



Judy Erola

Ellen Mackenzie, Dal Photo.

Where are the critics?

By SAMANTHA BRENNAN

BRIAN MULRONEY AND the Conservative government have succeeded in buying the silence of their critics, said Judy Erola, former Liberal cabinet minister at the law school Jan 31.

What was billed as a lunch time lecture on affirmative action descended into an hour of political rhetoric as Erola launched into a partisan attack on the federal Conservatives.

Erola said she sees a strangely quiet Canada as the new government enjoys its "honeymoon with the Canadian public." She sees a Canada that is becoming more and more like the United States where people are fed a media-diet of "Nancy loves Ronnie, Ronnie loves Nancy and Nancy loves Ronnie."

The critics are silent, said Erola, not because there's nothing to criticize, but because the government has mastered a technique borrowed from Reagan and Ontario's Big blue Machine — buying out the opposition.

What's happened to the NDP and the labour movement? And what's happened to the outspoken spokespersons of the women's movement?" asked Erola. She said they've all been co-opted and have joined the big, happy Mulroney family.

Erola said the best example of the "buy and silence" technique was the appointment of Stephen Lewis to the United Nations. The move was not, as the media claimed, an attempt to "purify patronage" but a move to silence one of the nation's most articulate critics, said Erola.

As the Conservatives succeed in netting an ever-widening circle of critics it'll be a long time before we see any real battles in the political system, she said.

Erola did take time to applaud the efforts of Pierre Berton and Canadians like him who have spoken up against cuts to the CBC and funding for the arts. She also took the opportunity to criticize the Conservative's policy on social benefits and argue in favour of universal day care.

Erola began and ended her lecture by apologizing for its overtly political message. She referred to herself as a "political junkie who couldn't resist any opportunity to comment."

It was clear that Erola's distinctly liberal message did not rest well with many of the students in the lecture hall.

One woman in the audience rose and said that if Erola's analogy of the conservatives honeymoon was correct, then Erola herself sounded like a bitter divorcee.

Students not repentant about SINs

REGINA (CUP)- The University of Regina administration has asked its teaching assistants to monitor student attendance at seminars and laboratories using class lists complete with students' social insurance numbers.

Susan Saunders, head of the university's academic assistants' union, says the union is "gravely concerned" about the request and considers the use of the SIN's "a

gross invasion of privacy."

Saunders, however, did not say the union would deny the request.

The administration decided last October to replace student numbers with SINs as part of their new registration system on hold. But the university still has the students' numbers.

University registrar Noel

Stables said the university allowed students who refused to provide their SIN with different identification numbers. During the November registration, however, he threatened to disallow students from registration if they did not provide their numbers.

Student council president Lori Latta says the council wants to stop the administration's use of the numbers. She said she has contacted the union but no official meeting on the issue has taken place.

The council is conducting a survey to determine student response to the use of the numbers. About 250 questionnaires so far have been returned.

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Fri., Feb. 8th
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Fri., Feb 15
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