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All the gruelling preparation and coaching is for the exams, not for university itself. In fact, a university education in Japan is little more than four years of relaxation and socializing. Society and government alike see university as a reward for passing the entrance examination.

Yukio Hatoyama, a prominent LDP member of the Diet (the Japanese parliament), explains the reasoning behind a light university curriculum.

"In Japan, students have to study hard in primary and secondary school to win the severe entrance competitions," he says. "Because of the vigorous competition they really have no time to make friends, to play or to associate with other people. In that respect, I think a university education is valuable. If they really want to study, they go on to graduate school."

University students are usually busier with 'club activities' than with

studying. They consciously build connections which will help them when they leave school and enter a business world where what you know is less important than who you know or where you went to school.

The Japan Teachers' Union, representing 49 per cent of the country's teachers, is one of the loudest lobby groups on education reform. The JTU attracts criticism because of its opposition to nationalism in the classroom and standardized education. The Union's annual spring convention in Tokyo this year attracted strong pro-

"We are becoming what is called an academia society"

test from rightist groups.

"The Teachers' Union is our National Enemy," was the slogan proclaimed by rightists over loudspeakers, as their vans flooded the busy city core where the conference was taking place. Riot police were stationed on the site and near government building.

"The Japan Teachers' Union is very anti-government," says Kunio Hatoyama, brother to Yukio and also a Diet member. "They are very hostile. One specific example is they refuse to sing the Japanese national anthem or have the Japanese flag hoisted at the school. They also reject the government-prescribed curriculum and government-issued textbook. They really oppose all moves made by the government to improve the quality of education."

The hostility on both sides has meant that the Ministry of Education and the teachers' union have not negotiated in twenty years. And if the government is not responding to the pressure from this, the most active lobby group on education in Japan, neither does it respond to a student movement which is virtually nonexistent.

Canada can learn much from Japan's education system. But before we begin to emulate, we must look beyond the statistics and decide: what is the real price?

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ACTION CALENDAR

Thursday 1

EVENTS

AIDS ON CAMPUS Dr. Jerry Kates, lecture, ATH Hall Heritage Lng 12:30pm.

MUGS general meeting and brainstorming session, Power Plant 5pm.

SOUTH MORESBY NATIONAL PARK A New Park in the Queen Charlotte Islands, lecture, Thom Henley, HUM L-1 7:30pm, free.

BOOK SALE Centennial Library Sir W. Churchill Sq. downtown, 1-2pm, 6-9pm, free.

THE ACCOMPANIST'S ROLE interpreting text, Dep't of Music, lecture, John Wustman FINE ARTS 129 2pm.

EDDIE 'CLEANHEAD' VINSON blues, Yardbird 103st 86av, students 1/2 price.

EXHIBITS

STRUCTURED PARADISE: A National Park Experience, photographic documentation of Banff, Ring House Gallery UofA, 11am-5pm free.

4 SEASONS IN COLOR photo exhibit, Custom Slide Printing 207 12306 Jasper, 10am-5pm free.

LOOKING THROUGH THE GLASS 5 women photographers, Latitude 53 Gallery 10920 88av, 10am-6pm free.

SOMETHING DIFFERENT Calgary art, symbol & style, Edmonton Art Gallery Sir W. Churchill Sq., 10:30-5pm, \$1/\$2.

FILM

LOCAL HEROES Films & Symposia, films and their makers, Citadel 9828 101A av, 426-4811, per day \$9.

AFTER HOURS Princess 9:30.

Friday 2

EVENTS

BOOK SALE annual sale at the Centennial Library, Sir W. Churchill Sq. 1-2pm, 6-9pm, free.

OKTOBERFEST lots of food & beer, Convention Ctr 7pm, \$11 tix: 421-9797.

CELEBRITY HOCKEY Oilers & local celebs in two 15min periods, Mayfield Inn 16615 109av 6:30pm, free

NORTH AMERICAN & EUROPEAN FOLK music, ProCoro, All St's Anglican Cathedral 10039 103st 8pm.

MASTERCLASS SERIES piano recital by John Wustman, CON Hall 7pm.

EDDIE 'CLEANHEAD' VINSON blues, Yardbird 103st 86av, 432-7166.

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FILM

MONTY PYTHON & The Holy Grail Princess 9pm.

LOCAL HEROES Films & Symposia, films and their makers, Citadel 9828 101A av, 426-4811, per day \$9.

Saturday 3

EVENTS

FOOTBALL Bears vs. Manitoba Bisons, Varsity Stadium UofA 1pm, \$1.

BOOK SALE Centennial Library annual sale, Sir W. Churchill Sq. 1-2pm, 6-9pm, free.

OKTOBERFEST lots of food & beer, Convention Ctr 9797 Jasper 7pm, \$11 tix: 421-9797.

KLONDIKE WRESTLING Northlands Agricorp 8pm, \$8-10.

MASTER CLASS SERIES piano recital by John Wustman, FINE ARTS 129 1pm.

CHARLIE PRIDE Jubilee Auditorium, 9:45pm \$21.

SIELIES SCOTTISH HARP DUO South-Side Folk Club, Orange Hall (behind the Strathcona bus barns) 7:30-11:30pm, \$10.

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FILM

BRAZIL Directed by Monty Python's Terry Gilliam, this is not really a funny movie, except for Robert DeNiro. Princess 9pm.

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