

News/feature

# "An opportunity to lead Canada into the future" - McKinna

by Patricia McKinna

Students across Canada have been presented with a significant opportunity.

We have been asked to contribute our views on the destiny of the country by the Citizens' Forum on Canada's Future. Its our future, and we should make our voices heard.

As the Student Coordinator for the Citizens' Forum, I recently had the pleasure of speaking to the provincial student federations in Ontario, British Columbia, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. The purpose of my trip was to introduce myself, to provide information about the Forum, and listen to comments and answer questions.

One thing I found out right away, is that most of us recognize the Forum by the name of its Chair Keith Spicer. It's important to remember it is actually named after us. It is the Citizen's Forum. Contrary to the traditional royal commission, the Citizens' Forum is not about one man leading hearings. It was named with the expressed intent of putting the people in charge.

As citizens of Canada, our input is crucial to any and all reports that could conceivably affect the future of our country. As I was told by students in each province I visited, it is dangerous and unacceptable to allow a select few to make decisions on our behalf.

How did you feel during the final week of negotiations on the Meech Lake Accord? How did you feel about leaving your future in the hands of eleven men who were meeting behind closed doors? What opportu-

nity did you have to express yourself?

We must ensure that our concerns, opinions, and ideas are given a clear, distinct and leading voice.

In each province, I heard students express their concern about this country, about the issues facing us, and about our ability to make ourselves heard and understood. What chance do we really have of making a difference? Why bother?

The answer lies in the motto of the Canadian Federation of Students: **STRENGTH IN NUMBERS**. The Citizens' Forum has a mandate to listen to every Canadian who chooses to make his or her views known on a wide range of topics. The document that The Citizens' Forum will deliver to the government by July 1 will be a report of those views. Not the views of Keith Spicer or the eleven commissioners. We are writing this report.

How do you make sure you are heard?

Very simply. Organize a small group - half a dozen of your friends who get together on weekends. Or gather together a larger group of as many as twenty at a time through any of your clubs, associations, religious groups or sports groups. You'll be talking about what annoys you about the state of the country, what is important to you, what needs to be changed, and most importantly, how you would like to see Canada develop in the future. The Forum must hear what we think about the issues that concern all Canadians, and what can be done to

get things moving again. The Forum can help to get you started by providing you with a Discussion Kit, complete with moderators' guidelines and a postage prepaid envelope. Take notes at your meetings, then all you have to do is drop it in the mail. By doing this, you will have gone "on-the-record" with thousands of others across the country.

What assurance do we have that anything will change if we participate? Turn this question around. How can you expect any change if you don't participate?

If Canada is facing a crisis, remember that the work

"crisis" is derived from two Greek words meaning "danger" and "opportunity". Over the next several months, you have the opportunity to discuss our ideas with family, friends, professors, clubs, associations, and fellow Canadians from every province and territory. You have the opportunity to learn from other Canadians, and to challenge them to learn from you. You have the opportunity to lead Canada into the future, rather than react to yet another crisis.

One student in Ontario warned me that student participation in large numbers could

be dangerous, as if this were somehow undesirable. In fact, students must be dangerous. They must challenge the status quo, provoke new ideas for their country's future, and lead the discussion -- not only over the next few months, but into the months and years ahead. Remember, Canada's future is our future.

For more information about the Citizens' Forum, call 1-800-66-FORUM (English) or 1-800-56-FORUM (French).

Patricia McKinna is a graduate student at the University of Ottawa.

## UNB students attending Model UN event

(UNB-PRI) Kuwait and Germany, two countries whose international relationships have thrust them to the forefront of the world stage, are being represented by student diplomats from the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton at the sixth annual North American Model United Nations which convened on Feb. 20 in Toronto.

The five day event brings together students from about 70 North American and British universities and gives them the opportunity to experience first hand the responsibility of representing various national interests on the international stage.

Last year, a team of ten political science students from UNB represented Israel at the annual event and captured first prizes for best delegation, best judge in the International Court

of Justice, and best delegate to the Security Council, as well as an honorable mention in the special political committee category. Because of that strong showing, UNB was asked to represent two countries this year. The team's faculty adviser this year, as last, is Miron Rezun, a professor of political science on the Fredericton campus.

UNB's 1991 delegation comprises ten students, most of whom are political science majors in the faculty of arts. Joe Savoie, a third year student, is representing Germany as an economic and financial delegate. Mark Cove, in his fourth year of arts, is being an economic and financial delegate for Kuwait.

First year arts student Jean-Marc Connor is representing Germany as a social, cultural and humanitarian delegate, while Derek Dunnett, a third year student is serving the same country as a special political delegate. Rajeev Venu-gopal, another freshman in UNB's arts program is being a special political delegate for Kuwait, and third year arts student, William Mountain is representing Kuwait as a political security delegate.

Germany is also being represented by political security delegate Greg Hoard, a fourth year

arts student, while fellow senior Tami Richard is being a social, cultural and humanitarian delegate for Kuwait. Rounding out the UNB team are two disarmament delegates, third year student Kevin Bourque for Kuwait and sophomore Tammy Yates for Germany.

Ms. Richard, Ms. Yates, Mr. Dunnett and Mr. Savoie were also members of last year's UNB team. Last week, Mr. Savoie, who is acting as head of the German delegation, said the UNB team members are already doing research on the countries they represent. Before they left they had a final team meeting to help prepare new members for the experience.

"Both the unification of Germany and the war in the Persian Gulf have made it difficult for our team to prepare for the competition, because issues and events in both countries are in a constant state of flux," Mr. Savoie explained.

Funding for UNB's participation in this year's model UN, estimated at \$9,000, will be shared by the Military and Strategic Studies Program in the faculty of arts, the office of the president of UNB, the political science department, the Fredericton Student Union, and UNB's Associated Alumni.

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### NOTICE OF ELECTIONS

Nominations are invited for the election of student representatives as follows;

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS:** (Graduate or Undergraduate Students)

Two seats --terms ending 30 June 1992

**FREDERICTON SENATE:** (Undergraduate Students)

Four seats --terms ending 30 June 1992

One seat --term ending 30 June 1993

**ELECTION DATE:** TUESDAY, 26 MARCH 1991

**NOMINATIONS CLOSE:** Tuesday, 12 March 1991, at 4:30 p.m.

**ELIGIBILITY AND PROCEDURES:** inquire at offices of Student Union, SUB, or University Secretary, Room 110, Old Arts Building.

James Woodfield  
University Secretary