EDITORIAL

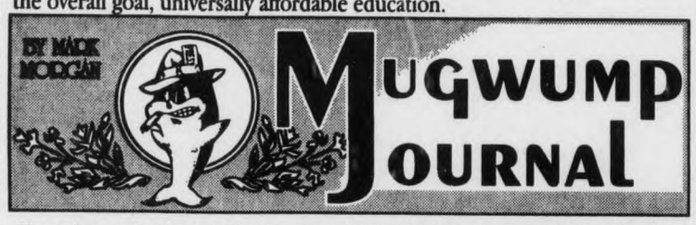
January 25 is approaching, the day which was proposed by CFS that all students across Canada strike in order to show their opposition to the government's proposed changes to the funding of higher education. The question is would a strike do students any good?

Kelly Lamrock of the New Brunswick Student Alliance (NBSA) has draughted a position paper which is endorsed by the UNBSU entitled "No More Smoke and Mirrors". This paper offers alternatives to the government's proposed Green Paper's cuts to educational spending. Mr. Lamrock has also come out in opposition to CFS's planned strike. He claims the rally will not only not make a difference but that it will detract from the effectiveness of the NBSA's presentation.

The CFS strike is being organized Canada–wide through the student action group the International Socialists. According to their plan, students from across the country will demonstrate against the cuts to education on January 25. In Fredericton, the protesters are supposed to gather by the rear door of the SUB at 12:00 noon for a march downtown to Fredericton MP Andy Scott's office. In the Brunswickan's December 2 issue, Shawn Corey of the IS admitted that a one day strike is somewhat ineffective but said that it is better than making no effort at all. Corey stated that "Inevitably a strike, even a one day one, becomes a means to building a bigger end".

The problem is that both sides seem to have missed the point. A strike need not be the exercise in futility which both the NBSA and IS paint it as being. It is true that joining in a protest that is doomed to be ineffective would be idiotic. And to have a protest in which you assert your displeasure but offer no constructive alternatives is to do little more than throw a temper tantrum.

But it is also true, however, that a show of political strength and solidarity is essential if we as students expect anyone to take what we have to say seriously. To purport to have alternatives to the governments proposals is all good and well but only if you can get them to listen to you. However, if you want to ensure that they listen, a show of strength and solidarity is essential. A small group of individuals can travel to Ottawa to lobby their position all they want. They can converse with as many politicians as they like and still get nothing more than lip service and empty promises. Take the same message however, and get 100,000 people to take to the streets even for a single day to demand that the government consider it and they will. The interests of the students would be better served if both sides would stop their posturing and realize that their interests would be best served if they worked together to attain the overall goal, universally affordable education.



I'm so happy. In fact I'm happier than I would be if I were attending a Charlie's Angels or C.H.I.P.S memorabilia auction. I've always worshipped the ground that Farrah Fawcett and Eric Estrada stand upon. Why am I happy? It's not as if you asked or anything but I'm gonna tell you anyway. I finally had the chance to meet the man, the myth, the man called Frank.

On Wednesday, I stood in the glory that is Frank McKenna or a reasonable facsimile. Well, maybe it was just an internet version of Mr. McKenna. So what does this mean? Inter-Frank? Frank-Net? God only knows with all those information highways circling the province. We all know that they're the only highways within New Brunswick that don't have potholes. Maybe Frank's idea of those brand new highways he has been promising have all been computer generated with a little imagination on his part and a lot of hoping on our own. Anyway, back to my little expedition to meet my idol Little Bigman Frank, while he said something about the ever popular Venture Campaign

I was alerted to his appearance at the Wu Centre by *The Brunswickan*'s own astute news editors. My God, I couldn't miss out on this opportunity. I had so much to tell him. I was going to ask him if I could attend his very popular Strawberry Social since no one else will invite me over to eat anywhere. (Hint, Hint).

So at about 2 o'clock I hurried up the hill with one of the news editors and our trusty kid sidekick, Photo Boy. Yes, that's right Photo Boy. Not to be confused with Saturday Night Live's Canteen Boy.

After several minutes of waiting for suit and tie guys to shake his hand and asking for the impossible, I stood up to Frank and... lost all point of purpose and words. It was worse than finding rat droppings in your Shreddies. I just stood there looking at him for an eternity. Beads of sweat formed on my frustrated brow. I kept reiterating the famous line of Homer, not the Greek guy. That one word that speaks volumes of failure: Doh! After I realised I was looking like an idiot, I suavely collected my vacant thoughts and inquired as to his knowledge of my uncle, a former politician and a general all around swell guy. He said he did. But after that affirmation I was at a loss for words again. I was in the middle of sentence and he finished it for me. I couldn't believe it Frank was a mind reader. Never mind the fact that I was nervous standing in his regalness. I mean this is the man that made the other premiers of Canada cry about not getting the UPS jobs. This is the same very man that made the Great Wall of China shake as he ran it's inclines in girth and publicity. So no wonder I was nervous.

It seemed my great pal, university president, Robin Armstrong has finally come to terms with the fallacy of phallicism. That's right he wants to make the university better not bigger. Remember folks, it's not the size of the university it's what you do with it. I know a big man like President Armstrong would never expect to wave the university over the student body and expect magic to happen. When you look at everything he and his administration are doing to raise money for the Venture Campaign you just can't help but to believe the university in the next century will be better. . Sorry paint jobs don't count.

Blood n' Thunder

Review "Below Average"

Dear Editor:

Regarding the "Review of Local Eateries" found in the last issue of the Bruns, I am disappointed!

It is unfair, as well as, unethical for these 3 "journalists/food experts" to eat one appetizer from our new menu, and then go on to base an entire establishment review on it.

Nacho's, covered with cheese and chili *Are Supposed To Be Greasy,* and we make no claims to the contrary. However, to have ordered only the nacho's and to state the "Food was below average" is unethical and would not be tolerated by any self respecting journalist.

At the Dock we pride ourselves on the quality and affordability of our food. Students make up a large portion of our valued clientele, as well as our staff.

A review such as the one you published is offensive to us as well as the many happy patrons we serve.

Larry Chippin
The Dock Pub & Eatery
The Upperdeck Sports Bar

Letter to CFS from Student Union President

Dear Editor,
This is an open letter to Guy Caron, Chair of the Canadian Federation of Students

Dear Guy,

I am writing to outline a number of the concerns of the UNB Student Union Executive in regards to recent decisions of the CFS Executive. As you know, we are holding a referendum in late March to review our membership in the organization, and many of your recent decisions and actions have only served to strengthen our resolve to leave the Federation. Below, I have outlined a number of these concerns so that you better understand our position.

First, the manner in which the Federation has handled the Green Paper is embarrassing. CFS has been perceived as a group of whiners and brats. The Federation has yet to offer any sort of useful alternative. This is unbelievable considering your office has nine full-time staff as well as Mr. Mancinelli and yourself. You and your staff should be reprimanded for your incompetence. Considering that Mr. Lamrock, with my help, was able to offer a position paper and have 30 student associations endorse it, just goes to show how pitiful your office has been. We managed to do so using our phones and our fax machine and the paper has been quoted by Minister Axworthy and read by the Prime Minister. In contrast, CFS has offered the brief "Life Long Learning or Life Long Debt" which I have yet to hear any politician cite or even admit to have read. To make matters worse, your support of the rally at Minister Axworthy's house only served to strengthen the Federation's image as being a group of immature whiners. What could you have possibly hoped to accomplish by being associated with this rally? Having talked to Mr. Mancinelli regarding this issue, he mentioned that the Executive felt they should support any group of students who were rallying against the cuts. While I am well aware of the need for more student involvement, I would caution any group against blindly endorsing any and all protests. The Federations image is its most important selling tool and this image must be guarded responsibly. A pathetic "Kraft Dinner Luncheon" on the front lawn of the Minister's is certainly not responsible protection.

Lastly, in regards to the Green Paper, is the strike. While I realize that the membership, in a totally misguided way, voted in favor of this stupid idea, I am nonetheless disappointed about a number of things. Most notable of my disappointments is the idea that the International Socialists should be used on all of the campuses who have opposed the strike. May I take this opportunity to thank you for completely subverting the democratic process. The UNB Student Union, the member local to CFS, voted opposed to the strike for a reason and to my knowledge, the International Socialists were not represented in that vote as a group. I am sure they were represented at the meeting by numerous individuals but not officially as an organization. Further to this, at no time was the executive given leave by the members to align itself with the IS in order to carry out the strike. We voted in accordance with what we felt our members would support and to not respect our decision shows just how little the current executive respects the democratic process they claim to defend. This action will not be forgotten at referendum time.

For your information, we will be having a food drive on January 25th. St. Thomas will be joining us in this effort. Both unions felt it made more sense to do something constructive and support students in need rather than damage the already crumbling public perception of students. It is unfortunate the CFS National Executive and the majority of its members fail to see the damage they are causing with these protests.

Throughout this entire year, the support, in terms of campaign materials, that we have received has been deplorable. Can you tell me exactly what the eleven of you in the office do with your time? Our student union is, for all intents and purposes, volunteer based and we are able to produce and run more campaigns in any given month than the Federation seems to be able to in an entire academic year. This too will not be forgotten come referendum time. At least we have been fortunate to have the New Brunswick Student Alliance (NBSA), as they have been more than effective with their campaigns.

Are we going to have a field worker this year or not? If this hiring process were to take any longer a suspicious person might begin to think that the executive does not intend to fill the position. I am sure that your defence is based on two arguments. Process is sure to be at least partly to blame. I do not buy this. The process has been flawed from the start. The hiring committee consisted of people who have never been to the region nor who could speak very much French. How were they supposed to find someone suitable for the region? Secondly, financial considerations may be partly at fault. This may be so, and I cannot comment on this since treasurer's reports have been inconsistent and less than revealing. All in all, it will be interesting to see how the new field worker finds life in the region since, to my knowledge the former field worker office here in the SUB is no longer available.

Lastly, we cannot believe how little lobbying you have accomplished since your election. I am fairly sure: we can count your meetings with MP's on one hand. In comparison to the 18 meetings the NBSA has mustered, this is down right awful. Matter of a fact, the only three meetings that I am aware of you attending, were set up by the NBSA and you were their invite. Considering you are fifteen minutes by foot from "the Hill" and they are ten hours away by car, this serves to further highlight the incompetence of the Ottawa office.

In closing, I am flattered to hear that as many as nine people are being sent to fight in the referendums here. I am sure much of this is due to the fact that Mr. Lamrock still roams our campus. This is, however, disappointing news for two reasons. To my knowledge, the nine does not include the chair or deputy chair. My question to you and Mr. Mancinelli is: are you afraid your incompetence will lose the referendums for you? Secondly, it is a sad statement on the organization that you can afford to send nine people to NB to fight two referendums and cannot (a) hire a field worker for virtually the entire academic year, (b) offer any sort of meaningful arguments to the Green Paper debate and (c) offer any useful campaign materials in a year when students, government and the public must be made aware of the importance of affordable education.

I wish your nine hired guns all the best when they arrive in March, but they should be forewarned that, to date I have yet to hear of any student attending UNB who is prepared to fight on behalf of the Federation.

Sincerely,

Paul Estabrooks
UNB SU President

International Socialists answer Lamrock

Dear Editor,

Kelly Lamrock's letter in the last "Bruns" (Diatribic Hyperventilation) came as a great surprise to members of the International Socialists (I.S.). In personal conversations, Mr. Lamrock was always friendly and approachable. When I.S. members visited his office they were typically treated with respect, and although we recognized our political differences (as well as our areas of agreement) , no personal animosity had ever developed. It was shocking to us, therefore, to have our organization, and in particular two of our friends and fellow members come under personal attack from Mr. Lamrock. While our response gives Mr. Lamrock's cheap shots more legitimacy than they deserve, we feel that a few facts must be set straight.

Mr. Lamrock states that the I.S. is, "no friend of democracy, surely". This is a lie. Anyone who knows us, or knows about our organization (which Mr. Lamrock clearly does not—unsurprising considering he has never seen fit to attend a single I.S. meeting), understands that we consistently defend democratic rights. Whether it be the right of lesbian or gay couples to same-sex spousal benefits, the right of women to choose an abortion, or the right of the people of Quebec and the First Nations to self-determination, we can hardly be considered enemies of democracy. Our group has always denounced Russia, China, Cuba, etc... as undemocratic dictatorships which have nothing to do with genuine socialism. We believe that real socialism means a society of freedom and democracy where wealth is produced to meet human needs, not corporate profit. Any claim that we are in any way "undemocratic" is mere ignorance of our political perspective. Besides, Mr. Lamrock's very definition of democracy seems a little hazy since he appears determined to lead a one-person assault on the Canadian Federation of Students' call for a National Day of Strike and Action on Jan. 25 to fight education cuts. The decision for this day of action was voted on and approved by students all across the country, and Mr. Lamrock is a member of the Federation, but apparently he would like democracy to apply to everyone but himself, because he is actively campaigning against the Jan. 25 actions.

Mr. Lamrock claims that the I.S. wants to silence students. He miraculously argues the I.S. tells students to stop thinking and "shut up". This is also a lie. This is precisely the opposite of what we would like to see (as Mr. Lamrock is well aware, which makes his claim all the more disturbing). We want students to think about $6000 a year for tuition. We want students to speak out against the Liberals' plans to cut all federal funding to post-secondary institutions, thus making higher education only affordable for the wealthiest individuals in society. We want students to stand up and be heard - opposing these plans which will hurt us all. In this we stand firmly on the side of other groups which share this perspective—the Canadian Labour Congress, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the Canadian Federation of Students, the Action Canada Network, the Public Service Alliance of Canada—we could go on and on. Look around Mr. Lamrock, we all want to fight these cuts.

Mr. Lamrock claims that the most important thing to the I.S. is that Mr. Corey, "gets to have his rally". This is lie number three. Mr. Lamrock actually believes that we, "feign concern for ordinary students while selling them down the river". What he conveniently forgets to mention is that we are ordinary students. We want to speak for ourselves, and we encourage other students to do the same. This is our goal. We would rather see students stand up for their own rights, than wait around for self-appointed spokespeople like Kelly Lamrock to arrange back-door bureaucratic deals with politicians who will cut our standard of living and double our tuition regardless of Mr. Lamrock's "constructive" proposals, and who are trying to solve their economic crisis on the backs of students.

No—what is most important is not for one individual to have "his rally". The most important thing of all is to build a real fight back now against the cuts. The real question is - are we going to fight double tuition and the destruction of our social programs, or are we going to sit still and hope that Mr. Lamrock will work out a better deal for us? We in the I.S. agree with all the other national organizations who feel that all students and workers should be given the opportunity to be involved in fighting for their education, their jobs, and their futures. That is why the I.S. is only one of many, many diverse groups all over the country who support the Canadian Federation of Students' call for a National Day of Strike and Action on Jan. 25, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women's call for anti-cuts demos on International Women's Day, and CUPE's rallies against workfare and cuts to UI and Welfare.

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