

Trouble ahead for U of A

by Allison Annesley

Quotas in the Faculties of Arts, Science, and Education may be introduced for the 1984 winter session, University President Myer Horowitz told students gathered in the Rutherford Concourse last Thursday.

As part of a forum address organized for the National Week of Students, a group of speakers each shared their views on the problems of quality versus access facing the University. In addition to Dr. Horowitz, Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Chair Brenda Cote, Federation of Alberta Students (FAS) President Don Millar, Graduate Students' Association (GSA) President Richard Jehn, and Association of Academic Staff at the U of A (AASUA) President Gordon Fearn all addressed concerns of post-secondary education.

As the Provincial budget was being announced that evening, Horowitz warned that unless the provincial grant increase for the operating budget of the University unveiled any surprises (the increase was a predictable five percent) "there is no question in my mind we're going to have to consider curtailing enrolment in faculties where we've never before had quotas."

FAS President Millar is concerned that government is reacting negatively to the current economic slump with cutbacks to post-secondary funding. "When times are tough we need more educated people...to meet the immense technological needs of the future."

Millar speculated that Advanced Education Minister Dick Johnston had declined an invitation to speak at the forum because of previous Minister Jim Horsman's promise during last year's Week of Students that the quality of education would not suffer. Johnston, Millar said, didn't show because the budget would not solve 20 per cent student unemployment in the summer, improve student aid program problems, or make up for the discrepancy that exists between the minimum savings requirement of the Student Finance Board and the wages paid to students in the government's Hire-A-Student program (the savings requirement is higher).

Sociology professor Gordon Fearn said, "I'm not so sure about this trade-off between quality and access." Fearn expressed fear that generous grants would not save the quality of education, while "quality clearly suffers in a period

of rapid expansion." Fearn believes "the major source of new revenue will not be found outside but from internal resources" and that we need a review of the duplication war and the deterioration of the curriculum core.

CFS Chair Brenda Cote expressed some optimism over Secretary of State Serge Joyal's recent announcement of an extension on student loan payments from six to eighteen months after graduation, which she attributed to lobbying. Federal aid eligibility for part-time students has also increased, but Cote stressed that the government continues to ignore the main issue: underfunding. Post-secondary institutions, she said, have been closed down or amalgamated in Nova Scotia, Ontario, and British Columbia.

GSA President Jehn didn't have any problems with quotas. Students who didn't get in because of academic ability, he said, can attend junior college to prepare for entrance.

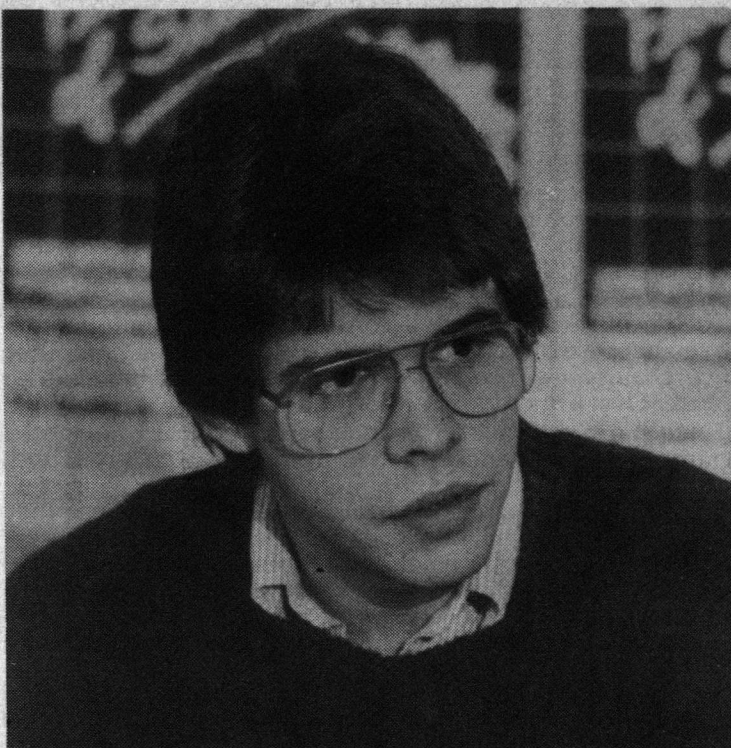
The budget announced in the Legislature that evening included a five per cent increase in the provincial grant to the University and as Dr. Horowitz said, there were no surprises.

FORUM STARS



U of A President, Myer Horowitz

photo Ray Ciguere



Federation of Alberta Students President, Don Millar

photo Bill Inglee



Canadian Federation of Students Chairperson, Brenda Cote.

photo Bill Inglee

PC'er speaks predictably

by Allison Annesley

Conservative party leadership candidate Peter Blaikie stressed strong support for private enterprise to a capacity crowd in the Law Centre Friday morning during a forum sponsored by the Campus PC Club.

Blaikie, a Rhodes scholar who served as national party president until January of this year, also expressed distaste for the Canadian "thrust of state intervention over the past fifteen years."

The private enterprise system, Blaikie said, is "the only economic system consistent with individual freedoms."

On unemployment, the Montreal lawyer believes growth must be generated "not by short term job creation" or by massive spending, a philosophy he attributed to the NDP, but with heavy Canadian investment and by encouraging traditional resource industries to modernize technologically.

Blaikie also wants strong federal assistance for exporters, of whom he says, "We have for far too long been scornful of success." The PC candidate supports healthy Canada/U.S. relations and asserts that Canadians have no basis for their inferiority complex. "The malaise in the land is basically a lack of self-confidence."

When asked how he would unite the Conservative party, Blaikie admitted that his party has not had enough public debate over issues while tending to debate personalities too much. Blaikie suggested the party "should debate issues and unify behind our decisions, once made." Blaikie also claims he has never been part of any party faction and told the crowd he had supported leader Joe Clark during his term as president.

Cruise missile testing in Alberta, Blaikie said, is necessary for Canada to demonstrate a responsibility to NATO, and therefore "we have to permit it."

Blaikie admitted that he had supported an amendment to the PC constitution denying a leadership review immediately after an election in which the leader has managed to form even a minority government: "The party can't be ripped apart by leadership discussions if there is going to be a general meeting every two years."

Westerners would have much better federal representation if the Conservatives took power Blaikie said and Western alienation would therefore be eliminated. He added "I would like to see two national parties represented across the country."

A massive study of how FIRA (Foreign Investment Review

Agency) should operate is needed Blaikie says because while he admires the restrictive policies of other countries stipulating foreign investors can own only up to 49 per cent of a company, in Canada "We would need to give them time to divest" or to apply restrictions only to certain industries. Blaikie also wants to increase the company size level below which FIRA won't interfere.

The candidate answered "yes" when asked if he thought the criminal justice system needed

more teeth. Though he said capital punishment should be a matter for a free vote, Blaikie supports the death penalty's re-instatement for murder. Blaikie also believes the present parole system is in need of major review.

When asked how he could hope to win Quebec support from fellow Montreal leadership candidate, Brian Mulroney, Blaikie answered "Brian and I are friends...we approach politics differently, though, I'm more issue oriented."

National student group rapidly losing support

OTTAWA (CUP)—The Canadian Federation of Students was sent reeling by a disastrous series of referenda losses this month.

The University of Toronto, Canada's largest post-secondary institution, decisively rejected the federation, as students voted an overwhelming 61 per cent against CFS.

The loss came on the heels of a string of earlier defeats. St. Mary's University, the first CFS member, voted March 8 almost 70 per cent in favour of pulling out. Then the University of Windsor rejected CFS by a 65 per cent margin, followed by Brock University (65 per cent) and the University of Victoria (51 per cent).

Only B.C.'s Kwantlen College supported CFS, with 70 per cent in favour.

CFS staff and executive members admit the defeats are a danger signal to the organization. They say CFS has lost momentum and must rethink its strategy if it is to escape the downward spiral that has killed preceding national student organizations.

CFS executive officer Diane Flaherty says the losses could mean the federation will have to do with less revenue after inflation next year.

Although CFS has won more money than it has lost through referenda this year, it will still drop \$27,000 the U of T paid for its membership in the National Union of Students, CFS's predecessor.

"We don't like to speculate on cutbacks, it's sort of a dirty word," Flaherty said. "It's not going to be a great year, but it's not a question of survival."

Flaherty said CFS should stop holding membership referenda and concentrate on campaigns.

"We've put the cart ahead of

the horse," said Flaherty. "We've said we're going to win all these referenda and then develop this wonderful organization we've all been promising."

"Perhaps we have to take a term or a whole year off from our membership drive and focus on our campaign. If we let referenda take precedence we may not have an organization to work with."

CFS chair Brenda Cote expects federation members will make several proposals for structural changes at the national conference next May. But she says the way to interest students in CFS is to become more militant.

"There's an attitude of 'don't go too far, otherwise you'll ruin the image of CFS,'" Flaherty disagrees. "She thinks CFS can't be too militant because students are not as militant as they were a decade ago."

"Students are not as militant as in the past but that does not preclude having a good campaign," Flaherty said. "The issues are there and our job is to get students involved."

"Quite frankly, I don't think we've been doing that." She partially blames recent referenda losses on member councils that say "you deliver or we'll pull out of CFS" instead of trying to work with other members on campaigns. "It's not the job of staff and the executive to make the campaign work, it's the job of student leaders across the country."

She said the recent losses are "a signal that we're not doing our jobs," and that CFS cannot grow unless it rethinks its strategy.

"Until we get the campaign back on track we'll continue to lose referenda."

Nader swings at video

(RNR/CUP)—Consumer crusader Ralph Nader is no fan of Pac-man, but he has discovered one video game to his liking.

It's called "China Syndrome." The goal: preventing a nuclear power plant meltdown.

Writing in Video Review magazine, Nader said he applauds the game's message, but the joystick "lacks the sensitivity to

give you a fighting chance." While this "may convey the message that controlling a nuclear reactor is dangerous," Nader adds that "playing an unrewarding game probably takes that lesson too far."

He has harsher words for Pac-man. "It was just gobble, gobble," he writes. "No social comment at all."