

Quintessence

The Newsletter of the Bel-Air and Newcastle Young Liberal Branches

FEATURES

O-Week News!

Dates Worthy of the Diary

O-Week Edition

Editor: Kara Densby.

Welcome all to a new academic year! I hope you have all had a restful holiday, even if, like me, you had just four days off following summer school exams!

So, you are reading "Quintessence", which means you are either a member of our fine party or club, or a prospective member. While I would encourage everyone to join the Liberal Party and become active in the Young Liberal Movement, there is nothing quite like campus politics, so turn around, walk back to our stall and sign up to become a member of the University of Newcastle Liberal Club!

The great Peter Costello began his political career as a student politician, as did many of our current crop of politicians from all sides of the political spectrum. I'll be honest with you - Liberals on this campus are not often a popular breed - although I'm probably not telling you anything you don't know here, as most of you have probably spent at least 18 years in Newcastle, and hence would be well aware of the nature of this area politically.

So then, why get involved if it means you become an object of scorn among the less enlightened of our peers? Perhaps because the best line our opponents can come up with is "Liberal Scum"? *æ* No, that warrants a mere contented smile and

feigned slapping of your hand on your heart to absorb some of the hurt and shock such a comment spreads within you.

The simple truth is, the Liberal Party is the only true party of initiative and freedom. It is the only party that holds dear principles such as freedom of speech, freedom of association, and the right of the individual to create his or her own destiny. In short, we are the final protectors of individual freedoms, as left groups attempt to erode away our freedom.

Take, for example, the issue of Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU). As you wander around these O-Week stalls, make sure you stop by the NUSA table. Resting on this table is the "fruits" of a large chunk of your General Service Charge. That's right, you have paid a substantial sum for those stickers that say '10% G.S.T = 100% F***ED'. Charming - such maturity! Now you question the relevance of that particular issue anyway - after all, shouldn't NUSA be concentrating on handing out "free" condoms? Just one of the essentials of your tertiary education that would supposedly vanish without a trace if VSU was to be introduced. By now I am sure that you have come across a leaflet or sticker or poster denigrating John Howard. If you are a first year, it's a shame you missed a delightful little purple pamphlet depicting John Howard with devil horns, informing you all about the evils of the Coalition's education policy,

which popped up on the NUSA tables last year. If you are a first year, you'll just have to imagine it for me. Now, maybe you think that John Howard is, in fact, the devil, in accordance with the beliefs of NUSA (you would be wrong, of course, but that is your right). So you'd be feeling pretty happy as you look at that leaflet. Perhaps you believe that John Howard is the greatest Prime Minister this country has ever been blessed with, (you'd be right of course, and did you know that if you sign up right now you will go into a draw to win a bottle of wine signed by the great man himself!), and a sense of injustice will wash over you as you realise that your money was spent on this tripe.

The point is, clearly NUSA is acting in a political manner. Now maybe they are representing your views, but there's a good chance that they're not, and yet you are funding them, and also the National Union of Students, and other left-wing causes. It is a matter of justice, a matter of freedom, you should not be forced to pay for this as a condition of enrolment. But you are. That's right, before you can even open a textbook you have to shell out \$300, of which a proportion is given to NUSA. Sounds like an up-front fee to me. You know, an up-front fee - that hideous creature that NUSA devote your funds to campaign against. But hang on there, NUSA, the General Service Charge (GSC) is the only up-front fee at Newcastle University...

A popular slogan bandied about by NUSA is "Funds not Fees". Clearly this is a ridiculous, hypocritical slogan for our friends to have adopted. The truth of the matter, of course, is "Funds not Fees - Oh, Except the GSC". VSU is a solution to this appalling situation. Last year, the University of Newcastle Liberal Club flew the flag for VSU. We were out on campus trying to protect and enhance your rights as a free individual, particularly your right to

freedom of association and freedom of speech.

This year, we will continue our efforts. The right of an individual to live in a free society is something that must be protected. If you believe in such principles as freedom of association, freedom of speech, and the encouragement of initiative and enterprise, the Liberal Party is the party for you. We would be delighted for you to join us.

Kara Densby

Vice-President/Secretary, The University of Newcastle Liberal Club,
Development Vice-President, Bel-Air Young Liberals.

Dates Worthy of the Diary

27th February 2000 - Newcastle Young Liberals branch meeting

29th February 2000 - Young Liberal State Council

8th March 2000 - First Liberal Club meeting at 12 noon.

21st March 2000 - Drinks with Joe Hockey MP at Senator John Tierney's office

For further details of any of the above call:

0418 972 936 Kara Densby or

0419 226 354 David Williams

or email:

youngliberals@hotmail.com

To develop every human being to his fullest capacity for thought, for action, for sacrifice and for endurance is our major task; and no prejudice, stupidity, selfishness or vested interest must stand in the way.

Robert Menzies