

Four richer or four poorer

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

RICK FISHER

The second presidential candidate to be examined is Rick Fisher. Rick is a third year Business student who apparently possesses an impressive record of experience and organizational involvement. For example, he has been a member of the Brunswickan, Radio UNB, an executive of the Business Administration Society, and Athletic Board. In addition, as an SRC representative for the past year and a half he has served on numerous committees including those involving Winter Carnival and the Constitution.

This image of maturity and responsibility is irreparably shattered when one experiences a conversation with Mr. Fisher of more than sixty second duration. Of the four candidates Rich has, without a doubt, the most highly developed capacity for "rubbing people the wrong way". This inability to work smoothly and effectively with others is one of his major liabilities as prospective SRC president.

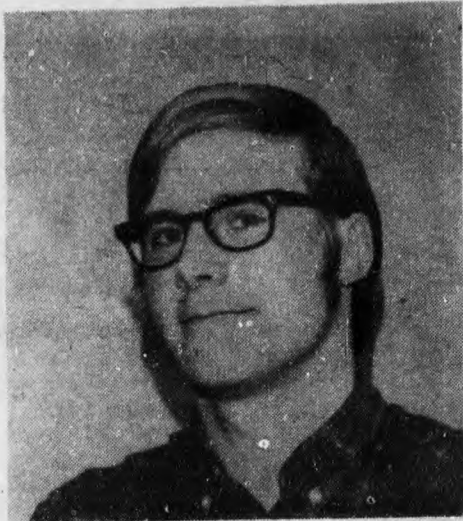
Rick wants to be president because he "feels he is the best man for the job", arguing that his record of past experience best equips him to carry out the duties of SRC president.

My interview with Rick was the shortest of the four I conducted. This can be attributed to the fact that he really did not have much to say on the main issues. He didn't have much to say on any of these issues because he didn't recognize their existence or significance or if he did recognize their existence and significance he had no solution to propose.

Rick is often rash and as such is prone to making statements without realizing their often ludicrous implications. These serious shortcomings are interrelated and can be traced mainly to the fact that he has not devoted sufficient time and effort to the consideration of student problems.

On the topic of student loans Rick felt that there was need for improvement in the present plan but he had no real explanation for the cause of the problem. Similarly, he had no specific proposal on how one could begin to correct these injustices.

Like the other candidates Rick thought that students should have proper housing with proper facilities. (what else is new?) He made a vague suggestion concerning blacklisting landlords who did not meet certain standards but the actual mechanics of constructing and enforcing these standards was apparently of no concern to him.



RICK FISHER

Rick, like Dave Kelsey, conceives of the activities of the SRC in terms of petty politics. This fact of his character was highlighted by the fact that it was part of his campaign strategy to emerge as a different candidate. To achieve this end he has adopted a Machiavellian tactic of allowing his position on an issue (if indeed he had one) to be determined solely by the position of the other candidates rather than by his beliefs.

While I agree with him that certain standards should be effectively enforced this measure is not addressed to the problem of providing proper housing to meet the immediate and future demands of students. While rejecting the co-op and residence concepts he again could offer no positive alternatives. His suggestion was that students should first determine the extent of aid the administration was willing to provide and then proceed to devise their plans on the basis of the offer made by the administration.

On the issue of the extent of the control over the decision making apparatus of this university Rick maintained that students should occupy a solely advisory role. Like Dave Kelsey he sees the SRC president as a type of liaison officer between the students and administration. He did not think, for example, that students should enjoy a position of parity with the faculty in any area. Like the other candidates he felt that some system of course evaluation was necessary; however, again he did not see fit to elaborate on the exact nature of this system. Supposedly he supports the McGill questionnaire now under consideration by the SRC.

Rick did not regard the subject of the proposed increases of student fees as being a major concern for the SRC president. He offered two arguments to support his stand. Initially he maintained that an increase in student fees was not as yet a fact, it is only a rumor. The fact that there is a high degree of credibility attached to this rumor did not frighten Mr. Fisher. For as he so aptly explained with that Fisher fatality "if it becomes fact, there is nothing I can do about it". (Any comment would be superfluous.)

CHUCK KINGSTON

Chuck Kingston is a fourth year Arts student who wants to be president because he thinks the SRC is not adequately reflecting the interests of students and he feels he can provide fresh ideas and new concepts. His credentials as a leader and organizer include his past presidency of the UNB Curling Club, vice-presidency of MacKenzie House and SRC representative.

Chuck is the most idealistic of the presidential candidates and as such he is often given to making grandiose suggestions without giving careful consideration to their implications. Consequently, his proposals are often riddled with contradictions or are simply not feasible.



CHUCK KINGSTON

If elected, one of his major concerns would be to provide adequate facilities for student activities. Chuck sees inadequate facilities and lack of proper housing to be closely connected causes of student apathy and alienation. He argues that for a great many students the only adequate housing available is such a long distance from the campus that they become alienated from campus activities. Those students who enjoy reasonable accommodation close to the campus lack adequate facilities for their activities.

His solution is to provide the campus with both adequate facilities and proper housing. This solution includes proposals for construction of a bowling alley, a curling rink and a new apartment complex.

Essentially he proposes two methods to achieve these goals. Initially, students should attempt to enlist the services i.e. financial backing of the administration for this scheme or secondly, students should shoulder the full financial responsibility themselves through borrowing.

One does not have to subject his theory on the nature of student alienation, apathy and housing to extensive scrutiny in order to detect certain basic flaws. Exactly what Chuck means by adequate housing or even alienation is not clear. Admittedly there is a degree of validity in his assertion; however, this thesis like many of his other ideas suffers from an overdose of simplification. For instance, I would challenge his initial assertion that a meaningful correlation exists between alienation and the distance of accommodation. I would argue that, proportionally, there are as many alienated students living in residence as living a distance from the campus. Similarly, his second assumption relating alienation and apathy to lack of adequate facilities for students in questionable. Apathy and alienation are complex phenomena and often occur on campuses which would seem to fulfil both of his conditions. Similarly they are not a problem on certain campuses which do not meet either requirement.

His proposed methods for realizing these goals suffers from this same tendency to oversimplify. If one merely considers the cost picture for such an extensive undertaking his proposals quickly lose their appeal. One might also wish to question the system of priorities that places the building of bowling alleys on the same level with providing adequate housing. Another factor to be considered is the elements of responsibility to future students for under his second scheme for financing these sports facilities a major portion of the cost would be shouldered by the future student.

Another inconsistency is that while he rejects the present co-op and residence system as inadequate his proposed new apartment units would seem to be slightly larger replicas of those now available at the co-op.

The issue of greater student participation in the decision making process of the university is also of primary interest to Chuck. He feels that students should have control over items such as hiring and firing of professors. However, with respect to matters generally considered to be the concern of the Board of Governors he does not believe students possess the maturity, experience, or responsibility necessary to deal with such issues. He does feel that the position of students on the Board of Governors should be more clearly re-defined but he rejected totally the notion that students should enjoy a position of voting parity with faculty.

There would be little point for me to restate my earlier argument favoring at least a parity position for students. I would add, however, that it seems inconsistent to suggest that students accept the financial and managerial responsibility for elaborate construction projects while simultaneously arguing they lack responsibility and maturity to serve on the Board of Governors.

On the subject of proposed fee increases Chuck argues that the source of these increases is increased food costs. He feels that it is unfair to penalize non-residents students with higher fees to cover increased residence food costs. The solution, he maintains, is to be found in an effective and aggressive attitude in bargaining. Now that is a brilliant bit of bullshit analysis.

I could continue to point out that like the other candidates, Chuck thinks the present student loan system is inadequate but again he really has no constructive solutions to offer so I do not see much point in wasting my time or the space.

I think Chuck is sincere and I agree that the SRC no longer reflects the needs and interests of students. Unlike the other candidates Chuck has offered both solutions and methods to achieve these solutions. Importantly, however, as I have attempted to illustrate the majority of his proposals are either illogical, inconsistent or simply not feasible.

Probably the best indication of the rampant idealism that pervades his proposals is the fact that if elected and despite the extensive, elaborate and obviously time consuming nature of his suggestions he would still remain a full time student perhaps even in first year law.

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