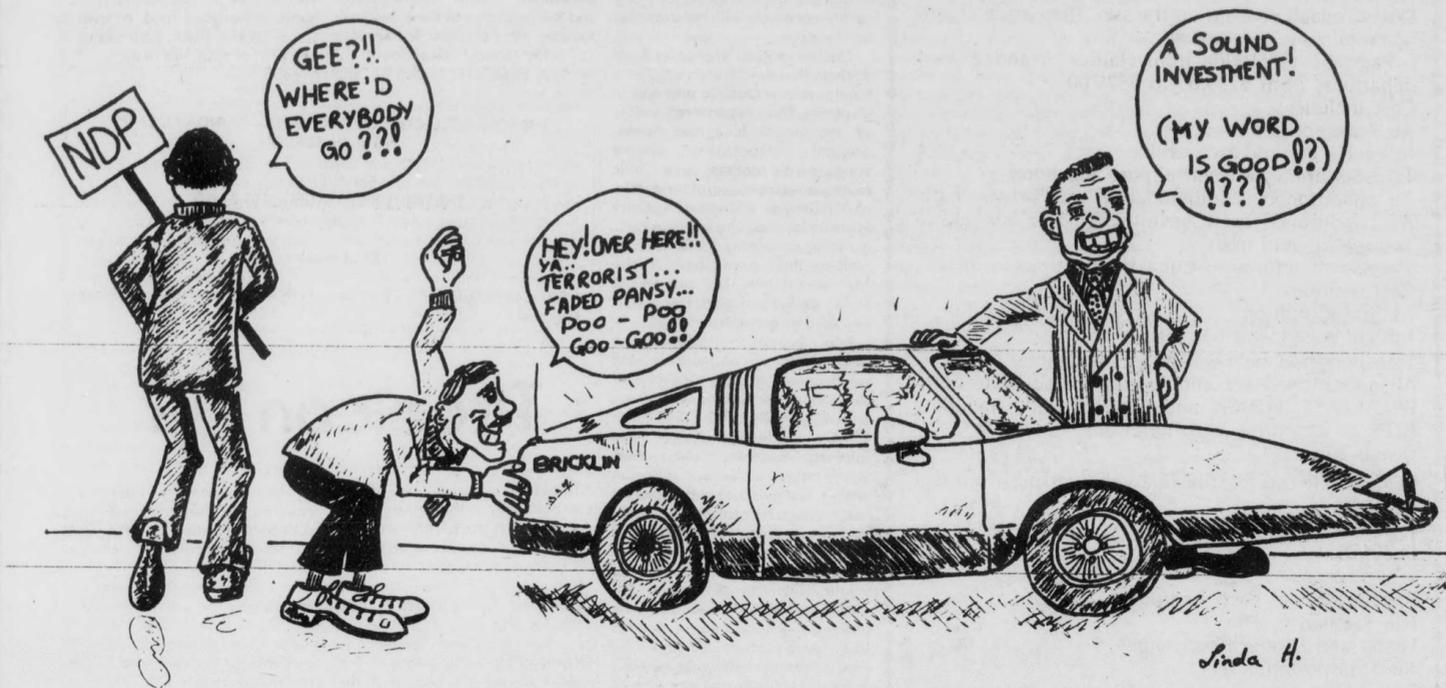


Political parties not up to par—they are the pits.



Linda H.

Have any of the parties done or said anything in the current provincial election campaign to merit a vote?

Premier Hatfield, whose Conservatives are seeking re-election to a third term of office, has promised the people more of the same. More than 300 lost jobs and \$22 million dollars later (six-sevenths of that money from Provincial Coffers), Mr. Hatfield not only isn't apologizing for the disaster that was Bricklin, but claims only another few million stood in the way of making this province the car capital of Eastern North America and that the people have to trust a government to take more such risks in future if New Brunswick is ever to pull up its bootstraps and surmount the economic doldrums.

He took a pie in the face last spring here with a certain aplomb, but students shouldn't forget how he either ignored questions they put to him, dodged issues they raised or laid blame for all problems at the door of the Federal Government when challenged at forums on this campus to defend his government's eight-year record. There have been lots of promises to ease students' financial plight but precious little performance.

Joe Diagle, opposition Liberal party leader less than six months and seeking only his second term in the legislature as an MLA can only offer promises regardless of the issue, student-related or otherwise. Naturally the new leader's performance to date comes under even closer scrutiny when people are being asked to take a flyer on an politically almost untested quantity.

His campaign rhetoric, beginning with his campaign kickoff press conference last month when he denounced the government's "record spending, record unemployment record debt," sounds like a broken record from the Conservative opposition's successful campaign in next-door Nova Scotia which ousted the Regan Liberal from eight years in office. All the talk of putting the civil service on a fat-free diet is certainly interesting coming from the party which in the 1960's did more than any other provincial government to vastly expand the civil service in Fredericton, calling the Premier a "faded pansy" was irrelevant, if tasteless. The other side of the Liberals' promised cutbacks in provincial government is inevitably more and bigger giveaways to the foreign, mainly U.S.-

controlled, resource multinationals—taking the Federal Liberals' performance as a guide in this regard.

Meanwhile there are John Labossiere's New Deomocratic troops standing little or no chance whatever of taking any seats anywhere once again, and running in only 36 of 58 ridings. Claiming to represent the interests of workers generally, in fact the NDP represents the interests of the better-off sections of working people and has no serious stake whatever in the socialism that it alternately brandishes and soft-pedals in B.C. Manitoba and Saskatchewan, it has proven ready to impose wage controls. Dr. Jean-Pierre Lantaigne and the Party Acadien sound and act much like and Acadian version of the NDP. A separate Acadian province in which the Acadian rich boss the Acadian poor all to themselves and in French is not going to arrest the effects, of deculturization and assimilation amongst the Acadians or end the double oppression of being treated historically as the cheapest of cheap labor by the rich, English, French, Canadian, American or whatever.

None of these political parties offer any way out of the

deepening and broadening crisis enveloping all spheres and all sections of people in this province and throughout Canada. Every one of them has a stake in upholding some or most aspects of the present state of affairs, regardless of their competing claims to have solutions to this or that particular.

Students have long since learned they must fight for their basic interests every step of the way and never rely on or generate faith in existing governments of any stripe to provide solutions. And the story is the same for all other sections of the society having to bear the burdens on their own shoulders of this current economic crisis.

At election time all the parties are tendering their verbal currency in the highest denominations but in practical politics they are in fact dealing in very small change. Any way you might want to cast your ballot this time around, you can only come up short.

We're not saying don't vote, that doesn't solve anything but just make sure that they know you're protesting against the lack of good candidates in this election.