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Bruns Bits

This Thanksgiving, we
Canadians have much to
be thankful for:

5. Don't have to share
plentiful food with
greedy Americans,
since they're busy
celebrating the
discovery of Haiti.
4. No customary dressing
up like pilgrims.
3. Turkey over-population
problem under control.
2. Left-over turkey great
for handing out on
Halloween
1. There's not going to be
an appeal.

SUB to include movie theatre?



"Expanded" Student Union Building. Keen students might be able to watch the latest flick in the expanded SUB
photo by Mike Dean

Brunswick News

It looks as though the SUB expansion project may be finally gaining momentum, despite some delay since the students voted in 1994 to pay a \$25 fee towards improving the SUB.

The Student Union, according to President Kelly Lamrock, has been investigating new facilities and services which could be located in an expanded SUB. One idea which was introduced at the October 3 meeting of the Student Council was a movie theatre. "It's a possibility, the SUBs at U. Victoria and U. Saskatchewan have them, and they do very well," Lamrock told Council. He also stated that the theatre was an extension of the popular "Loonie Movie" series run by the Student Union.

The SUB Steering Committee, which will formally set out the goals and propose a floor plan for the new SUB, is set to meet for the first time on October 11.

CASA counters cuts with new ideas

by Marty McCarthy
Brunswick News

On October 11 and 12, UNB will hold a plebiscite to determine if students prefer the funding structure for post-secondary education proposed by the federal government or by the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA).

CASA recently released a set of proposals for renewing the country's higher education system in a document entitled "Making Higher Education Work." They were developed as an alternative to those made by the federal government late last year. The

document cites four areas in which to effect change to Canada's higher education system.

First and foremost among these, obviously, is the way in which government funds higher education. The document asserts that the government cannot expect the student population of Canada to bear the load of ever increasing tuition on an indefinite basis, as this would seriously compromise access to education.

CASA recommends that, in the short term, provincial governments treat cuts to transfer payments through the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST)

program as cuts to general revenue, rather than as cuts specifically to education, health, and welfare. In the medium term, CASA recommends that the CHST be abolished and that the government reinstate some version of the previous Established Program Financing (EPF) program, this time allowing for added measures which will protect that portion of the funding which is designated for higher education.

Secondly, the document addresses the systems of education in Canada. It recommends that Canadian universities work more in harmony, each institution having a different mission within the

system of universities. The performance of each university in fulfilling its stated mission would be judged according to a set of performance indicators.

Particularly relevant to UNB is CASA's intention to rationalise administrative services and academic programs among institutions in the same region.

The third major group of recommendations made in the document concerns the "re-orienting" of our system of higher education. This includes giving students more flexibility to choose courses to allow students to learn a body of skills rather than a single body of knowledge. It also suggests that institutions develop better links with government and the business community in order to better understand the demands of the labour market into which graduates will enter.

All of these proposals have at least one common goal: to make delivering higher education more efficient so as to require less funding from the government. Section four of CASA's strategy addresses the possibility that the government may still not be able to adequately fund higher education.

Their solution is called EBF (Education Beneficiary Fund.) It would be a financial resource built by contributions from graduates and corporations, two major benefactors of higher education.

The graduate contribution would take the form of a surtax on the portion of the graduate's income which is above and beyond the average yearly wage for non-university graduates.

The corporate contribution would also take the form of a tax, but only to be applied to corporations that do not already provide some form of financial support to universities, such as scholarships or research grants.

Money from the EBF would be distributed directly to institutions by a joint Federal-Provincial committee.

Anyone who would like more information on these proposals may contact the national office of CASA at (613) 236-3457.

Students to protest cuts

by Janice McConnell
Brunswick News

Students hope to show their solidarity to the government by protesting against the recent cuts to health and social services.

Students and social justice groups are organizing a demonstration in front of the Harriet Irving Library for Wednesday at 2:00 pm. Similar demonstrations are scheduled to take place across the country.

"We are hoping to show the government that we are serious and that we want tuition funding increased, not decreased," said Nik Carrier, a concerned student who is helping to organize the demonstration.

"The government is cutting health and social service transfers by \$2.5 billion," said Carrier, commenting that the government has increased defence spending.

"Which is more important: army toys or the health and well-being of Canadians?" asked Carrier.

"I don't think that students just want to follow," said Patrick Bush, a student involved in organizing the protest and a member of a social justice group at STU. "My feeling is that students come to university to think and learn, to be

critical and challenge ideas. Students have to take a vested interest in politics that directly affect them." Bush pointed to a trend of less government involvement as a source of the current funding problems, using Mike Harris and Ralph Klein as examples.

"A lot of people charge that it is just a bunch of radicals," said Bush. "The definition of radical is to get to the root, in this case to get to the root of the problem of the loss of social programmes."

Carrier indicated that a number of groups are endorsing the initiative including CFS, the International Socialists, labour groups and social action groups such as Ox-fam.

But, according to Carrier, the SU will not be supporting the day of demonstration.

"It is quite popular everywhere else," said Carrier, referring to other universities that will be holding their own demonstrations. "Most SUs have endorsed it, at least all CFS universities."

The UNB SU refused to support the student day of strike last January on the grounds that it objected to some of the tactics being employed by CFS.

"One problem that I have is that it seems that the UNB SU is not going to

endorse this strike for the mere fact that the International Socialists are involved," said Bush, who clarified that he is not a member of the organization.

"I think that it is good that organizations pull together to show their frustration and anger at what the government is doing," Bush said.

"CASA has the position that fighting back is not necessary," said Carrier. "The only problem is that history and repeated attempts have proven that this doesn't work. The only way that wins social change is organization and protest on the ground."

"History proves it. Healthcare, welfare, unemployment insurance, public education and women's right to vote were not won by benevolent bureaucrats," he emphasized. "People massed in huge numbers and demanded it from the government."

UNB voted in a referendum last spring to leave CFS, an organization which promotes student interests at the government level. UNB, along with a number of other universities have formed CASA, a parallel organization to represent student concerns.

At time of press, the members of the SU executive had not been reached for comment.