

## Swedish Green visits N.S.

by Alex Boston

Per Gahrton, photo-journalist, sociologist, and most notably Swedish Green Party MP, spoke to an engaged full house at the MacMechan auditorium Tuesday evening.

Typical of the party's empowerment/grass roots themes, Stephen Russel, a first-year King's student, gave the introduction. Russel, while lacking the eloquence of most political speakers, spoke of the state of the Green Party of Canada.

Internationally, Green Parties have consolidated numerous formal environmental and social movements into popular vehicles, successfully promoting change within political arenas from the community to the continental level. Green Parties are represented in national parliaments throughout Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and the Soviet Union.

In Canada, most movements haven't the maturity, interest, following and most evidently the solidarity of Green politics. There are a number of factions that share a similar vision, but in typical Canadian style, are debating over philosophical differences in the origin of our global environmental crisis. In spite of this controversy, Green Parties have been established federally, and in the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario. In Quebec's last provincial election, Greens received a greater popular vote than the NDP.

In Europe, Per Gahrton said, the debate is more pragmatic than theoretical; Greens share a broader identity and philosophy. They are individuals from diverse socio-economic backgrounds who have lost faith in the goals, institutions, and decision-makers of existing society. They are alternative thinkers and doers, concerned about our economic

system. They recognize that in order to achieve a sustainable, egalitarian society they must proceed through disruptive public demonstrations against the status quo, and policy proposals of a constructive nature in 'legitimate' institutions. Their platforms and actions do not originate from some central bureau on a parliament hill or the doctrines of deified leaders like Karl Marx or Adam Smith, but have simply developed from the grass roots groups at the regional level up. They have imposed restrictions to retain a check on the "golden rule of oligarchy" — the law that has enabled partisan organizations like the NDP to manifest in themselves ideals of a peculiar similarity to those self-serving, capitalistic elites they have hoped to displace.

Ironically, Per Gahrton responded to questions about Green welfare policies with the vague confidence of any politician. Nevertheless, the intent of the presentation was not to increase awareness of Swedish Green Party policies or revolutionary solutions to social, economic and environmental issues, but to enlighten the general public of a refreshing, truly democratic, holistic perspective from which these issues can be addressed.

## Green boardrooms?

by Andrew Poon

A decade, the span of the '90s, was the deadline that Colin Isaacs predicted the world had to tackle the problem of pollution before damage to the environment became irreversible.

Isaacs, the past Executive Director of the Pollution Probe Foundation, and representatives from the federal government, the Ontario provincial government, industry, and academic along with close to 70 business students from across Canada, gathered in Hamilton, Ontario, this past weekend for the Eleventh Annual Canadian MBA Conference. The topic of discussion was "Greening the Boardroom", the role of business and government in tackling the mounting issue of the environment's decline.

Isaacs, perhaps best known for his work with the Loblaws supermarkets' G.R.E.E.N. products campaign, advocated the concept of sustainable development, "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

This framework to solve the world's environmental and economic problems first surfaced in 1987 in a report entitled "Our

Common Future" by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), a commission established by the United Nations in 1983.

Others attending the conference agreed with Isaacs. Madelyn Webb, Director of Environment for the federal government in Ontario, supported sustainable development as the way to go in facing up to today's environmental crisis. She urged businesses and consumers to "think globally and act regionally" in their approach to the problem.

Webb also said the federal government would be announcing in the spring a national agenda addressing the environment. When pressed for details, she said none had been provided by Ottawa as yet.

The representatives from Noranda, Stelco, Dow Chemical, Procter & Gamble, and Ontario Hydro in attendance at the conference all cited examples of how their companies were dealing with the issue.

In the case of Procter & Gamble, the manufacturers of such products as fabric softener and disposable diapers, they claim to have taken a solid waste management approach. They point to

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