

LETTERS

eic@unb.ca • november 23, 2005

Bush pushes, will China push back?

MUGWUMP

by Greg LeBlanc

In a surprisingly smart move, George Bush left his country, and acrid, civilian disgust, behind in a grand venture across the Pacific in order to improve relations with some of the world's economic powerhouses.

He's a man on a mission.

Asia is a hotbed of controversial activity at the moment, and Bush wants to cool the fire. From Kyoto, Japan, Bush gave an uplifting speech on values to China. As if hurling a rock at an elephant, he preached of how democratic freedom will eventually follow economic liberty and then foolishly exemplified Taiwan (a long-time thorn in the side of Chinese-American relations) as the model for progress toward freedom.

China has the world's largest population, workforce and military, the second largest economy, and third largest landmass. It is the up-and-comer of the 21st century. Having left its sluggish, communist, state-controlled economy behind, the Chinese 'free market' has taken off in a big way, and at the expense of the 21st century's done-and-gonner: America. With a trade-deficit that grows by the day, the US economy is currently losing \$200 billion a year to the Chinese market. That's up 17 per cent from last year.

China is also becoming a competitor in many other areas, particularly in energy consumption. With its 1.3 billion citizens crying for resources, and with car sales skyrocketing, China will soon pull ahead of the US as the world's largest energy (i.e. oil) consumer.

And the cherry on top is that the Chinese people are downloading, ripping and copying American intellectual property as fast as they're consuming energy. With over 103 million people logging onto the internet every day, and with a thirst for entertainment, China is also draining the US of its digital industry.

But Bush wanted to start off his visit to China on a high note.

In his first public appearance, George attended a Sunday sermon in one of the few allowed (yet state-controlled) Christian churches in Beijing. Delighted at the newfound 'religious tolerance' of China, Bush wrote "God bless the Christians of China" in a guest book, and went on to say as he left: "A healthy society is a society that welcomes all faiths, and gives people a chance to express themselves through worship with the Almighty."

As a man with a religious mission, Bush went on to push for China's acceptance of the Pope and the Dalai Lama. For some reason, however, he forgot to mention the religious persecution of

the followers of Falun Gong, who have been seriously mistreated by the Chinese government for too long.

Don't forget the other atrocities against humanity China has been using to rule its people, such as control of the press; we've seen greater infringements on rights and civil liberties since current president Hu Jintao took office in 2002. This has been an increasingly irritating problem for the US, and other major trading partners, as there is mounting moral tension between the two economic giants (especially with Bush being the champion of freedom).

Not only is the US government losing a public relations battle over its invasion of Iraq and fumbled

attempts at saving its own people from natural disasters, but China is now becoming a source of concern because the US has no choice but to seek good relations with it. Even beyond the economic bullying and crimes against humanity, China remains politically insulting for the US government, as it lies draped behind the red banner of Communism.

To further the resentment, it seems as if Hu knows full well of his privileged position, and has either ignored Bush's demands, or appeased them with superficial catch-phrases, such as "mutually beneficial" or "win-win situation." Hu's government even agreed to buy a fleet of Boeing 747's, so as to show Bush he was serious. But

the \$4 billion dollars spent to get the aircraft will no doubt support the Chinese factories that built the metal hulls more than the American executives who signed the deal.

In fact, the US has become so reliant upon the Chinese market, and its cheap, cheap labour, that it has no choice but to do the powerhouse waltz, just as it did with the USSR for so many years. Yet, rather than on political terms, economics is the name of this 21st century game. With such companies as Wal-mart and Nike heavily invested in Chinese factory work, the American government has little option but to gently nudge the giant, and hope that it doesn't nudge back.



Brendan Doyle illustration/The Brunswickian

We don't hardcore dance here. Well, one of us does

Dear Editor,

I would like to start by informing you, I am very disappointed and disgusted by an article that ran in last week's paper entitled "You Think You're Hardcore? Think Again" by Michele Legendre. The complete disregard for facts as well as journalistic integrity and respect for other people in the community has tainted my view of the Brunswickian.

I find it hard to believe that the Brunswickian Staff felt that that would be a good article to run. As the facts go, the short article was wrong in a lot of the points that were made. "Hardcore kids" in Fredericton don't Hardcore dance. I have only witnessed it on a few occasions in Fredericton and every time it was being done by a few kids from Sussex and one person in Fredericton. Maybe it happens at other shows that are not "Nick Of Time" shows, but I doubt it. There aren't that many Hardcore shows that someone else has put on.

Also, the "moshers" generally take their shirts off at our shows because it is hot inside. They don't mosh with band hoodys on and the term "merch" is not a Nick Of Time show or hardcore term. It is a term that the whole industry uses for the word Merchandise. It is much like the term "Kick" for bass drum or CD for compact disc... I am sure the industry you are in has a lot of words like that as well. I could go on and on but I won't waste the time.

But if that was the only beef I had with the article I would not be writing this email. The paper looses [sic] a lot of integrity when it starts publishing hate literature. I would like an explanation on why you would print something like this, but I would also like to know how you don't consider this a hate

piece. I would like some clarification on this as I assume you have a policy against publishing articles that segregate and discriminate against people's race, sex, sexual identity and in this case social identity.

On top of all that, the Brunswickian and Michele should of realized that what she was writing was a direct insult to the 13 to 16 year old kids that come to shows. A lot of kids who haven't found themselves yet, who much like their older peers, buy into hype and fashion. To criticize them directly for doing something that truthfully we all have either done or more then likely still do is absurd. What about the young High school students that pick up your paper and go to our shows. Will they want to come to shows if they are going to be publicly humiliated? I wouldn't want to. And on top of all that. It is because of their buying habits that we can have bigger shows and better shows. If it wasn't for them. Zach and I couldn't have accomplished what we did. We would be losing money to bring bands into Fredericton. The money that these kids shell out for merch and tickets allows our scene to grow.

To those fans of music and to all of us in the music community who support live music and care about the well being of others in the scene I would say don't support the Brunswickian as they don't support our peers. Unfortunately I have spoken to others who feel the same way. I would like an apology from the Brunswickian published on this issue, if not for me, for the 15 year old kids that the paper insulted.

I look forward to your explanation on this issue.

James Boyle
Nick of Time Productions

Humour lost on some, unfortunately

FROM THE EDITORS

The article "Think You're Hardcore? Think Again," published November 16, was not intended to offend anyone, but rather to be a humorous deconstruction of a musical trend. It was our hope that should any of our readers have identified with the content of the article or recognized themselves

in any of the behaviours, tastes, or fashion choices described in the piece, they might have had a brief chuckle at their own expense and learned - as indeed all of us must at some point in our lives - to take themselves a little less seriously. Clearly, the intention of the piece was lost to many, and caused some hurt feelings, which *The Brunswickian* regrets.

We shall try to be more explicit in our definition of humour. Perhaps a diagram would help.

Mill's new owner good for workers?

MARXIST READING GROUP

by Chris Bailey

The pulp and paper mill in St Anne-Nackawic will finally be reopening. The mill went bankrupt 14 months ago and was forced to be shut down leaving about 400 workers without jobs. Seeing as the pulp and paper mill was the largest employer in town, the closure of the mill was utterly devastating to the small community. The tragedy of the bankruptcy and closure is that the former owner of the mill purposefully caused the mill to go bankrupt while financing the construction of another mill in the United States!

Recently, the mill has found two new buyers: Tembec, based out of Quebec - which pulled out of a deal with the province to buy and reopen the mill last April - and Birla Group of India. These two companies have renamed the mill to A-V Nackawic from St Anne-Nackawic Pulp Company Ltd., and they are upgrading the mill to produce more varieties of paper.

It should be noted that Tembec - which was once organized as a workers' co-operative by its workers after their mill was shut down - and Birla Group are getting a little help from the provincial government. In all, the government has announced almost 61 million dollars in loans and loan guarantees for the new mill owners. Twenty million alone is for the purchase of the mill! Some people have asked

that "if" the government can afford to loan that much money to these two corporations, then why didn't the government itself buy the mill and operate it as a crown corporation? The editor of the Telegraph-Journal stated that it would be a "bad investment for the people of New Brunswick," because the mill couldn't make any profit.

The reason the New Brunswick government has been unwilling to help the workers is because the state's interests lie with capital, rather than with labour. Lenin demonstrated clearly in *The State and Revolution* that "the state is a product and a manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms... the state arises where, when and insofar as class antagonisms objectively cannot be reconciled." Lenin also explained that the state is the instrument of capitalist exploitation because both wish to preserve the "status quo" of private ownership of the means of production (private property), and that state loans are actually necessary for this.

But, you are wondering, "this is good for the workers, right?" Not necessarily. Unfortunately for the workers, roughly 250 people are going to be rehired. Most of them are already unionized, but they've lost most of their union benefits due to the bankruptcy of the previous company, which depleted their pension fund to pay off creditors. In fact, the pension fund, which was topped off by the government, has been left 30 million dollars in the hole! Many workers who were hoping to re-

tire next spring are being forced to continue working because they now have no way to afford retirement!

Early musings when the mill was first closed was for workers to organize themselves into a co-operative. In this scenario, the workers wouldn't need bosses to tell them what to do and how to do it. Some people still maintain that the workers should organize into a co-operative; however, this requires advance-capital - something the workers couldn't get together to initially buy the mill. People wonder why the state didn't advanced the workers the capital to buy the mill, even if that capital is in the form of loans which the co-operatively organized workers could then pay back after the mill was back in operation. As we have seen, the state's interests do not lie with the workers but with the capitalists - to maintain private property. A co-operatively owned and operated mill is a challenge to privately owned property.

Unfortunately, co-operatives usually tend to fail after a short period of time because they cannot maintain a competitive edge against capitalists who continuously exploit labour to maintain their "bottom line" (at a more "efficient" rate). Capitalists are also able to reinvest their capital at a faster rate to continuously expand their capabilities to reproduce surplus profit.

Thus, the only successful way to combat capitalist exploitation is complete seizure of the means of production by the working class.

Conrad's problem

MY AWESOME COLUMN

by Brendan Doyle

Conrad Black is not an ugly man. In fact, some might describe him as pretty. And by some I mean his new cellmate.

Lord Black has been indicted by US Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald, the Elliot Ness-like prosecutor who recently brought Tom Delay to his knees (smiling no less). Black faces up to 40 years in prison and millions of dollars in fines.

The former Canadian and former media baron was, until last week, certain that American officials had nothing on him, and that his former lieutenant David Radler was the one responsible for what the Chicago Sun-Times business editor is calling the "rape and pillage" of Hollinger International Inc.

The charges stem from the sale of a majority of Hollinger International's newspaper holdings. The company was once a major media player, until Black gutted the company and diverted funds into his pockets, and those of his close associates, prosecutors allege.

Other incidents include a \$62,000 birthday part for his wife, Barbara Amell, and a trip to Bora Bora on the Hollinger company jet. The *Globe and Mail*, a former Hollinger paper, reported that when Black was asked by Hollinger's accounting department to pay for his use of the jet, he replied: "needless to say, no such

outcome is acceptable." Is he saying that he can't afford to pay? We'll get to that bit later.

Lord Black became a member of the British House of Lords in 2001, but had to renounce his Canadian citizenship to do so. This may be a promotion he regrets, because prosecutors in the US have politely requested that he voluntarily surrender himself to authorities or face extradition. If Black was still a Canadian, he most likely would have been charged at home, and faced a much more lenient penalty. The shareholders of Hollinger, an American company, are furious at Lord Black's alleged theft; his jet-setting attitude and his wife's confessed inability to not spend money can't help.

In addition to his indictment and possible extradition, Black also faces years of legal fees and a shrinking pocketbook with which to combat the virtually bottomless resources of the United States De-

partment of Justice. Black recently tried to capitalize on the sale of his New York apartment, only to have FBI agents seize the proceeds within days of its sale. He is alleged to have used Hollinger funds to renovate the apartment, then bought it from Hollinger at well under the market value.

Additionally, the Canadian Revenue Service has placed a lien on Black's Florida home (read: mansion), which means he will be unable to raise capital by selling it. The US Justice Department is likely to want a piece of that pie as well. And to add injury to insult, Lord Black faces a number of costly lawsuits in Canada and the United States, from disgruntled Hollinger executives and shareholders.

Though Black has been doing a fine impression of Tom Delay recently, his luck is about to run out. All that remains is to wait for the made-for-TV movie.

