

Brunswickan

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THE PLEBISCITE

New Brunswick will have an opportunity to do more than choose the lesser of two evils during the upcoming election; they may, on the issue of the voting age, make their views known to their elected representatives. On the ballot, the question will read, "Are you in favour of lowering the voting age from 21 years of age to eighteen years of age?"

What this means, simply, is that the most democratic means possible is being used to determine whether a free people choose to extend democracy to the most rapidly-expanding, and most politically-aware segment of society.

The government has been criticized for this measure, even though the result of the plebiscite will not necessarily determine anything.

"It is not responsible government in the British and Canadian tradition," says the Saint John daily, the *Telegraph-Journal*. It more closely resembles the American "government by consensus" tradition.

Perhaps New Brunswick is finally ready to destroy the system of responsible government anyway, in a system where plebiscites are never used, where a body of legislators are elected to rule without the opportunity to determine what the electorate really feels, we are living under the absurdity of an elected oligarchy. The British parliamentary system enables the Commons to say, "We have all the rights."

Surely the government should have no more rights than its citizens choose to give it.

In this, one of the most critical elections in the history of the province of New Brunswick, Conservatives are calling for a restoration of democracy. Liberals are maintaining that the election of J. C. VanHorne will usher in New Brunswick's first dictatorship.

Where Democracy is such an issue, surely it is the most terrifying of hypocrisies to advise against the use of the most democratic measure conceivable in the stench of present-day New Brunswick politics.

— Stephen J. MacFarlane

VIETNAM

The war in Vietnam has spawned a new mythology. Its nature and origin obscured by propaganda, the assessment of the war has become a conflict of bias contesting for popular support. Rhetoric, duplicity, and political expedience have effectively sealed the truth into the maze of the Cold War only to be extricated by the historians of another generation.

The nature of this war does not accommodate the traditional good versus evil perspective of the North American. The innate idealism of the student has not been fused with the patriotism and sense of duty evoked in other earlier wars, and unprecedented dissent has marked the escalation of this conflict as it rumbles towards a global scale fraught with nuclear implications. It is in this context, polluted by the clash of ideologies, that the individual, after careful introspection, must make his moral commitment on the war.

The contagion of war in this century denies us the illusion of isolation. We are obliged by history to decide.

— B.M.R.



Letters to the Editor

Challenge to Honesty?

Sir:
 I am rather offended by the challenge to my honesty which occurs at the library each time I exit. Being a hardened criminal, I have figured out fifteen different ways of getting a book out of the library aside from the conventional procedure and have used some of them. I will not elaborate on these fifteen ways since it would be detrimental to the large percentage of hardened criminals in the student population.

However, I will say that to keep students from smuggling books out of the library the administration must bar and wire up all the windows and place their Gestapo on all sides outside the building. Exits must be limited to one for all people, students and workers; and there must be two three-room chambers at this exit, one for males and one for females. In the first room the student takes off his library clothing; in the second room he walks naked past a member of Colin B's Gestapo (here's a chance for the administration to further fortify their police state by adding a female to watch the ladies); and in the third room he puts on his street clothing. Frisking would be simpler but female students might find it offensive.

I suggest that for the administration to take these steps would cost too much both in money and in a loss of good will. I also suggest that, since one commissioner at the entrance cannot really deter a determined book stealer, this insult to the honesty of the student population be removed.

— Ronald Burns

A Letter From Vietnam

Dear Fellow Students,

We are students and professors from all the universities of South Vietnam (Saigon, Hue, Dalat, Cantho and Van Hanh.) who write to thank you for try-

ing to stop this terrible war in our country. We cannot act officially, as you did, because the universities here are not permitted by the Government to express themselves freely. We have made petitions and appeals, but we cannot let our names be made public, because we would be arrested and imprisoned. That is the kind of society we live in here today.

Nevertheless, we write to thank you for your actions and to plead with you to continue. We ask you to consider these facts:

1. In South Vietnam cities the American power has become so great in support of the Ky government that no one can speak against the war without risking his life or his liberty.

2. If it were not so millions would speak out. The people of South Vietnam desperately want the war to end, but they are losing hope. They are not Communists, but if the war does not soon end, they will join the National Liberation Front because they see no other way out.

3. Americans should not believe that they are protecting the South Vietnamese from Communism. Most of us believe that the Americans only want to control our country in order to prepare for war with China.

4. The present government of South Vietnam is not our government and is not representing our people. It was imposed on us by the United States, and is controlled by military men who fought for the French against the Vietnamese people before 1954. If we were free to vote freely, that government would not last one day. We want a government of our own, not controlled by either side, so that we may be able to settle the problems of Vietnam by ourselves on the basis of national brotherhood; to negotiate peace and to negotiate the withdrawal of American troops with the United States.

5. Do not believe that the danger of a communist take-

over justifies the continuation of war. We believe we are strong enough to form an independent government. The decision, however, should be ours, not yours, when it is our lives and our country that are being destroyed.

Finally, we send you the best wishes of ours and of the Vietnamese people.

— Done in Saigon,

the 20th of February, 1967

SRC Exemplifies Apathy

Dear Sir:

As a participant in the "Think Tank" this past weekend I can only say that the S.R.C. exemplifies the apathy they so vocally accuse the student body of possessing. Their failure to be there caused the retreat to be a partial failure. True, there were some members of the SRC there but they were a minority all the way around. As well, the appearance of only one faculty member, out of nearly three hundred and fifty was bad news. Of course, only five were invited. That's bad news too.

My second point concerns the *Brunswickan*. The fact that last Thursday's issue didn't come out till this past Monday indicates that something is administratively wrong. From my ventures among the papers floating around the office, I notice that only two people appear to be steady workers. Where are all the interested people who want to join the *Brunswickan*? Where are the girls that volunteered to type, the reporters, the layout people — all willing and all eager to make a stab at it?

They are not in the *Brunswickan* office because no one has told them to be there, because no one has given them an assignment, because there has been no efficient administration. If the *Brunswickan* wants to aspire to the heights of glory and radicalism it hopes to, then someone is going to have shape up — and soon.

— Tom Murphy