

# Before our time...

I feel a bit sorry for students who run in the SU general elections, because they are usually expected to stand in front of hostile and cynical audiences to discuss issues that only a few

seem interested in. A fair deal of confidence is required to "face the lions" during the campaign, and I respect most candidates who take the chance.

Nonetheless, and despite my best intentions, it is difficult to avoid cynicism when considering this year's slates contesting the election. The only significant difference I can discern is one of political naivete: at the election forum, presidential candidate Scott Thorkelson displayed a frightening lapse of political cool and plain good taste.

Pressed by a string of students asking him difficult and somewhat embarrassing questions, Thorkelson shot back and accused his

questioners of being "plants" placed by the opposition candidates. He went on to name names, including people who hadn't even asked questions but were merely attending the forum.

As a presidential candidate, Thorkelson should be ready for criticism and constant evaluation, no matter how hard he tries to avoid it. Plants are as common as pamphlets at election forums, and any candidate worth his nomination deposit is prepared to deal with them, come forum time. Playing into the hands of his baiters by losing his cool and accusing virtually every familiar face in the theatre of being a plant lost Thorkelson a lot of respect that he just couldn't afford to lose.

Later, the entire Thorkelson slate left the forum before it had been officially adjourned. Thorkelson stated "classroom speaking commitments" as the reason for their early departure. Alas, Scott, this I find difficult to believe.

Anyone who has an inkling of the nature of Students' Union campaigns realizes that the Wednesday forum is the single most important function held during election week. No one who wants to win schedules lesser events during the forum hours. To leave the stage before the end of the forum is absolutely inexcusable, and Thorkelson might well have said "Vote for the Astley slate."

Because of the attention Thorkelson drew upon himself, his opponent Nolan Astley was able to escape any serious questioning. This was unfortunate, because Astley's platform has more holes in it than I care to count.

Astley strikes me as a nice, Joe Clark type, molded in the Dean Olmstead style. If Astley is elected, we can likely expect a very similar year to this one: the slate will probably spend most of its time avoiding controversy and worrying about its image. The slate ran a boring campaign, and one of the reasons Astley avoided being pinpointed at the forum is

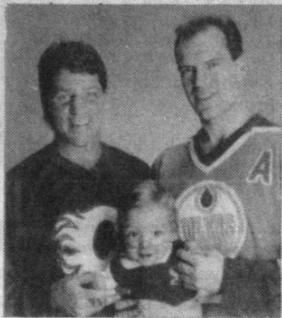
because there was nothing controversial in his campaign.

That's the key. Despite my own and other people's opinions about Thorkelson's platform, it at least outlined some specific proposals and ideas. Astley meticulously avoided saying anything that was worthy or controversial enough for discussion. And he'll probably win the election because of it.

The only people at the forum who seemed interested in anything but political posturing were the three independent candidates, Darrell Rankin, Mary Ann Gillies, and Ron Snyder. It's unfortunate that Snyder and Gillies are fighting for the same post, because both of them, as well as Rankin, deserve to win (at least on the basis of their campaigning).

The slate system is obsolete. Let's recognize that finally and then do something about it. That is, if anyone still cares.

**Gordon Turtle**  
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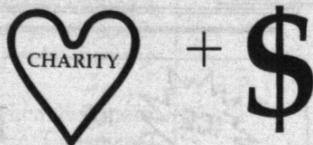
Brian McAdam with Mark Messier and Paul Reinhart, co-chairpersons of the Christmas Seal Campaign.

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# Student Election Issues

The Federal Election Will Occur Monday, November 21, 1988

When you vote, please consider the candidates' stance on Student Issues. Only by making the candidates consider Student Issues *Now* will we be able to improve our situation.



## What will the Candidates do about Student Income Tax?

### Facts:

- The Student Income Tax Exemption was introduced in 1973 at \$50.00 for every month that a student attends a post-secondary institution.
- It is designed to recognize student expenses like books, rental accommodation, and transportation that are non-tax deductible.
- It now sits at \$60.00 per month - an increase of only 20% in 15 years.
- In the same period, Housing has increased over 300%, textbooks have increased over 225%, tuition has increased over 100%, and food has increased over 100%.

## The Deduction Has NOT Kept Pace With Our Expenses!!

Ask the Federal Candidates about the Student Income Tax Exemption — Will they increase it to make up for past inequities and will they continue to increase it to keep pace with our increasing costs?

## What will the Candidates do about funding Post-Secondary education?

### Facts:

- Because of Bill C-96, passed in 1986, Federal Funding transfers to Alberta will be reduced \$743 million from 1986-1991. Federal support for Universities is declining as a result.
- Federal funding is now given in a block untied grant. Provinces do not have to spend federal money intended for post-secondary education on post-secondary education, and they do not have to contribute a set amount of the province's money.
- Provincial contributions to post-secondary education are therefore decreasing.

Will the candidates work to ensure Federal funding for Post-Secondary education is a priority?

Will the candidates work to ensure that Federal funding is given contingent on provinces also contributing a set amount to Post-Secondary education?