

Vintage \$3

THIS WEEK
at the Barn



Sunday
WWF \$6