

# commentary

by Kevin Charles Little

Great people can only be measured by their obstacles and how they overcome them. When Pierre Trudeau became involved in public life he did so out of a concern for his country and its future. He sensed that the status quo was suffocating change in Canada and especially Quebec. His determination was to help keep Canada together and to maintain an economic system which protects lower income Canadians from the pitfalls of the capitalist system. He could have taken the easy way out like many college students do today. That is, to cynically sit on your self-righteous ass and refuse to get your hands dirty with politics, contributing nothing to your cause except to jump down the throats of those people who care enough to make the effort to change. It's so easy to sit on the sidelines and criticize but it takes a great individual like Trudeau to throw yourself at a political party and make it an instrument of

social reform.

Some of the obstacles he faced included a political system dominated by the English, where French ministers and Prime Ministers before him had been dictated to by the Anglo elite. He faced a separatist movement that resulted from this inadequacy. He faced an electorate relatively conservative and resistant to social change of any kind. And what did he achieve? He destroyed the fundamental logic behind separatism, that is, the alienation of the French from the decision-making process. Many have accused him of overkill, but these people are mostly bigots who, strangely enough, did not speak up until now, when the French are for the first time being taken seriously in the government of Canada. He achieved Medicare along with bilingualism. We see the potential threat to Medicare now, from the provinces and doctors alike, who prove or display the kind of obstacles Trudeau was up against

when he courageously passed the bill. He achieved an economic system that did not abandon the poor the way all other western democracies did during the recession, the worst economic crisis since the thirties. He maintained our social programs despite ample opportunity to slash them when the public mood was shifting to the right.

He achieved the economic stability for the poor by cutting back on military expenditures, another move unpopular with our conservative-minded public. Yet people like Charles Spurr call him a war monger? When the provinces were fighting to break our country into ten separate states, Trudeau stood firm for a strong, united country. The provinces who want to decentralize our country because they believe they are the defenders of liberty know their record proves otherwise. We all remember how the B.C. government scrapped the human rights commission, how Ontario refuses to protect French

language rights, and how the Alberta government, with a large heritage fund, insists on imposing user pay fees on their citizens. We saw the hypocrisy of Joe Clark and Ed Broadbent when they demanded to know why the federal government had not included women's and native rights in the Constitution. This was following their decision to force Trudeau to go back to the bargaining table with the provinces where those provincial governments bargained those same rights Clark and Broadbent wanted included in Trudeau's original charter. Who insisted on a Charter of Rights even before he entered public life? Who implemented a department of multiculturalism? Trudeau did, and I might add it was the NDP government in Saskatchewan who were the last to agree to the inclusion of women's rights in the constitution.

Do not misunderstand me—I have condemned him like most Canadians have. I am thoroughly

against the testing of the cruise missile, I am disappointed in Trudeau's indifference to the abuse of the abortion legislation he initiated in 1967-68 as Minister of Justice, and I felt cheated like many Canadians at his flip flop on wage and price controls. For those people who blame Trudeau for disillusioning them with politics, however, I do not concur. He tried to run a rational government devoid of political manipulation and patronage from 1968 to 1972. But Canadians told him, with his government's near defeat in 1972, that they wanted him to play the game of politics the way they expected it to be played. In 1974 and 1980 we knew his patronage policies and the sleazy political animals that advised him and we still swallowed it a lot more easily than his dialogue with Canadians in 1972. If only we could have had a second chance... think of how exciting his novel approach could have turned out if only we had given him the mandate in 1972.

## And more Senate questions and answers

### Gazette Questions

#### Senate

1. What past experience qualifies you for this position?
2. What are the main points of the debate in Senate on academic planning? What views will you advocate?
3. Are there particular issues you want to raise as an individual on Senate and how will you raise them?
4. Are you a member of a political party? Would this influence you in dealings with the Liberal Federal and Conservative Provincial governments?

5. Are we being treated fairly by the provincial government? Why or why not?

Paula Amyoony

1. None.
2. I'm not familiar with the Senate debate but I do have a few ideas of my own. I would oppose increases in tuition, overcrowded classrooms, limited enrollments, and the high differential fees paid by foreign students.

3. Senate should establish a committee to look into differential fees. I would also like to bring issues such as school spirit and student affairs before Senate.

4. Yes, I'm a Young Liberal. It would influence me in that I know many Liberals and would have an easier time dealing with them.

5. The provincial government is unfair. They give too low a

priority to education.


Sandra Lovold

1. I have experience on a high school student council and as a liaison between the School Board and the student body on the issue of book censorship.

2. I'm aware that it's a fiscal debate but I'm not aware of the main points. I am aware of the general issues and I'll be looking into problems of fiscal efficiency.

3. I would raise issues such as communication with the community, general apathy, and university finance, by going to committees and speaking out.

4. No.
5. Yes and no. For the amount of work we do to try and present our side, and for the amount they put towards it, I would say no, but there's limits to what they can do. It's not fair for them to change the amounts of funding after telling us a figure, which we build our budget around.



Hollis at Morris

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CAPER

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**TUESDAY**  
OPEN MIKE

**WEDNESDAY-SATURDAY**  
WILLY HOP

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5:00 A.M. GOOD GOD WHAT TIME IS IT? WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO F. DON'T BOTHER ME. I HAV. WHAT A TYPICAL MALE C-P ATTITUDE FND OUT FOR YOURSELF. I'M JUST BEING A SHIT.

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