

OPINION & EDITORIAL

Editorial

Canada is great, eh? I am not sure where my patriotic feelings came from, but it seems like every time I see our flag, flapping in the wind or just hanging from the ceiling at the Aitken Centre, I feel a sense of pride. I don't think I learned it in school. Yeah - we sang the National anthem in elementary school until it was banned. Other than that, I cannot remember being told to be proud of my country. Of course, I was never told not to be.

In class this year, one of my professors questioned the class on what the population of Canada was. I wasn't quite sure but I wasn't really surprised when he told us it was around 30 million - 30,750.10 to be exact (number from Statistics Canada as of 2000). I was surprised, however, to hear that California has a population of 33,899,00. Now, if you put it that way, being the best in Canada is not so great anymore. Our neighbors, directly to the south, have a total population of 283,701,869.00. Compared to our numbers, it makes me feel pretty small and insignificant.

But, on the upside, Canada, (as we all know from Joe, in the 'I am Canadian' commercial), has the second largest landmass. Considering the fact that we have such a low population, perhaps we are wasting a lot of space or perhaps we are just preserving our wildlife and resources. Well, that is debatable.

These facts, although disheartening, does not turn me off of Canada. I will not move to the United States. I don't care how much money I could possibly make down there. Of course, having lived here all my life, I am biased. I like Canada.

Why do I like Canada? Well, there is a sense of pride that isn't overwhelmingly overdone. I heard a story once about someone who was visiting the United States. He went to the theatre to see "The Patriot" on the silver screen. For those of you who haven't seen it - it is about an American farmer, (Mel Gibson) who takes up the American cause in the American Revolution against the evil British. I won't tell you the ending, but since it is American born and bread, I am sure you can figure out who came out victorious. Any historian will tell you that while this depiction is entertaining, it is not entirely true. It certainly reflects the American patriotic feeling in a bit of a biased way. At the American theatre, when Mel Gibson killed a British soldier, the Americans in the theatre clapped and cheered. At a screen. So, I can be proud that Canada doesn't make films that portray themselves as the saintly people who can do no wrong. Of course, our heritage moments on T.V. do leave a bit to be desired - "You all know I cannot read a word." Oh - you've seen them, Columbus sailing to the Orient, midwives and the poor orphans. They are informative but not a true representation of what went on.

I will not shape my argument on the fact that the Americans are flawed because we have our flaws as well. Our universities are not as good as they should be. One of my professors always makes the joke about when he goes away on a conference and someone says, "University of where?" As the current population of UNB, we should certainly try to improve our reputation.

Other than that, we are not exactly saints when it comes to environmental care. Once a major industry, fishing in the Atlantic is again in trouble. Just on the news the other day, I saw a story about how the cod industry in Newfoundland and Labrador is in serious danger with the way the fish stocks are. Again, people are deciding to do something when time is running out. I can't understand why the fisheries minister hasn't been paying closer attention to this over the years. So now, fishermen in Canada are getting quota cuts and will have a hard time sustaining themselves for the season. So what are we going to do?

Canada, even with its flaws is not a bad place to live. It has beautiful landscape (at least until all the trees are clear cut in the logging industry), we have relatively few natural disasters, and Quebec has not seceded - at least yet. If it does and separates Canada, you may as well pack your bags - you'll be an American.

• Cindy Brown, Acting Editor-in-Chief

Mugwump

A lot of Brazilians are mad at Canada. In the past few weeks, bar owners have thrown out Canadian beer, radio stations have banned Canadian music, longshoremen have boycotted Canadian goods, and a satirist has called us party poopers. Are they justified in being angry with Canada? All our government did was put an import ban on their beef for a few weeks. The Brazilians even went so far as staging what became daily protests, where some people dressed as Mounties had cow barbecues in front of the Canadian embassy in the Brazilian capital, Brasilia. Was their behaviour excessive? Arguably not. The circumstances of the "beef ban" call into question the real motives of the Canadian government for establishing it, as well as its prudence in international dealings.

The Canadian government imposed the ban February 2, 2001, alleging that the Brazilian government had failed to provide documentation showing that the country's 160 million cattle - the world's largest herd - were free from mad cow disease, which is linked to Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease in humans. And although Canada noted the restrictions might be lifted subsequent to scientific investigation, the Brazilian reaction was less than accommodating. But the move has also met with dissenting criticism in the Canadian and international communities: many ascribe political motives. Many draw attention to circumstances coinciding with the implementation of the ban. Canada called the ban one day after the WTO refused to further review its December 12, 2000 decision allowing Canada to take retaliatory actions against Brazil - which may range from suspending, or applying huge tariffs to, certain imports - for running afoul of international law with respect to export subsidies in their respective, and competing, jet-making industries. Many critics thus believe the ban to be a pressure tactic, or even retaliation on the part of the Canadian government. The implications are serious. NAFTA requires that the United States and Mexico join in on any ban that Canada establishes. And while the member countries of NAFTA only accounted for 10% of the US\$800 million in Brazilian beef exports last year, the effects it could have on the reputation of the Brazilian beef industry, and thus all of the people that depend on it, could be quite damaging.

Yet, what is perhaps even more interesting are the circumstances in which the Canadian government decided to back out of the deal. When the action was taken, the Brazilian government threatened to impose trade sanctions on Canada if it did not lift the ban within three weeks - a deadline that Canada managed to meet calling off the ban on February 23 (only an hour after the U.S. said it was not scientifically founded). Furthermore, Brazil also threatened to pull out of talks regarding a hemispheric free trade zone at the Summit of the Americas, which will take place in Quebec City, in April. Brazil is Canada's largest trading partner in South America. Meanwhile, there was discord within the Canadian government as well. Whereas neither the U.S. or Mexico ever thought that there is potential for mad cow disease, two Health Canada scientists have suggested that the ban was likely motivated by the politics surrounding trade relations, rather than by scientifically based health concerns. One of them, Margaret Haydon was suspended, while the other, who does not wish to be identified has gone so far as to say that government scientists were not consulted at all. So what is the story?

Many of the parties involved in the affair express contrasting opinions and facts. The matter lends itself to conspiracy theories, and stories of alternate agendas among international powers. It also means that Canada may have to do some image work in the international community, and perhaps be a little careful about its dealings with Brazil in the future. Meanwhile, it also brings up the issue of whether or not decision-making in Ottawa should be more transparent. Indeed, who is Health Canada working for anyway?

• Pat Reid, Acting Managing Editor

S.U. Roundup

The Student Union has officially taken a step in the right direction and restructured the executive.

The long-awaited realignment of duties, between the President and the newly created VP Executive, has been finalized and will come into effect for the up-coming elections.

As a current member of the executive, I highly recommend coming and learning more about the positions available. The elections have been called for the Student Union and will close March 20th at 4:00 p.m. Application forms are available in the office Room 126 in the SUB.

A major part of this restructuring includes a limitation on the number of courses the President can now take in a term. The idea behind this comes from past-presidents' recommendations that it is not possible to do the job true justice while being a full-time student. The person is forced to sacrifice academics versus the role at hand.

With the element of a restricted course load, it was felt the student who is President might be forced to lengthen the duration of their degree program. Currently, the President and the VPs all receive honoraria for their contributions for the Student Union, plus a summer salary. During the year this is based on a part-time commitment and then full-time status during the summer months. As the President will be required to now work full-time at 37.5 hours a week and may be required to remain at university longer due to the course restriction, the President will now receive a raise (if such a word could be used). This is a good solid step to bring the Student Union President up to a higher level that is deserving of such a position.

The Board of Governors Election has been called and will be held concurrently with the Union elections. There will be advanced voting March 28th and regular voting the 29th and 30th.

The major difference between these elections is that nominations for the Board of Governors close March 14th at 4:00 pm and are open to undergraduate, graduate and part-time students. The details for nominations are also available in room 126 in the SUB.

The ultimate decision-making body of UNB is the Board of Governors. There are over 40 members of the Board. Of that number, three are students (one from the Saint John campus). They meet no more than four times a year to deal with such concerns as the university budget, personal issues, changes to academic procedures, and long-term planning.

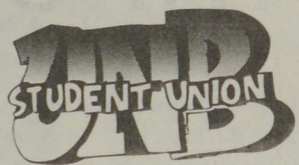
Council meeting agendas have been very full lately with another big issue on the table. A motion has been put forward to revise the Club and Society guidelines of the Student Union in an attempt to address some of the key shortcomings that currently exist in the system. It is felt there are no strict guidelines for the finance committee to follow and there are major communication issues between the Student Union and the Clubs and Societies involved.

The new system is an attempt to make the operation more manageable and more equitable to all involved. It has not been passed by the Union yet, as there are still some major details to be considered.

In my mind, it is important not to lose any existing spirit here at UNB but rather promote an increase in student pride and involvement.

• Kate Whitfield

VP External
UNB Student Union



UNB STUDENT UNION

ELECTIONS 2001

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Executive

President	1
VP University Affairs	1
VP Finance & Admin	1
VP Student Services	1
VP Executive	1

Council Seats

Arts	4
Business	3
Computer Science	2
Education	3
Engineering	4
Forestry	2
Kinesiology	1
Law	1
Nursing	1
Science	3
Student at Large	2

Fredericton Senate

1 Year Term	4
2 Year term	1

Board of Governors

Positions	2
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Valedictorian (1999)

Ceremony A	1
Ceremony B	1
Ceremony C	1

Grad Class 2000

President	1
VP	1
Secretary Treasurer	1
Project Co-ordinator	1

DEADLINE MARCH 20

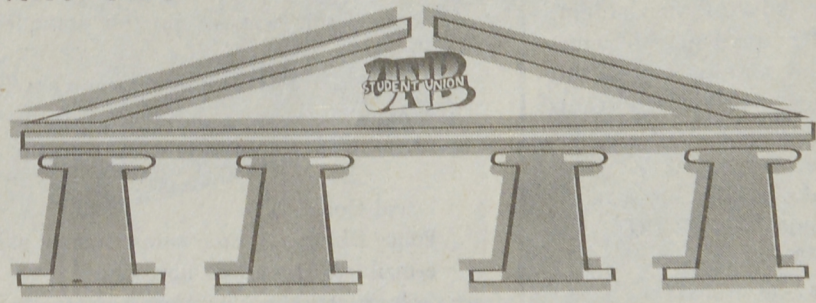
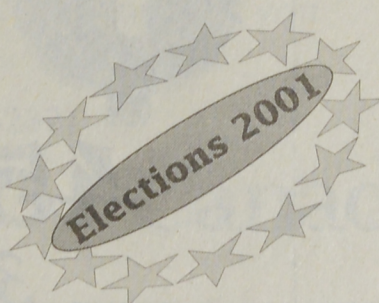
Nominations are being accepted until March 14 for any undergraduate, graduate, or part-time student in good academic standing (GPA of 2.0 or above) for:

Board of Governors (Student Representatives) - 2 seats

Nominations are being accepted until March 20 at 4pm for any full time undergraduate student for all other positions.

The Board of Governors, Senate and Student Union Elections
will take place on March 28, 29, 30

****Close of nominations are Monday
March 20th at 4:00pm. Nomination
forms can be picked up at the SU
office, Rm. 126**



Candidates for all positions must be at least 19 years of age.