

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A letter to MP Andy Scott

by Asaf Rashid, Andrea Markey, and
Daron Letts (on behalf of
F.R.E.E.D.O.M)

To the Hon. Andy Scott:

Members of the community organization, Fredericton Residents for Education on the Economically-motivated Deployment of the Military (F.R.E.E.D.O.M.), respectfully request that your office articulate your personal stance on a number of local and international issues that greatly concern us.

Many people in our community are intimidated by the fact that soldiers and military equipment from C.F.B. Gagetown have appeared in and around our neighborhoods to conduct "basic tactical training in urban warfare." A photo in the *Telegraph Journal* on January 9, 2003, depicts a Major from the British Royal Engineers instructing Canadian soldiers from CFB Gagetown in downtown Fredericton. The men are dressed in camouflage uniforms. These may be some of the same soldiers who participated in "Iron Fist," the largest live-ammunition combat training project ever undertaken in New Brunswick. We are also uncomfortable with the seemingly constant helicopter traffic that passes overhead each afternoon. Why did you not seek the permission of your constituents before donating our community to combat training for a war that so many of the people who elected you oppose?

Secondly, we are concerned that our Canadian soldiers may die from friendly fire by the US and other hazards, including exposure to carcinogenic

depleted uranium used by the US and the UK to strengthen armour-piercing shells.

Approximately one-third of the casualties among the US led coalition in the first Gulf war were a result of friendly fire. Of the 4,500 Canadian soldiers who served overseas in the first Gulf War, over 2,000 have suffered serious ailments including cancer, according to Suzanne Raidon, the widow of a Canadian soldier who suffered the effects of depleted Uranium exposure shortly after returning from the Gulf, eventually dying in 1999. We also do not want these young Canadian men and women to kill the people of Iraq to protect the interests of the US government and corporations such as Exxon-Mobil.

Do you share these concerns? What is the motivation for Canada's involvement in this offensive? Do you endorse the US "first strike" nuclear strategy or do you stand with us to oppose it?

Thirdly, given the fact that over a million people in Iraq have perished as a result of UN sanctions, a decimated infrastructure and weekly bombing by the US and the UK that has continued since the end of the first Gulf war in the early 1990's (including over 50 bombing missions last year alone), and given that U.N. inspectors have uncovered no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, how can you justify an escalation of the aggression against the people of this devastated country? You have been involved in the Canadian government's Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights. What is your argument, informed by a justice and human rights perspective, for a war against Iraq?

Canadians ignorant of US

*US bashing caused by
jealousy, feelings of
superiority*

by Michael L. Demmons

Some time ago, I responded to a story in the *Emory Wheel*, an Atlanta college paper, about the firing of several gay translators by the US military. In that letter, I noted how stupid I thought the military's "Don't Ask. Don't Tell." policy was. I received an email a couple days later from a Canadian man complimenting me on my position. His compliment was well received - until his note digressed into a wholesale attack on the United States in general. It ended with the sentence, "Free Healthcare. YEAH!!!"

In the *Toronto Star*, Richard Gwyn defended the position of "moral superiority" as "good for [Canadians] and good for Americans." His reasoning for this is that while Canadians might just "talk" superiority, Americans absolutely believe that they are superior to everyone else. Gwyn is right about one thing - a lot of Canadians do feel morally superior to their American neighbors to the south. I, though, am not one of them.

In 1999, I moved to Atlanta to teach at a private university. Before that, I was finishing a Master's degree - a degree I needed to complete before I could take the job. My professor asked if I felt prepared to go to the United States. Trying to be funny, I replied that I needed to work on my arrogance if I was to be fully prepared. Turns out, my own arrogance was not in such short supply. I quickly learned that for 30 years, I had been fed a slanderous line about Americans. Americans, I was always led to believe, are ruled by the almighty dollar. Their sole desire is to impose their culture on an unwitting world. They bombard us with their media, their businesses, and their advertising. Americanization is the goal. And that is all that matters. How arrogant can these

Americans be? I was soon to find out. It took all of a couple weeks to have just about every single stereotype shattered.

America is not about arrogance. America is about success. And if apparent arrogance shines through in a person's dealings with a US citizen, chances are it is of that person's own invention. America is (or is supposed to be) about people taking personal responsibility for everything they do. Some here would like it to be otherwise. They want higher taxes, free healthcare, and welfare, welfare, welfare - everything that makes Canada "great."

In America, the government does not pay for healthcare for the general population. It isn't free. We love to point this out when comparing Canada to the US. We gloss over the fact though, that we are drowning in the debt of our "free" healthcare. We never mention that a lot of the good things we could be doing in the world are things we can't do because our "free" healthcare has made us poor. Once, Canada had decent armed forces. Today, our military is an embarrassment. We put tolls on roads that are supposed to be paid for by tax dollars. We have some of the highest personal income taxes in the world. And when there's not enough money for "free" healthcare? It gets stolen out of our pockets. Or worse still, other programs are cut to pay for it. God forbid we toy with that which maketh us different from the US. I guess it's more important to be different than to pay down our national debt.

Should I be proud to be a Canadian? Sometimes I find that difficult. We're doing nothing in the war on terror - except kicking our neighbor when they're down. Even if we wanted to, there'd be no money! We call our neighbors warmongers and arrogant. Some as in the Prime Minister's office call the president a moron! So what if she eventually resigned? She should never have been given the chance. The Prime Minister should have canned that woman immediately.

Canadians need to get off the pedestal they've placed themselves on. At one time, it was deserved. People looked to

Canada as a moral compass. It is becoming increasingly evident that Canada deserves the label "moral compass" about as much as Saddam Hussein deserves the title "His Excellency." Sometimes, when we can't say anything bad about someone, we will often resort to insults. And that is what Canada has resorted to with the United States. They can call Americans arrogant, but they can't back it up.

The United States is a powerful country. Not just militarily. This country has created an environment for business that is unmatched. The US is a global media powerhouse. Is this a fault? To hear Canadians speak, you'd think so. Canadians would sit and watch the latest Spielberg flick in a US-owned theater in Toronto. Then they would walk across the street to Burger King, happily eating a Whopper and bitch about how the United States is too powerful. It's like wearing a fur coat and whining about the seal hunt! Unfortunately, that puts the US in a position where it cannot win the PR battle, because no matter how powerful their media machine is, you just can't reason with people who hate you because you are successful.

The only way the US could win that one is if it decided to become a socialist state - which is exactly what countries like Canada do when they make healthcare a free-for-all. Canada is a social-welfare state. Free healthcare, welfare, unemployment insurance, and all these social programs that Canadians throw in the face of Americans, mean exceptionally high taxes. It means higher prices for goods and services, and higher costs for doing business. It means that we, as a country, will be less able to compete with countries where government money is not so easily thrown around. Canadians have made that decision. But with that decision, comes the requirement that we take responsibility when we are less successful because of it. So, don't pretend to be morally superior because our country squanders its wealth and can't compete on the global stage with the US.

It's embarrassing to me as a Canadian.

Again, reader tired of US-bashing

by Matthew Steeves

In the past few years I have become increasingly aware of Canadians' hostile attitude toward the USA. So I found it very refreshing following the September 11th World Trade Center attacks to see what appeared to be an outpouring of concern and sympathy by Canadians. Throughout town the occasional American flag could be seen in the windows of cars and homes.

Now the memorials have disappeared and hate once again seems to be the going theme for Canadians. I find the recent bashing of President Bush and the USA in *The Brunswickan*, the broader provincial and even the federal media very disturbing. Once again it seems that Canadians have nothing better to do except complain about the policies of our neighbors to the south. And for what good reason? Is it anything more than envy and/or ignorance? The hot topics of late seem

to be the Iraq situation or just Bush in general. This irks me!

Sure I like the thought of peace like most other people, and in a perfect world there would be nothing but peace. Unfortunately, we don't live in a perfect world. Would it be better for the USA to lie down and die? I suspect that if Canada was in the position of the USA with our safety and security directly threatened, we would do much the same; we would protect ourselves and our country to the best of our means. Or at least I would certainly like to hope so! For example, who thinks that it would be wise to refuse law enforcement the right to enforce the law with force? Is that not basically what many of us are asking the US to do?

And what if the USA does turn a blind eye to Iraq? I really think that there is more at stake here than cheap oil! I may be wrong, but my understanding is that, "War For Oil," is nothing more than a good slogan stolen from the Iraqis by anti-war protesters. Many Canadians

appear to be more on Saddam's side than that of our neighbours. I think that it is very low and ignorant for anyone to accuse Bush of risking so many American lives in any potential war so that he can basically "steal" oil. Really, when it comes to the fight against terrorism, most of the interests of USA are in the interests of Canada.

I think as Canadians we should start seeing things from their point of view. I'm tired of Canadians who bash the USA for being arrogant while thinking we are better than everyone else. Does anyone else see the irony here? Or is it just too great to comfortably crap on the USA knowing that if we ever are in danger we can just count on our strong neighbors to come in and help us out? After all, we are quite defenseless without them.

Yes, everyone is entitled to their opinions and the right to voice them, but please, let us think before we spread our hate. It's really easy for us to judge, isn't it?

Law and Order, Little Mermaid not sexist

by Greg Pattman

This is in response to Casey Jaketta's article in the November 29th *Brunswickan*, titled "Stop worrying about impressing your man."

I think this article has some serious weak points and is a classic example of making a sexist/womanizing issue out of something that shouldn't be. You mentioned that as you watched your favorite show, *Law and Order*, you noticed that the assistant District Attorney (Angie Harmon, a woman)

didn't say a word in court. That's because she's the assistant District Attorney and they rarely, if ever, say anything in court on that particular show.

Now, if you have watched the show from its beginnings, you would have noticed that the original assistant district attorney was played by Richard Brooks - a man - and he never, ever, ever spoke a word in the courtroom as the assistant District Attorney either. The ADA doesn't speak because that's their position, not based on whether or not they have a penis. You are making an

issue out of nothing (ie - you're grasping at straws) and people like you are a problem in the Women's Movement because you are presenting non-credible arguments, thus discrediting the whole movement.

As far as *The Little Mermaid* goes, do you seriously believe that the movie sends the message "that women have to give up everything to make men happy"? You must have been stuck in some pessimistic rut the day you decided to dream up that theory. Get off your soap box unless you have something relevant to the cause.

Help support new study: a letter from UNB's President

*Academic integrity
under the microscope*

by John D. McLaughlin
President and Vice-Chancellor

Dear Colleagues and Students:
The University of New Brunswick has been asked by the Center for Academic Integrity at Duke University, and by Professor Donald McCabe of Rutgers University in New Jersey, USA, to take part in a North American-wide study of academic integrity in higher education.

I would like to encourage your support for this important study which is endorsed by the Association of University of New

Brunswick Teachers and the UNB Student Union, and is approved by the University of New Brunswick Ethics Review Board.

During Academic Integrity Survey Week, from February 3rd to the 7th, you will receive an e-mail providing directions about participation in the study.

Our Teaching and Learning Centre will be responsible for coordinating the survey on the UNB campuses. If you have any questions about any aspect of the survey, please e-mail the coordinator, Dr. E. Joy Mighty at mightyj@unb.ca.

Thank you, in advance, for your support of this important project.

Remember
Letters to the Editor
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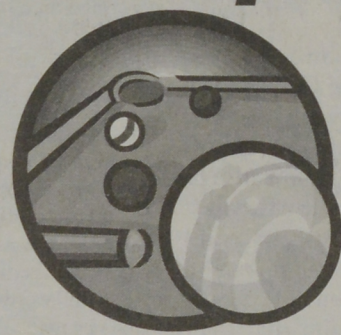


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