

News

CoR's Fraser: "By 2010, the country will be pretty much Oriental" All-candidates forum held at UNB

By Derek Carlisle

A candidate made what could be considered racist statements at the forum on educational issues held last Thursday.

The politicians running for election in the federal riding of Fredericton-York-Sunbury gathered at Tilley Hall to respond to questions from students.

In her opening remarks, Confederation of Regions candidate Doreen Fraser said it was a disgrace that Canadian students "have to go into a bank and prove they are worthy of a loan when foreign students come in wealthy."

She added that "by the year 2010 statistics show the country will be pretty much Oriental."

At this point the crowd collectively booed Fraser and shouts of "racist" were heard in the audience.

UNB Student Union President James van Raalte, who was the moderator of the forum, quickly responded to Fraser's remarks.

"UNB is a tolerant community that does not tolerate racism. All 500 international students on this campus are a valuable part of our life and we welcome them," said van Raalte.

van Raalte's comments drew the loudest applause of the evening, and Fraser did not factor in much during the rest of the debate.

At one point when she mentioned going to Ottawa after the election, one student remarked, "Yeah, on holiday."

Former third-year science student Mary St. Onge brought up the issue of recent cuts to daycare assistance by the provincial government for

students with children.

St. Onge told the candidates that she had been forced to withdraw from UNB the day before, because she no longer had enough financial resources to stay in school and provide care for her children.

"Now I'll have to go out of the province in January and separate myself from my husband in order to stay in school," said St. Onge.

Kelly McGuire said she also had to drop out of university because of the daycare cuts. McGuire addressed her question to Progressive Conservative candidate Bud Bird.

"I was told by (Human Resources Minister) Bernard Valcourt that you would not be cutting prison programs, but social programs would be addressed. My husband is in jail for trying to kill me and he is taking university courses," she said.

"His prison is like a country club. You can afford to give prisoners color television and university courses, but my children don't have day care. I'm very angry," McGuire added.

Bird promised he would look into the issue.

UNB VP External Hugh MacNeil conducted a quiz with each of the candidates and asked them for their best guess on the student loan default rate.

A wide range of answers were offered. Bird said there is a backlog of over 200 million dollars in the student loan system and that the student default rate was close to 20%.

Jack Lamey of the Reform Party said he was unaware of the figure.

New Democrat candidate Pauline MacKenzie said that the 200 mil-

lion dollars outstanding was only a small drop in the bucket compared to the billions removed by the federal Conservative party for health care and post-secondary education.

Only Andy Scott of the Liberal Party and Steve Gillrie of the Canada Party came up with the closest response at five per cent. (MacNeil said the actual default rate according to the Secretary of State is 5.2%)

St. Thomas Election Campaign Coordinator Kelly Lamrock asked each of the candidates where they stood on proposals to let banks take over the Canada Student Loans Program.

"Since 1964, you won't find a social program that has achieved as much as the Canada Student Loans Program. Yet, the new proposals that will allow banks to reject 18-year olds depending on their credit ratings is unfair and dehumanizing for two out of every three students at St. Thomas," said Lamrock.

Bird said he would support the implementation of an appeal process with the introduction of such a system.

MacKenzie said that her party supports the federal guarantee of loans that are currently in place.

Scott told the students that there is no mention of student assistance in the Liberal Party's federal Policy manual, but it should be included.

Jason Morton, provincial Chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students, asked Bird why the long-awaited announcement on increases to weekly Canada Student Loans amounts was not announced until just prior to the election call.

Bird said his party has had a commitment to increasing the loans and that by raising questions in the House of Commons, he was able to encourage the government to announce its intent.

"It has been announced, but why did she (Kim Campbell) not implement it when she became Prime Minister?" asked Morton. "Some of us are going through four years of a degree program with no sign of an increase," he added.

Neil Dickie of the Natural Law Party spoke of introducing his party's "scientifically validated solutions" to prevent student burnout, but failed to mention what these solutions were at any time in the debate.

During the debate, Canada Party candidate Steve Gillrie said that students failing to meet some type of minimum standards should have their access to student loans cut. Like Dickie, Gillrie failed to mention any specifics.

Last week's forum kicked off in the lobby of Tilley Hall featuring "KD with the candidates." Virtually all of the politicians and many students wolfed down a plate of Kraft Dinner prepared by Beaver Foods.



CoR candidate Doreen Fraser was "booed" by students for her insensitive remarks concerning international students. Photo by Carrie Ramsey.

Referendum results: 3 to 1 in favour of new student health plan

by Jonathan Stone

UNB students have overwhelmingly said 'Yes' to a new health plan designed by the Canadian Federation of Students.

After heavy turnout, the results of the byelection referendum were 984 in favour, and 331 against, with 38 spoiled ballots.

"The turnout was amazing. The Health Plan results are great," said an elated Student Union President Jamie van Raalte.

Every single poll went Yes, although a large amount of No's were cast in the Faculty of Engineering's Head Hall.

And van Raalte said that there was five times the turnout in Nursing and Education than usual.

Now the results of the referendum will be examined by the university administration, who have indicated that this plan will be possible if and only if UNBSJ gets similar coverage.

UNBSJ students will be faced with a referendum sometime soon.

In other byelection results, Pat Fitzpatrick is the new VP Univer-

sity Affairs, with 747 votes, beating Doug MacLean with 386. There were 99 spoiled ballots.

Paul Estabrooks is now VP Finance and Administration after getting 566 votes, while Richard DiGiacinto earned 389 and Euan MacAllistair got 184. There were 92 spoiled ballots.

There was a tie for Arts Representative, between Cheryl McLean and Patty Smyth, at 140 votes a piece. Under the Student Union's constitution, they will be required to flip a coin or draw lots.

There were a total of 4237 ballots cast.

If implemented, the CFS Health Plan will cost \$100 for 12 months, as opposed to the current \$25.

However, the new plan would include an 80% discount on oral contraceptives, which account for 30% of prescriptions filled by university students.

Students will also receive a pay-direct card used to purchase prescriptions, and a 24-month \$80 allowance called VisionCare, which is good for prescription optical needs.

New computer lab in Harriet Irving Library

by Mark I. Minor

What happens when two UNB departments join forces to maximize use of existing resources?

Why, a new computer lab, of course. Computing Services realized that they had some extra equipment and the Harriet Irving Library was an ideal place to put it.

The result: a new computer lab located in the basement of the Library.

The new lab consists of 17 PC's and 10 terminals which are routed to an Epson dot-matrix printer.

Packages such as WordPerfect, a spreadsheet, a statistics application, Music, InterNet and, of course, Phoenix will be accessible.

As well, a site license is being sought for a package which will allow students to bibliograph sources directly from Phoenix.

The H.I.L.'s Alan Burk told The

Brunswickan that this and other upgrades would be made as time and money allow. He said upgrading the printing feature is highly dependent upon creating a way to manage the use of a more elaborate machine.

Burk said that the cost for the joint initiative was modest at approximately five thousand dollars.

He added that Computing Services deserves most of the credit considering that they were seeking a home for existing equipment.

The facility will hold its Grand Opening on Tuesday, October 12 at 4:00pm.

David MacNeil will represent Computing Services and John Teskey will speak for the H.I.L.

Coffee and snacks will be available, and there will be signs posted to direct those who wish to attend the opening or to use the new facility.