

The Brunswickan

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No. 7

... A Good Question ... An Honest Answer

The question is this: "Are there no limitations (of authority) on college paper editors?"

The answer, in a word: No.

There is not much difference, actually, between a college paper and any other paper. As our friends, the philosophers, would say, "It is not a difference in kind, but in degree." The Brunswickan operates with precisely the same privileges as does the New York Times and the Peoria Gazette.

The power of the press increases in a democratic society and decreases in a totalitarian one. The policy of the New York Times is engraved upon its flag: "All the news that's fit to print." No newspaper has any less a right in our democracy, although it is apparent that there exists no uniform opinion of what constitutes news "fit to print." The Brunswickan seeks to give a factual report of events on the campus; it strives to separate news comment from editorials. The Brunswickan reports on undergraduate affairs, but maintains a rigid line of separation between undergraduate affairs and somebody else's business.

It is our firm opinion that a newspaper has the right to print or not print news. The process of selection and discrimination are complex, and often unfair, but such unfairness could only be remedied by establishing some sovereign power over the press, a bureaucratic, totalitarian step which would directly imperil the natural freedom of the press.

There has been much pollyanna talk of late by people who think it would be nice if newspapers reflected what they like to call "popular opinion." The people who talk most about popular opinion, or "P. O.," are apt to be the ones who have the least idea of what it is. Sometimes it is possible to represent the norm, other times it is impossible, and there are times when it is both impossible and undesirable.

These misguided reformists would evidently set up some training school which would produce automatic, self-winding editorial robots whose sole task would be to consult a modern barometer hanging outside their window which would give the daily reading of "P. O." on any topic of the times. The robot would then put the report on paper.

In the sixty-six year growth of the Brunswickan, the faculty and the S. R. C. have gradually made it an independent organization. True, the S. R. C. contributes considerable to the support of this paper, but they in no way control its policy, or nominate its officers.

We do not base our policy upon our infallibility, nor upon our ability to consistently interpret student opinion. Nor do we think the students of this University want a paper whose editorial pages are restricted to mere mouthing of platitudes, generalities, and extracts of "P. O."

We believe it is our duty to speak for ourselves on issues which arise affecting this campus society. We credit the men-

Letters To The Editor

Fan and Pan Mail

The Editor,
The Brunswickan,
University of New Brunswick,
City.

Dear Sir,
I am enclosing a letter concerning your recent editorial, "Step Down Please", which I would like to have published in the Brunswickan. I understand that it is the policy of the paper to publish all signed letters.

The latest edition of the "Brunswickan", which contains an editorial entitled "Step Down Please", cannot help but do much harm to the committee at Alexander College which is trying to improve conditions here.

You suggest that persons holding campus appointments should understand the limitations of their authority. Are there no limitations on college paper editors? Many students will feel that you are overstepping bounds in printing your personal opinions as if they were representative of a group feeling. I have spoken to several men who attended the meeting you attacked and they all disagree strongly with your conclusions. In any event, the meeting was called by the Alexander College Committee at the request of several married veterans and with the concurrence of the Dean of the college, so your attack on Mr. Lawson was inaccurate as well as unfair.

AL BROWN

The Brunswickan will publish signed letters, in full or in part, only if the writer concerns himself with remarks considered pertinent to Brunswickan and undergraduate affairs.

The Editor in Chief,
The Brunswickan.

Dear Sir,

When I received my copy of the Brunswickan today and glanced at your headline "Step Down Please" I thought the April Fool issue must be out by mistake. However, it appears to be no joke.

Being completely uninformed, except for the account in your paper, of the pros and cons, I venture no opinion, but I wonder: "What would 'Honest Al' say?" I wish the S. R. C. the best of luck in its new venture.

The quality of . . . editorials thus far has been tops. Keep up the good work!

Yours truly,
FRANK HORGAN '46,
Ottawa, Ontario.

"... we of St. Anne's have decided Snoop is either Teed and Baxter combined and/or singly! . . . And I really think the Brunswickan is tops this year — especially in taking a decided stand on campus questions."

Ruth Cumming (ex-'48)
MacDonald College.

Let St. Anne's readers know that Teed and Baxter plead not guilty.

NOTE:—The statement which followed the letter by D. F. Taylor in last week's letter column was an extract from a nationally known flying magazine.

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ality and maturity of our readers with being capable of the task of forming their own conclusions, irregardless of our own.

It is indeed fortunate when our readers agree with our conclusions, yet were there no disagreements we would feel that either we had said nothing or that no one was reading page two of the Brunswickan. We do not claim to be right, though we hope to avoid being wrong; we do want to voice our opinion and thereby open the question to all for free discussion. Oftentimes, people will do some solid thinking on a question only when their neighbor has stated his opinion. The stimulation for thinking is not so much in posing the problem, but in a comparative analysis of the solutions or opinions of others.

This has been both an attempt to answer a question and a statement of policy. There is much more in this eight-page paper than mere ink and paper. Those of us who do the job of editing the Brunswickan feel a kinship which transcends a campus society. We consider ourselves integral parts of that democratic fortress of freedom—the press.

And so, there can never be a limit to the authority of any newspaper. So long as the newspaper abides by the laws of libel, moral decency, and seeks to preserve its integrity, the authority of the press must remain unchallenged.

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