

THE BRUNSWICKAN OPINION & EDITORIAL

Editorial

Vote-it's your privilege

by Cindy Brown
Editor-in-Chief

It's election time again (well - SU elections).

There was a time when I refused to vote in any election. When I was old enough for my first vote I didn't feel that I should vote because I didn't know anyone who was running. I am glad I did vote.

In the end, I voted because I had a right to vote - in other countries and in other times, I, being a woman, would not have the right to vote. So, I voted. That didn't change the fact that I didn't know anyone who was running.

The thought process - do I vote? - was repeated throughout all of my years of university when Student Union elections came about. This year, being the Editor-in-Chief of our student newspaper, I felt obliged to vote. I also have the opportunity of finally knowing some of the candidates. However, the only reason why I know any of the candidates is because of my position at the paper.

So, could the fact that the majority of the student population does not know any of the candidates who are running, also be

the reason why we have such low turn-outs at the polls? I think so. I don't think that this is necessarily the fault of the candidates. At a conference held in the cafeteria on Wednesday many people were there and able to observe - but it was lunchtime. Of course people were there - they were eating lunch. I doubt, however, that many heard the arguments of the candidates.

The candidates were trying to spread their message - they have visited residences, held a conference in the cafeteria, and have plastered the campus with their posters. There doesn't seem to be a lack of effort on their part.

So, there are students out there who are trying to be leaders and trying to make a difference. But there are also students out there who complain about parking, tuition, and campus safety and so on.

So why not at least make an effort to get to know the candidates for the SU elections, think about their platforms and vote. You have that right. If you didn't - I suspect you might want it. Don't abuse that right. Voting is a virtually effortless way to be involved.

A great majority of students are apathetic. But only they can change their apathetic attitudes.

"Hippies" in the Middle East

by Naveed Majid

Fashions come and fashions go. The ending of one fad is the beginning of another. So, it goes on and on. However, it appears the grungy, peasant-style apparel of the late 60's and early 70's have had a long lasting grip on the psyche of youth in North America. But, what about the spirit of that "hippie" movement?

Well, that is another story. Beyond the protests by a select few spawned by the thought of globalization, willing to undergo the sting of pepper spray, the bruises by swinging batons, the scrapes by being dragged over asphalt into paddy wagons and the threat of incarceration, little of that hippie spirit exists. However, that is the case in the developed world, the industrialized countries today. Neil Young wrote a song about "4 dead in Ohio" who were killed on the Kent State University campus on May 04, 1970 protesting against an unjust and oppressive Vietnam War. This was the epitome of the Vietnam War protests and the "highlight" of the hippie movement of that era. Youths, the future of any nation, gave their lives for the future.

Today, would anyone give his or her life for a higher cause, to protest injustice, to protest oppression? Well, Palestinian youths, emulating the biblical young David, openly hurl rocks and debris at the new Goliath, the Israeli Army. Some use slingshots but most just throw rocks. What they face are bullets. It is irrelevant if sometimes the bullets are rubberized!

Day after day, for those who care to watch the news, the same vision is seen on our TV screens. This is a struggle of the most basic form. In the face of hopelessness, the youth carry the frustration of their ancestors out into the street in protestation of oppression and injustice. And, each one is ready to pay the ultimate price for the "higher" cause.

The French Resistance movement against Nazi Germany during World War II is romanticized in literature, in movies, in general, the popular Western culture. The Resistance, the majority being French youths, undermined the German occupiers, attempting to drive the occupiers out of their homeland with any means available to them. The French Resistance

movement has never been associated with the word "terrorist", yet they used terrorist tactics (by definition) against the Germans. So, had the Germans won World War II, the French and their allies, including the British, Canadians and Americans would be official terrorist nations. It's simply a matter of perspective.

Interestingly, despite the actual result of World War II the United States of America holds the distinction of being a terrorist nation from the perspective of many peoples of Planet Earth.

Charles Black, a scholar of Constitution and International law at Yale University Law School could not find a publisher in the U.S. for his essay about the U.S., Israel, and the Palestinians: "They are imprisoned under obscene conditions, after kangaroo trials, or no trials at all. They are regularly shot at; enough of them are killed to make death ever-present. Many are maimed; many are disfigured for life. Yet they come out in the streets again and again, these young people. What name shall we give to the trait of character that produces conduct like that? Why do you hesitate? You know what the word is. Do you hesitate because that word just never happens to be spoken in American in application to these young Palestinian people? Or is it because you fear that a revolution in your thought and feeling will have to follow your pronouncing the word? Well, you're very likely right about that last. That makes you nervous? So let me help you. I'll start things off by saying the word for you the first time.

The word is 'courage'. The courage of Palestinian youth shall not be romanticized for a while, if at all. But, their spirit is not a fashion or a fad, not a passing fancy. They honour their past, honour their heritage and they honour their forefathers, as would any other nation. But, having lost their homeland to an occupier, they take honour in death for the higher cause.

Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Oh yes, the spirit of the 60's is alive and well. But, it is not to be found with those who are superficial, cosmetic and fashionable. It is found with those who truly struggle against injustice and oppression. And that spirit will spread in the face of injustice and oppression.

Mugwump

UNB plays catch-up

by Patryk Reid
Managing Editor

"Personally, I would say it's about time," said Daron Letts about UNBF's recent announcement that it will put \$75,000 towards safety enhancement initiatives on campus.

And it certainly is. Letts, a member of UNB Students Against Rape and Intimidation (UNBSRI) aptly points out that "this university is very much behind the times," where providing safety services on campus is concerned. Many of North America's campuses have made far greater efforts to create a secure public environment. He is further correct in saying "that doesn't mean that by this time next year they can't be leaders."

The announcement was made by UNB President, Elizabeth Parr-Johnson on February 19th. This allocation of \$75,000 took place in the midst of an ongoing process of evaluating and trying to satisfy the security needs relevant to UNB's campus. The work is being done in cooperation by various groups, which UNBSU VP (Exec) Kate Whitfield says includes representatives of the Muriel McQueen Ferguson Foundation, Fredericton Assault and Crisis Centre, UNBSU, UNBSRI, the UNB Administration, Victims Services Division of the Fredericton City Police, and the Women's Studies Program. Some of them have participated in two night-time walkabouts during which areas posing safety concerns were identified, and designated to be supplied with lights or telephones. Safety mirrors are also being considered. Meanwhile, UNB Security is gathering safety audit information from other universities which will be considered in a safety audit for this

campus which, according to Louise Boldon, Parr-Johnson's Executive Assistant, will be led in part by Director of UNB Security, Reg Jerrett. She noted, February 20th, "it's the kind of thing where you don't want to reinvent the wheel." Other programs will be implemented with a view to enhancing consciousness of safety issues.

These are all praiseworthy initiatives, and the administration ought to be complemented for moving to facilitate their realization. Yet it is unfortunate that it took five attacks on campus - which were made public at least two weeks late - to set this overdue process in motion. What is more important is that most of the needed initiatives are actually followed through. For example on February 20th, Whitfield stated that an audit similar to the one currently in planning was done in 1998. She continued, "our [UNBSU's] job is to make sure that things are done, and that this isn't another report on the shelf." Still, she admits that such meetings were not on the SU agenda prior attacks either.

Yet the SU may be praised for at least providing some safety services, all of which were mentioned in the release in a manner that presents the university as a supporter of these programs, while contributing only a small amount of funding to them. Whitfield thinks they should have mentioned the Student Union's role. And she notes that while "those projects need help... someone needs to step up in a different area."

One of the areas being lobbied for especially is a project for the establishment of a Women's Centre. Letts emphasized the need for a Women's Centre - a type of organization common to many campuses across the country - with a paid staff-person. He says that Women's Centres provide a

space for students in which they can step out of the patriarchal pressures of university life, where students can express concerns and quickly access counseling, among other services. He says it's been agreed that "the [university] administration has some catch-up to do... [claiming there have been proposals and calls for a Women's Centre at UNB since 1979] and they seem really eager and committed to meet that responsibility."

I suppose we'll see if they are, and we'll probably find out soon. Probably the best indicator of whether or not a project is going to happen on campus is a guarantee of funding. \$75,000 isn't bound to last long when things like phones, for example, cost from \$6,000 to \$12,000, according to Whitfield. Certainly that money will not be enough to cover the cost of something as elaborate as a brand new Women's Centre, and just barely cover the lights and telephones needed on campus. Yet Boldon admits UNB does not allot specific funds to initiatives such as those it seeks to implement. UNB must create a yearly budgetary line-item to the maintenance and improvement of safety services on campus. Boldon hints that "where this is on the forefront of everyone's minds right now... budgets are due on Monday... there's probably a good chance that that's what people are thinking about."

What happens Monday will be indicative of just how committed UNB really is. And they need to come up with more than just lights and phones. As Whitfield points out: in working on something like this, one needs to "think about the worst case scenario, then do what you would have done to prevent it." Prevention indeed.

VP Executive's responses unsatisfactory

by Kirby Arbeau

Once again, it is with sadness I looked upon the words of Kate Whitfield, VP Executive of UNB Student Union. Her responses to some of the issues that have been circulating around campus and on the provincial and national stages concerning the future of post-secondary education are unsatisfactory for this student, as I hope they are for others on campus.

I'm sure most people are aware of the CFS and its organizational objectives; if not, check out their website. Of course, Ms. Whitfield seems to dismiss their goals as simplistic, naïve, and obviously left of center. On the last point, I would probably agree; however, the goal of tuition-free universities in Canada is not so far-fetched. The only problem is that challenging tuition fees means challenging government funding in general, which means

challenging taxation, which means challenging corporations, and so on. This is exactly why an organization like CFS has a stance on social issues, because they realize that rising tuition fees are symptoms of larger societal processes.

Calling their policies unrealistic misses the point, I think, because the assumption behind our student reps reasoning is that issues like decreased funding to universities and rising tuition fees and globalization are seemingly disconnected. Of course, it sounds reasonable to try to lobby governments about increasing funding for post-secondary education, rather than freezing tuition levels and demanding increased funding. That is, only if the terms of the debate have been set from the beginning in a particular manner: that being, governments and universities are doing the best they can with what resources they have at their disposal. I

don't buy this logic.

"Being taken seriously" necessarily involves providing plans and opinions that are palatable to the powers of the day, thus limiting what counts as reasonable and rational debate on the subject of post-secondary education, or any other issue for that matter.

So Ms. Whitfield, your position then becomes one that enables the power structure and the opinions of the day to maintain their reasonableness, and by extension, their popularity. I would like to think that the enlightened people down at the SUB could give lots of thought to these issues before a steadfast position is developed for the student body to follow. Demand change, don't hope that it comes from the good graces of politicians in their infinite compassion and wisdom. A step in this direction would truly surprise me. I hope you and the other members of the executive give it some thought...

Campus Watch... to promote safety and security

This column was written by UNB Security and Traffic in response to recent concerns with safety on the UNB campus. The views expressed in the following are not those of The Brunswickan.

by Reg Jerrett,
Director, Security and Traffic

Campus Watch is a new information column which will focus on the timely reporting of crimes on and near campus that may have implications for student safety.

Police Task Force

The City Police Task Force, established to investigate incidents which occur on and near campus, is off to a good start. A suspicious person was sighted on campus by Security who then reported the sighting to police. The police investigated the report but the individual has not been located.

Specific Cases

On February 2nd, a female student was

followed down Windsor Street by a male subject who was 30 to 35 years of age, approximately 5' 11" tall and wearing a black tuque and dark-coloured winter coat. When he approached her and tried to initiate conversation, she did not respond and ran into Head Hall to safety. She reported the incident to Campus Security who then contacted police. The subject was not located but police are investigating the incident.

On February 4th, in the early hours of the morning, Campus Security received a call reporting a beer bottle had been thrown through the window of a campus residence. The two female students in the room were not injured but were frightened by the incident. A male resident student responsible was sanctioned by the residence community.

Thefts on Campus

Campus Security received reports of thefts in residences and the Aitken Centre. Many of these recent incidents, involving the theft of wallets, purses, cash and watches, occurred as a result of students

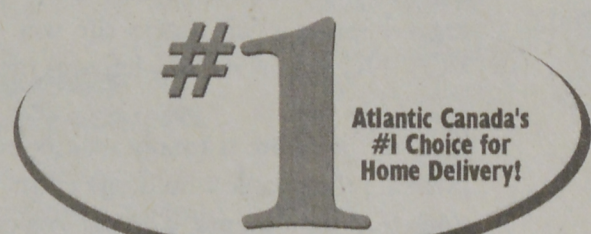
not locking their doors when they were out of their residence rooms. Safety and security is the responsibility of us all; please lock your room when you go out, even if it is just for a few minutes, and report all incidents of theft to UNB Security immediately.

Emergency Phones

Did you know each of the pay phones located in buildings on campus has a direct link to UNB Campus Security? On the bottom left corner of the key pad on each of the pay phones you will find the red UNB symbol that reads 'UNB Security.'

Report What You See

If you see anything that seems suspicious or if you are a victim of any criminal act, we urge you to contact Campus Security immediately at 453-4830, or Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-8477. UNB Security and Traffic has a Web site featuring information on issues of safety and security on and off campus. The address is www.unb.ca/security. We also encourage you to visit the Fredericton City Police Web site at www.frederictonpolice.com.



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