

Energy is the issue, says Pratt

by Alison Thomson

A rapid increase in energy prices and full Canadian ownership of natural resources is necessary, said Dr. Larry Pratt, of the Department of Political Science Saturday.

Pratt was addressing the Canadian University Society for Intercollegiate Debate at its awards banquet at the Four Seasons Hotel.

Pratt commended the debaters on their skills, noting that "in Alberta we don't have parliamentary debates, we have annual reports from the Chairman of the Board."

He said Canadians must develop a sensible and decent energy policy before it's too late.

He discussed various alternatives for a Canadian energy policy, beginning with the argument that Ottawa should have full and complete control over resources. Pratt went through several reasons why this would not work.

He pointed out that this would make a dubious contribution to national unity, especially from the West's perspective. All provinces own resources, and all would be wary of the possibility of these measures being used against them, he said.

Second, he said, this policy assumed that Ottawa is competent, and said he does not share this assumption. "The federal government has an outrageous

record in managing resources, especially in the north and offshore. They'd probably sell the resources to the States," he said.

Finally, Pratt said using non-renewable resources is like consuming capital. He said were the control of energy to be in the hands of Ottawa, the revenues would be spent. "Ottawa cannot save money," he said. For these reasons, Pratt concluded control of resources should not be solely in the hands of Ottawa. He then considered the Ontario position that there should be cheap domestic oil and gas.

He said to force Alberta to provide an internal program of foreign aid is not logical, because to maintain low prices for energy encourages scarcity.

"It is inequitable," he said. "It forces the next generation to pay for our excesses."

We should therefore accept the inevitable and allow the prices to rise, both because the higher prices are what it costs to import petroleum, and because that is what it will cost us to replace the resources when the cheaper energy sources have been exploited, Pratt said.

Furthermore, he said, the provinces should own and control their own natural resources.

Pratt discussed one objectionable side effect of allowing energy prices to rise. It means foreign controlled companies

would take large profits, and buy up yet more Canadian industries, he said.

Public policy should discourage more and more foreign ownership of Canadian resources, Pratt stated. He pointed out that for every dollar per barrel price rise in oil, twenty one cents goes out of the country.

We must face up to the need to control our own resources by using public capital and public companies, he said. Nationalizing the entire industry is beyond the economic and political will of the country at the moment.

This expenditure of public capital would mean new jobs and new industries, he said.

Referring to the debate final on the topic "East is East, and West is West and never the twain shall meet," Pratt noted that one thing the East and the West do have in common is that "we don't own our own country."



photo Travis Huckell

Political science professor Larry Pratt.

Group formed in Edmonton Petition hits opposition

A committee to oppose the *People to People Petition for Canadian Unity* and to defend Quebec's right to self-determination has been formed in Edmonton.

The group, unofficially known as the Committee for the Defense of Quebec's Right to Self-Determination, has about ten members. And committee representative Michel Gagnon emphasizes the group does not support either side in the referendum campaign.

However the group wants to ensure that "the Quebecois have the right to choose freely without any threats or intimidation from outside," says Gagnon.

He objects to what he terms the petition's "chauvinism," citing especially its failure to recognize Quebec's right to determine its future. "Basically, it says that Quebec has the right to choose its government as long as it remains in Canada."

"The petition never refers to Quebec as a nation, just as a culture," says Gagnon, "but it is a nation, with its own history language, boundaries, culture and so on."

Gagnon agrees with a similar Toronto committee that "the Quebec nation was incorporated into the Canadian Confederation without the consent of its people... it has never had the

right to self-determination, that is the right to choose its political status freely."

The *People to People* petition's honorary chairperson for Alberta is Jean Forest, who has said that Quebecers have the right to determine their own future. Forest also says she hopes "the petition will be one more factor weighed in the decision of Quebecers." Gagnon commented that Forest might sincerely believe that, "but I think she is naive as to what use will be made of the *People to People* petition."

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Petition with hydro bill causes uproar

VANCOUVER (CUP) - A University of British Columbia professor is taking BC Hydro to task for distributing pro-federalist petitions with hydro bills.

Phil Resnick is threatening to sue hydro for printing and distributing petitions with the November-December hydro bill calling for a united Canada.

The petition was written by *People to People*, a pro-federalist group, and urges British Columbia to support the federalist cause in the upcoming referendum debate.

Resnick said he objects to hydro ratepayers footing the bill for political propaganda.

Hydro chairman Robert Bonner authorized the spending of \$8,500 for the printing of the petition, he said.

"I've got no objection to these groups expressing their

opinions but I do object to them masquerading as non-partisan and non-political. It shows how far the federalist forces are prepared to go to promote their cause."

Resnick said he is not ready to sue personally BC Hydro over the matter, deducted for his last hydro bill as a protest against public fundings of the petition.

He suggested concerned lawyers or political groups take Hydro to court over the issue. "Perhaps a committee of some kind could be struck to investigate the affair," he said.

Resnick added the petition was part of a nation-wide campaign to use public funds to support the federalist option.

"People to People gets money from the federal government, from Wintario and the BC Lotteries Fund. This in itself is a questionable use of public funds."



The \$110,000 revamped south entrance to the Civil Electrical Engineering is nearing completion. The university administration says the efficiency, safety and ease of maintenance should be improved.

SU briefs Minister's committee

The Students' Union expressed its opposition to tuition increases at a public meeting of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Student Affairs Saturday.

The committee, which advises Jim Horsman, Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, on matters affecting students, heard SU briefs on tuition increases and on university accessibility and academic quality.

The SU presentation on tuition pointed out that if university fees are increased by 10 per cent this year, it will be the third tuition hike in the last five years - making fees a total of more than 50 per cent higher than in 1975.

A declining participation

rate in university due at least partly to student financial problems is also cited in the brief.

It recommends that the provincial government freeze tuition fees at the present level to help ensure that "all qualified students in Alberta can attend, rich and poor, urban and rural, young and old."

The Federation of Alberta Students (FAS) also made a presentation at the meeting, expressing two primary concerns.

The FAS brief states that "since higher education plays a major role in the development of our society and our economy, public policy must preserve our institutions of higher learning."

FAS' second major concern

is that access to higher education be open to all people regardless of their personal wealth.

A final presentation to the committee was made by Graduate Students Association president Myron Oleskiw. He said many of the concerns expressed by the SU held true for graduate students as well.

He particularly stressed the problems graduate students face because of the difficulty of holding outside jobs to supplement their incomes.

Oleskiw also cited a decline in the number of graduate students receiving graduate assistantships, the slow increase of the amount granted by these assistantships and the differentials that exist in the pay scales in different departments in the university.

Rhinos on rampage in Alberta

by Jim McElgunn

The Rhinoceros Party of Canada invaded the Hotel Vega bar Wednesday night, and Alberta politics seem unlikely to recover.

Leader of the party's "redneck rump" and alleged *Edmonton Sun* columnist Dave Billington says they hope to field five Alberta candidates in the coming federal election.

The Alberta Rhinos derive their inspiration from the largely Quebec-based Rhinoceros Party of Canada, although the exact relationship between the two is somewhat fuzzy. The national party has been satirizing federal politics since 1964, although it was not until 1979 that they ran

candidates outside Quebec.

The Rhino Party favours a repeal of the law of gravity. They also propose a phased-in conversion to driving on the left side of the road, beginning with trucks and buses.

The focus in this election is on their opposition to the defeated Conservative budget, because of its lack of provision for subsidization of the dog food industry. "That's hitting the old-age pensioner where it hurts — at the dinner table," according to their national chairman.

Meanwhile, the party was making rapid advances in Edmonton. A somewhat drunk but very enthusiastic crowd of about sixty people braved bitter cold to

listen to "Ayatollah Billington," the self-proclaimed dictator of the Rhino prairie caucus.

Amid fierce heckling from his supporters, Billington announced the Rhinos will run a candidate in the Yellowhead riding "so good that Joe Clark will be sure to get re-elected."

"Clark is the funniest thing to happen to Canadian politics in the last fifty years," said Billington. "Can you imagine not being able to watch that little yo-yo in the Commons with his feet not quite able to touch the floor?"

Billington said he was confident they could find a candidate

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