

# USS students off to Ottawa

By S.J. DEA

"In the Ottawa spring, among the thousands of Canadian students who are received on Parliament Hill, the 500 participants in Forum for Young Canadians are conspicuous for their sense of purpose and commitment," says a recent pamphlet. This is certainly true of Uxbridge Secondary School's delegates to the program, Connie Todd and Shari Pedersen.

The 17-year-old Grade 11 students learned of Forum through promotions in the school and were immediately interested.

Forum, founded in 1975 by the Foundation for the Study of Pro-

cesses of Government in Canada, is made up of four week-long conferences in Ottawa, each aimed at giving high school students a clearer understanding of the workings of Canadian government.

This is achieved through seminars on various aspects of government given by prominent members of public life, group discussions and three simulations: a cabinet committee on priorities on immigration, a question period in the House of Commons and a federal-provincial conference.

Says Connie: "I really want to learn about the process of gov-

ernment because I really want to be a history teacher. I think it will really help to better my understanding of how the government works."

For Shari, Forum hits even closer to home: "I want to be a politician; so I thought this could be a great advantage."

Friends, the two girls both decided to apply in the hope of taking part in the activity together.

Each applicant to the program must submit an essay explaining why he or she should be accepted into Forum. In each school, applications are ranked, then submitted to provincial and territorial committees who

make the final selection according to provincial quotas.

In Uxbridge, Connie's and Shari's essays were both of such high quality that a coin had to be flipped in order to rank them.

The provincial judges were equally impressed with them and both Connie and Shari were accepted as participants, in separate sessions.

Connie, who will take part in Forum from April 23-30, is looking forward to meeting the leaders of Canada's three parties, as well as to a dinner with local M.P. Scott Fennell.

Never having visited Ottawa before, Connie is excited about

seeing the Parliament buildings up close. Forum participants also take in such sights as the National Arts Centre and the Rideau Canal.

A big challenge for Connie will be the optional bilingual format she enrolled in. Although Connie admits that French is not her forte, she is interested in learning "what a French person in an English-dominated country would feel like when they don't understand that much English themselves."

A G.A. (Girls Athletics) rep for her class and students council hopeful for 88-89, Connie's political interests extend beyond English-French relations.

March 11-14, she will travel to Toronto to take part in Ontario's "Youth Parliament", a government simulation involving students from all over the province.

Connie, who plans to study at the University of Toronto or Queen's University one day, hopes these experiences will enable her to study at the school of her choice.

"If you're going to university," says Connie, "then they'd say, 'Well, that person's been picked for this; they must be pretty smart.'"

Like Connie, Shari is active in student politics. A G.A. rep and

(Continued Pg. C-20)

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