

Mock election results differ at McGill

By Brandon Schott

As Israeli citizens took to the polls in the national election, many McGill students voted in a mock election. McGill Hillel, in conjunction with pro-Israeli student groups Hasbara Fellowships and Upstart Activist, organized the simulated voting. Similar elections were held on college campuses across Canada and the United States.

"This is a great way to involve students in the democratic process," said McGill Hillel president Alex Kemeny. "Democracy is about discussion and this was a great way to foster discussion."

The results of the mock election showed a clear divide between the Israeli population and McGill students. Both the Likud and Labour parties received 29 per cent of the vote, with Likud beating Labour by less than one per cent. Shinui was in third with seven per cent and both Shas and National Union captured five per cent. The National Religious Party, United Torah Judaism, Herut and Yisrael B'Aliya each attracted four per cent. While the exact number of students who participated was unavailable, Hillel estimated that several hundred McGill students voted.

Yoni Patel, president of the city-wide Hillel and former president of McGill Hillel, said that the Canadian media's representation of the Likud and Labour parties as "hawks" and "doves" can help explain the cleavage between McGill students and Israeli citizens. Patel added that the general feeling of insecurity among the Israeli people is difficult for many McGill students to understand.

McGill's election results were also in stark contrast with the overall results on North American campuses, as Likud captured 42 per cent compared to Labour's 12 per cent.

Full results are available at www.israelvotes2003.com
