

Axe worthy of grinding

Maureen Brown

When Manitoba Liberal, Lloyd Axworthy arrived in the Senate Chamber at York on Monday, he remarked, "I approach this discussion with some degree of trepidation, since York has recently acquired a national reputation as being a political minefield for aspiring politicians."

argued that Canada's west is civilized and sophisticated.

Furthermore, he said "the centre of Canadian nationalism in terms of the ambition to own our own industries is now in Western Canada. We are becoming increasingly equal to central Canada in our sophistication and the nature of our industrial base."

Axworthy suggested that the best way Westerners can achieve their ambitions and aspirations to become a fully grown, mature economic unit is not to rely on provincial governments but to endorse a more dominant central government. "Contrary to what you normally hear from Western politicians—both federal and provincial—that the way to salvation is through provincial redemption...it has already gone too far. We are in danger of indulging and frittering away one of the great economic opportunities of our time simply because we are not allowing the federal government to play its full role in regional development."

In reference to Quebec Liberal

leader Claude Ryan's recent white paper on constitutional reform Axworthy remarked, "Ryan's proposals have strong federal elements; the spirit is a welcome point of view."

Regarding the current polls in

which the Liberal party has been losing momentum, Axworthy commented, "We are ahead and will be on election day. People do not believe Joe Clark can manage a government and he has shown he can't."



The MP for Winnipeg-Fort Garry, recently touted as a possible successor to Liberal Leader Pierre Trudeau, discussed some "made-in-Western-Canada issues", in his talk "A New Federalism for Western Canada".

Before arriving at the crux of his message, Axworthy said he wanted to dispel some of the current myths about westerners like the image of "a Calgarian in boots, at a ranch with a barbecue and oil gusher in the back." He

believes that this economic boom in western Canada can only help the rest of Canada.

But, in his opinion the biggest impediment to the full utilization of the Western economy for the entire country is our present political structure, and the attitudes that go along with it. "We have allowed, in the last several years, for the pendulum of federal/provincial arrangements to swing increasingly toward more decentralization, more provincial rights, more separation."

88 think it's great

Jonathan Mann

Eighty eight per cent of the 150 votes cast by members of the Graduate Assistants' Association supported the contract agreement reached by the GAA negotiating committee and the university administration, according to Chief Union Steward Leslie Sanders.

The 750 member union has won a one year contract, giving its membership greater job security, salary increases averaging 9.5 per cent, and contract clauses on maternity and sick leave.

The contract is the first offered to any Canadian TA's with some form of job security.

More strike talk

Michael Monastyrskyj

Between the GAA and YUFA, this campus has heard a lot of strike talk this year. Last Wednesday, we listened to more, as Ontario Liberal leader Stuart Smith and York professor H. Glasbeek debated whether teachers have the right to strike. However, the subject of the Moot court discussion was secondary and elementary school teachers, not university professors and teaching assistants.

Smith argued against allowing teachers to strike, because by doing so, "you are interfering with a very basic right." He agreed that a person's right to withdraw his services was a fundamental liberty, but holds that it must not interfere with society's obligation to give every child an education.

Smith then listed statistics which showed that in 1975-76, students with average grades dropped out of school at higher

rates if they came from schools with striking teachers.

"The right of equality of opportunity, to the extent we can provide it, has to be the hallmark of liberalism." He added that the right to strike must take second place "provided that there is a reasonable alternative to the strike mechanism."

This alternative according to Smith, is compulsory arbitration. He pointed to its application in Manitoba, which he called "particularly successful."

Smith believes, however, that some civil servants should be allowed to strike. Saying that a student can learn more from a good book than from the verage university lecture, Smith added, "I would take university professors as an example."

Osgoode's Glasbeek began his argument by remarking, "I don't know if you realize it, but I've been set up. I've been asked to

stand up for the proposition that hurts children."

Glasbeek said that in his native Australia, despite compulsory arbitration, "schools have been struck and locked out endlessly."

With slight sarcasm the professor added that this has "closed opportunities. That's why we flee to Canada."

In reply to Smith's charge that teacher strikes hurt the equality of opportunity for students, Glasbeek point to Canada's large disparities in wealth and opportunity. Why, he asked, should teachers be forced to follow a principle ignored by the rest of Canadian society?

Glasbeek ventured that the higher drop out rate cited by Smith was more likely caused by the recession than by walkouts. According to Glasbeek, by withdrawing their services, bus drivers and garbagemen cause more damage than do striking teachers.

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