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Catholic condom controversy continues at STU

by Mark I. Minor

The removal of condoms from vending machines at St. Thomas University has caused a stir on campus as of late. Heavy coverage in the forms of articles, editorials and letters of concern have appeared both in the January 28th issue of Fredericton's *Daily Gleaner* and S.T.U.'s *Aquinian* of January 29th.

The *Gleaner* quoted acting S.T.U. Student Union president Jeff London as saying that the (student) "council has met with the university administration to discuss the issue but has not made any demands to have condoms available on campus."

London denied this in an interview with *The Brunswickian*. He claimed that no meeting had taken place as

yet but that plans were currently being made to have such a meeting. He said that the whole *Gleaner* article was "blowing things out of proportion and I am extremely angry with the author of the article."

The *Gleaner* also quoted London as saying that the student body "was kind of apathetic to a point" with regard to the university

administration's request to have the condoms removed.

London continued by telling the *Brunswicks* that as far as he knew, no such apathy exists and that he was again misquoted.

At the S.T.U. Student Union's meeting on January 28, London reviewed the alleged misquotations saying that maybe "students weren't marching in the streets" over the university administration's action but that it was an "issue of quiet concern." He said that meetings with the administration would be taking place later this week or early next week.

During the meeting, Councillor Regan Legassie commented in reference to the C.F.S. Aids Awareness Campaign which the S.T.U. Student Union supports: "If we were to back down from this issue given the stance that we took last term, I think that it could be seen as a very contradictory move." London answered the councillor's suggestion by reassuring that the S.T.U. Student Union's policy stands in favour of condom distribution and that the S.U. will act in the best interest of its constituents.

In future discussion about meetings with the S.T.U. Administration, London stated that the issue should not become "a big media stance but that we should try to see what can be done" to resolve the differences between the respective policies of the S.U. and the administration. He added that "if there is a stalemate and no agreement can be reached, then maybe that is the time to take serious action."

"(The *Gleaner* article was) blowing things out of proportion."
-London

One councillor, First Year Representative Jamie Carter seemed concerned with the quality of the products which were offered for sale in the vending machines. He stated that the condoms in question were "cheap" and that "if I'm going to have sex with somebody, I'm going to purchase good ones."

The machines in which the condoms were offered are operated by Boyd's Vending Ltd. whose spokesman has been quoted as confirming that "We didn't sell a lot of them."

It seems that condoms are viewed as a form of contraception which is frowned upon by the Catholic Church.

Although Dr. Don O'Brien, President of St. Thomas University was unavailable for comment to *The Brunswickian*, he has been quoted in *The Daily Gleaner* regarding the philosophies of the church and the university. Dr. O'Brien is quoted as saying that the use of condoms "is not consistent with our beliefs and convictions (and) is in conflict with church doctrine."

At the S.T.U. S.U. meeting, one councillor referred to the administration's position as oppressive. Another offered that not all the students at St. Thomas are Catholic and that the issue was about life and death, not religion.

Dr. O'Brien was further quoted as saying that "St. Thomas, in keeping with

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'92 Grads reassess Grad Class Project

by Josée Guidry

The Grad class held a meeting last Tuesday to vote for a different Grad Class Project.

The initial project, a cross-walk at the traffic circle, was unofficially recommended by the Physical Plant and the Campus Beautification Committee, but was later rejected by the University. It was rejected because of the possible danger it may cause, along with the fact that the entire intersection may be changed in the near future due to the new STU administration building.

There were approximately 110 students in attendance compared to 140 who were at the first meeting. Kevin Ferguson, President of the Grad Class Committee, expected more people to attend since the project received so much attention, mostly negative, and that many of them did not go to the first one.

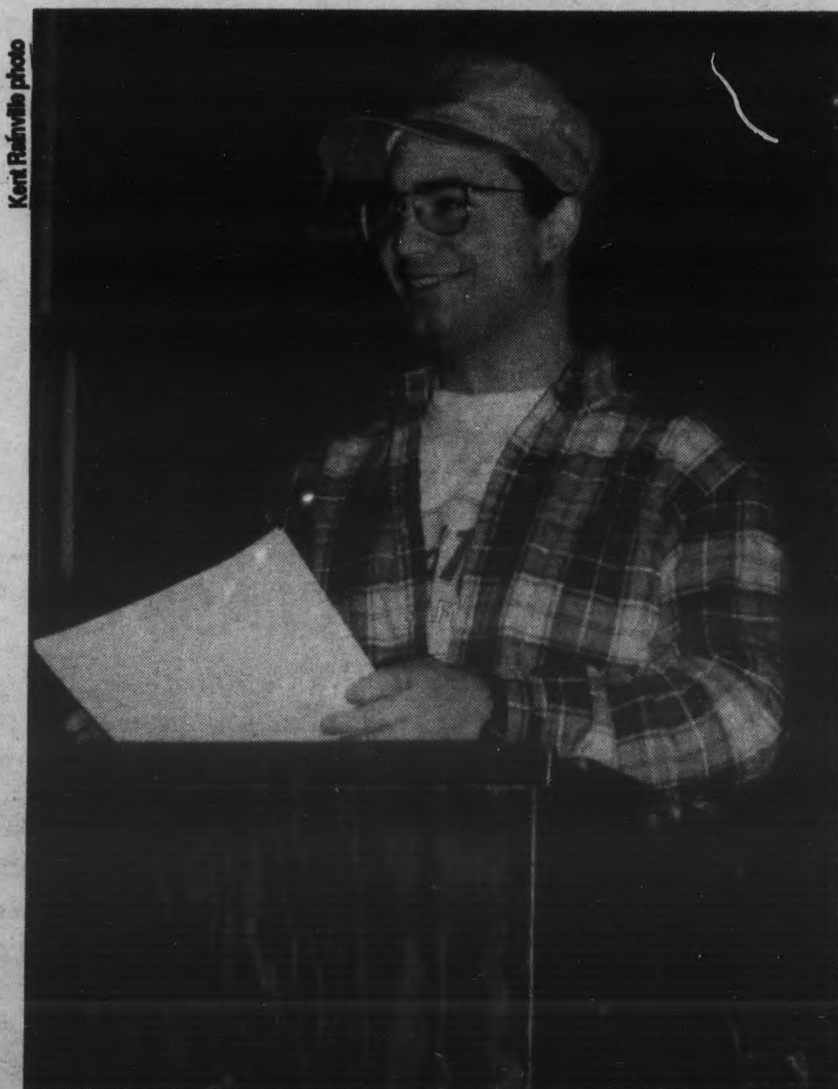
The graduates had a choice of four projects from which to vote: a scholarship fund which would be available to students in their last year; a fund to restore campus libraries which would be given to the Director of Libraries to use at their own discretion; a fund to improve campus lighting, which would be given to the physical plant to decide on where the lighting would be needed most; and a fund to support a SUB expansion. A fifth suggestion was made by a student that the funds go towards a playground for the daycare centre. However, the idea was turned down because it is not guaranteed that there will be a daycare centre.

In addition to the four options, the graduates were asked to vote on a yes or no ballot for the sealing of a time capsule in May 1992 that would be unsealed in June 2017 at the 25th Reunion of the UNB class of 1992. The results for that ballot was yes by approximately 2/3 of the voters.

The project that got the most votes was the scholarship fund, with approxi-

mately 10 separating each project (library funds came in second; lighting third and the SUB expansion only received one vote).

The Grad Class Committee will be asking student to make suggestions for scholarship criteria hoping to make the scholarship different from the others by not necessarily making high marks an issue. See Student Services for more detail about the suggestions.



Shown is Kevin Ferguson, president of the Grad Class Executive at Tuesday's meeting to vote on a new Grad Class project

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