

MacDonald speaks out about SU

President said meetings secret to avoid confusion, rumours from spreading

by Sean Patrick Sullivan

A week after Peter MacDonald was removed as Vice-President (Executive) of the Student Union, two very different sides of the issue are emerging.

The Student Union (SU) has issued a press release saying MacDonald was "released" by the

council at its November 4th meeting. Milan Chotai, SU President, also confirmed that MacDonald had been suspended since September 30th.

Though he pointed to job performance as a factor in the dismissal, Chotai said he couldn't give out specifics.

All meetings with regards to the ousting were held in executive session, meaning only council members could be present for the discussion. Minutes are not kept.

"The reason the process was done confidentially in closed session was to avoid confusion that would result from misinformation," explained

Chotai.

"Nothing really was done in secret... council didn't take action until November 4th," he continued.

Peter MacDonald disagrees. The former VP Executive has told *The Brunswickan* that he was investigated by a judicial review committee that took five and a half weeks to bring together a final report. MacDonald said that the committee found no means for dismissal.

"Their overall opinion was there was no means for dismissal. So then [council] still decided to put it to a vote, and they voted to dismiss,"

MacDonald said.

"I don't know if there was internal pressure but I think there's a good clique of people that had five weeks to make sure that everybody was on board," he continued, adding that he has doubts about the legitimacy of the dismissal vote.

"It was a meeting led by several people who were bound and determined to get their way, and in the end they did. They were expecting me to be dismissed. They had no intention on [the judgement] not being guilty."

According to MacDonald, several charges related to his participation in protests, peace rallies, and controversial movie showings. "I think that motivated part of it - they don't agree with some of the positions I take outside of school, but that's their right and it's my right to be able to do that," he claimed.

"I've been told that I'm on duty 24 hours a day and [did things that were] against the will of the union."

MacDonald also questioned the ethics behind the decision.

"Anybody can bring up a motion, and try to get rid of anybody in council. All you have to do is convince 2/3 of council that you don't like them there. And that's basically what just happened."

Still, MacDonald is not sure what he's going to do now. "I don't think it's all done with. I'm looking into what can be done."

Chotai stressed that there were precedents for the procedure, though at other schools those in question had taken the initiative and stepped down.

"Unfortunately we had to go a bit further," he said, adding that it was done properly, following guidelines set out in the union's bylaws.

Chotai also emphasized the need for discretion, which is the reason meetings were held in executive session.

"It is so easy for things like rumours to result, then confusion from that. You don't want to defame people in a public forum; that's just cruel," he said.

As of press time members of the executive were not available for further comment.

The VP Executive and VP Finance positions will be posted soon, and Chotai encourages all students who are interested in making a difference to apply.



The Internet
Social Issues Committee at UNB hopes to eliminate use of sweatshop clothing on campus.

Sweatshop continued from Page 1

investigate are items like society shirts, security uniforms and employee uniforms.

Currently, the UNB bookstore, which is managed by the Follett Corporation, has a policy that states it will not sell products made from sweatshops. They monitor all shipments sent to them and will return merchandise that does not meet with their policy.

Other sources of clothing on campus are not subject to any restrictions at this point and it is up to the buyer to decide where to buy their products.

Brewer said the Social Issues

Committee hopes that after the investigation, the SU will pass a policy on the campus to ban all sources of sweatshop clothing at UNB.

However, some say the downside of creating a policy against the use of sweatshop labour is that the costs for merchandise may increase.

Greg LeBlanc, a member of the Social Issues Committee said that would not be such a bad thing.

"Not only would we be supporting social justice and fair trade, but that extra buck would also be supporting local, quality producers rather than anonymous, unjust and greedy multi-national corporations" said LeBlanc.

Improving artisan's quality of life

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The main objective of the Ten Thousand Villages sale is to improve the quality of life for the artisan and his or her family.

"We know we're doing something that's helping other people and that's really what it's all about," Baerg said.

All products sold by Ten Thousand Villages are handmade. Money is borrowed by the artisans to buy the necessary raw materials. Once the work has been completed and has been shipped out of the country, they are paid in full, explained Baerg.

Dan Doerksen, a retired UNB professor, volunteered during the sale. He said it's important to buy fairly traded products.

"There's a lot of inequality in this world," said Doerksen. "North American's sometime forget that there is a lot of poverty in the rest of the world, a lot of suffering."

"I volunteer because I'm a follower of Christ and I think it's a wonderful way to serve my fellow human beings... it's very satisfying," he said.

Over the next few weeks, the Ten Thousand Villages sale will be travelling throughout the Atlantic provinces. Woodstock, New Brunswick, Truro, Nova Scotia and Crapaud, Prince Edward Island are still on the list of places to visit. For more information, visit the Ten Thousand Villages website at: www.tenthousandvillages.com.



Meg Folkins/The Brunswickan

Shoppers browse through handmade goods last weekend.

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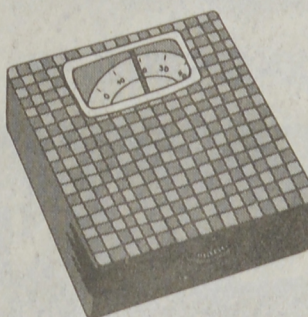
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