



The workshop focussed on one of the main issues of the youth forum: the environment. Youth shared their personal experiences of the environment taking a back seat to globalization and industrialization.

Native Youth Movement workshop: raising awareness

by Jessica Kraitberg

The Native Youth Movement workshop started with a traditional Native "sage circle," where a bowl of burning sage is passed around a circle to cleanse bad spirits from the room.

Youth delegates then moved into a "talking circle," where a feather is passed around the circle. When the participants received the feather, they told their name, age, nationality and what they knew about Native people.

The talking circle was followed by a group discussion, where youth heard of the origins of the Native Youth Movement, which began in Winnipeg, Manitoba six or seven years ago. There had been a lot of Natives in Winnipeg involved in prostitution, killings, and suicides, and a group of Native youth decided to take matters into their own hands. They started educating themselves, and formed the NYM. The goal of the NYM is to raise awareness; for example, on child apprehension.

The workshop then broke into smaller groups to discuss APEC, how it will affect Indigenous cultures globally, and who it was really designed for.

The workshop was facilitated by Honey Desjarlais, Jair Machado, Nena Pierre and Billie Pierre. Desjarlais left the group with this remark: "To sum it up, APEC will be very negative to Native people."

Labour economics workshop: understanding the wave of the future

by Tiffany Kalanj, 17, Port Coquitlam

Economics is the force behind APEC. Understanding how it works helps youth make reforms to it. Profit margins,

government policies and supply and demand all determine workers' wages around the world. Delegates discussed how these things effect unemployment, especially for youth. Ideas such as cooperative learning, apprenticeships, student loans and extra training programs for students still in high school were all indicated as solutions to youth unemployment. A suggestion was made about corporations funding these programs. Arciris Garay, a facilitator, raised the concern for the future that, "We won't be able to learn for learning's sake" if private enterprise funds education. Basic economics and ideas on how to reform today's economy were the main focus of this workshop.

Anti-free trade activist addresses youth

by Alice Schwarz, 17, West Vancouver

David Orchard, a fourth generation wheat farmer, anti-free trade activist, and author, was the afternoon guest speaker for the second day of the Youth Forum. Orchard made the point that he was not a politician or a lawyer, just a citizen concerned about the effects of free trade on Canada, and interested in educating other people.

Orchard's powerful speech included the claim that the United States has a long history of attempts to dominate Canada, beginning with military attacks and then through economic war. He spoke at length about NAFTA – the North American Free Trade Agreement – noting that free trade initially had no support in the American government, and leaders realized the issue had to be pushed.

"Now they know that they can't get people to vote for the free trade agreement in a democratic way," said Olive, "they have to use an iron fist to get them going."

Orchard addressed the outcomes of free trade, and how they were not as successful as promised. For example, the jobs that were promised never materialized, but the unemployment rate doubled. Orchard also spoke of other outcomes, such as slashes to social programs.

