

EDITORIAL

Q: "How do you get a hundred Canadians out of the pool?"
A: Say "Hey Guys. Get out of the pool."

Have you ever noticed that student protests in this country usually amount to little more than a small group of people, huddling together in the cold, waving cleverly worded signs about in an attempt to stay warm. The apathy displayed by the general public and politicians in regard to the plight of the students has left many with a feeling of abandonment and alienation. It seems to many students that they cannot get anyone to pay attention. Others argue that the students cannot just try to get attention, but must respond with concrete ideas of their own.

In other countries, however, student protests take on a more serious tone than they do here in Canada. In France, students rioted and battled with police when the government proposed to cut the minimum wage for students. In Canada, we meet at noon at the SUB, only thirty or so show up, and when people push through the picket line we ask them to excuse us for being in their way.

In China, students battled against troops and faced off against tanks, when they took to the street in Tiananmen. In Canada on the other hand, we debate the effectiveness of mass protest and plod on with the business of getting an education. We are secure in the belief that no action students make will have the slightest impact upon the government's decision. In turn, rather than actually beating the students down, the politicians know that if they shine the students on, with empty promises of trying to help, in a couple of weeks they can come up with a proposal of less extreme (and yet still severe) changes which will pass as being a lesser evil than those originally proposed.

As Canadian students we are too complacent about the lack of response we accept from the government in regard to our protests. The usual attitude of "Oh well, we tried" is not an acceptable outcome for our actions this time; the consequences are too serious. This is not a minor battle. We are talking about students incurring enormous debt loads upon graduation. If we lose this battle we are running the risk of seeing double tuition by next year. If the current actions fail to elicit the desired result we cannot shrug it off with our usual lack of commitment. Our actions will only have an effect if we accept nothing less than victory in this matter. We must create a level of intensity to our objections so as not to enable the government to ignore us this time. We have to be prepared to escalate our protest in order to make our voices heard at any cost.

We must do this because if the protest fails to draw adequate attention to the plight of students, and the proposition paper prepared by Kelly Lamrock fails to be considered seriously by the government, what do we do then, shrug our shoulders and say we tried?



Sometime over the night of January 23, 1995, persons unknown hailing from St. Thomas University stole UNB star mascot, Rowdy Beaver from room 120 of the Student Union Building. Rowdy Beaver's bloody decapitated body was later found just outside the SUB's door located near *The Brunswickan's* office's the following morning. The person or persons responsible severed Mr. Beaver's head with several paper clips fashioned into the shape of Ginsu 2000 knife. At present, the head has not been recovered and it's whereabouts are unknown.

The kidnapers left a ransom note on the various doors utilised by the UNB Student Union that reads as follows: "We have the beaver-head. To see it again you must pay 250 dollars." It was signed "Tom". The message was photocopied onto yellow paper bearing the STU Student Union logo with a mish-mash of letters spelling out the kidnapers demands. These letters were apparently cut out from *The Brunswickan* and not *The Aquinian*.

Rowdy's head is described as typical of a 300 lb, six foot tall North American beaver, better known by scientific nomenclature as *Castor Canadensis*. All teeth of said beaver are missing due to an earlier incident involving one of the local UNB residences. A red ball cap sporting the letters U-N-B is firmly attached to the crown of the head and a Mikail Gorbechev-like birthmark is also present on the beaver's right frontal lobe.

This incident is being investigated by a lowly operative named Maynard from *Balding Engineers Against Violence Involving Rodents* (BEAVIR), in association with Mugwump Journal.

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Call now.

Boy that STD sounding inspired CFS strike sure was big here in Fredericton. I'm telling you one whole day of boycotting classes is just going to bring this and other universities across Canada to their knees.

I didn't strike on Wednesday because I figured I did my bit last term when I was actively involved in a *revolving strike* towards several of my classes. Most of the time I picked socially important issues as reasons to boycott classes such as: "I'm tired, I don't wanna get out of bed today, I wanna go to the mall, There's a really good episode of Mr. Dress Up I don't wanna miss or my favourite, Ab to Hell with class it's not as if I'm gonna pass it anyway."

Oh, if a prof asks about your absence, just tell them you were showing your frustration at all the that crap we've be force fed from Ottawa. Remember. It doesn't have to be Hallowe'en to throw eggs and it doesn't have to be national strike day to take a couple of classes off.

Blood n' Thunder

Parking Woes

Dear Editor,

Last Monday, Jan. 16th, I bought a parking permit so that when I go to class in the Engineering Building (Head Hall), I would have no problem getting a spot to park and wouldn't have to get a ticket.

Feeling happy about my purchase I proceeded to park, but when I got there, the lot was full—overfull. In fact, most student parking areas were overparked. I had a hard time to even move around the lot.

Why does security over sell permits? Before I came to UNB, I attended Memorial University of Newfoundland. There, when you buy a parking permit, you were assigned to a certain lot. Only a certain number of permits were sold for each parking lot. If you were parked in the wrong lot, you were either ticketed or towed away.

I feel that I'm paying too much to park on campus.

—Sincerely, Pissed Off Parker

P.S. See for yourself—go to Windsor St. on Monday, Wednesday or Friday during the day, behind Head Hall.

No Excuse for Grease and Poor Service

Dear Editor,

I am writing this in regards to the letter published January 20th (the last issue) by Mr. Chippin on behalf of the Dock. If Mr. Chippin would care to reread the article carefully, he will notice that it was clearly stated we were not "food experts". However, like any other student, we do know what constitutes good service and good food. We were one of two tables occupied at the time and the server completely ignored us, spending the vast majority of his time waiting on the other table, which incidentally was comprised of a group of business men. He was nothing but cold and rude in his rare interactions with us and nobody deserves the manner in which we were treated.

Nachos were sampled at each location all over town as a standard measure of comparison. This also was explained in the article. This, in addition to service and price was a basis for ranking. The nachos themselves were cold, and there was no reason for the amount of grease on them. It is my suggestion to you, Mr. Chippin, that if students make up a large portion of your "valued clientele", you should have demonstrated so at the time we visited your establishment. We may not be experts, but we're not stupid either. So try focusing your "disappointment" on your staff, not the customers.

Keith Loukes

In Memory of Dan and Brian

Dear Editor,

My sincere appreciation is extended to the University of New Brunswick for the park bench placed in memory of Dan and Brian by the students and staff of the Faculty of Forestry. The inscription from Psalm 46 is very special, and I am thankful to all those who took a personal interest in the project.

—Eleanor Ripley-Barrow (forever, Dan's Mum)

From the Outside, Looking In

Hi, I'm just a Joe, a Mary, Mary quite contrary. No one special, yet not one to be taken lightly. The past few weeks have culminated in many "occurrences" I can only describe as hilarious and confusing. They have lead me to some questions and comments about my life, student politics, and the Big picture. Conveniently they are arranged in the Lettermania style so repeatedly used no doubt due to its effectiveness.

1. Are the International Socialists really what they say they are, or are they like the Holy Roman Empire, neither Holy, nor Roman. (quote from H2. Thanks hon). 2. What is CFS? Does it hurt? and who the hell is Guy Caron? 3. Why should I miss class the 25th, so I can be that much further behind on the 26th. 4. Why do people strike anyway? These types of delays are like bureaucrats, they're a pain in the ass, are the International Socialists condoning bureaucracy. 5. I hate snow! 6. I hate strikes! (Hockey, Baseball, downtown Bathurst, now this)

7. Why doesn't the IS and CFS have a tag team, kickboxing, monster truck rally fight to the finish with Kelly and Paul. 8. Why does Bills work week consist of Tuesday and Wednesday? 9. Are the IS members with beards trying to look like a) Hegel b) Marx or c) Lenin? (Apologies to any female members) 10. Why don't people learn to laugh at themselves and not just other people?

Mount Allison Students Decline to Participate in the National Student Strike

by Danielle White, VP External

Although the Mount Allison Students' Administrative Council vehemently opposes the proposals for reform of post-secondary education outlined by Minister Lloyd Axworthy, last week Council unanimously voted to reject the strike initiative. We believe that this is an irresponsible and ineffective means of expressing student protest and we resent the fact that our collective voice has been distorted by the involvement of the International Socialists and other non-student groups who have become involved in the strike.

It seems sadly ironic that the Canadian Federation of Students, (supposedly our national lobby group), has reduced the student voice to a whine and a whimper while clearly failing to fulfill the mandate given to them by the 450,000 paying members, to provide government with any pro-student alternatives to these drastic cuts in educational funding and conduct effective lobbying sessions with the decision makers. Rather, the organization has decided to override the direction given to its democratically elected representatives, by democratically elected student councils, and has instead

opted into an alliance with the IS (which was notably never approved by these members). The result is that students are being cheated out of the quality lobbying and research services they pay for, while their money is being redirected into a meaningless demonstration which will have little impact, save to enrage the already skeptical public about the legitimacy of our concerns.

It is our position that our students simply deserve more honest and effective representation. Student issues are too important to be left to macaroni-throwing, changing, sign-waving idiots who are so far removed from the student cause that they have not been able to string together a single comprehensive thought as an alternative response to the Axworthy reforms. Rather, we applaud the efforts of other student organizations like the New Brunswick Student Alliance who have been consistently lobbying government officials since August, have produced a 20 page critique of the Green Book, including 24 definite proposals for university funding reform, and who have received very favorable media coverage as dedicated and informed leaders who have been able to effectively challenge the Liberal plan at every turn. This is the type of response our students deserve and which we intend to provide them with. Meanwhile, we intend to disassociate ourselves as much as possible from the National Student Strike in an effort to allow a comprehensive and effective consultation process to continue where we have the opportunity to influence the policy makers, where student voices might be recognized as having significant value and not be diminished by the antics of our severely misguided counterparts.

Metanoia by John Walk

Those Catholic Bishops

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops released a statement in December entitled "Will the poor have the most to fear from Social Security Reforms?" No doubt some economists will make their (predicable) public statement that the Catholic bishops should stick to their own area of expertise. The bishops are, of course, doing just that.

The bishops are encouraging economists, business and political leaders, indeed all of us, to do a little soul searching. They are asking us to reflect on what is meaningful, important and worthwhile in all of life, and not just church life. What propels the bishops to speak out? Could it be that they, more than our political leaders, are sensitive to the fact that the powerful are gaining advantage over the powerless; the marginalized are blamed for our current socio-economic crisis; the voices of the disadvantaged are not being heard; and we are running the risk of changing from a "caring" to a "careless" society? We might well listen to what they have to say. I mention a number of their concerns.

One, the bishops have discerned that many of the consultations of the past year—regarding foreign, immigration and refugee, defense, social and economic policies—have one goal in mind: "the desire to remake the Canadian economic and social fabric, to respond to the expansively competitive demands of international markets" (p.2).

Two, the bishops agree that social policy review is necessary. But the changes required must go beyond the merely administrative. They see the need to "deeply question our present direction as a society" (p.3). The debate regarding social programmes touch "the heart and soul of Canadian communities: our willingness and commitment to care for others" (p.3).

Three, the bishops argue that we have neglected a stark truth about our increasing debt: "it is the result of failed economic policies, not social programme spending" (p.7). Further, endeavors to decrease unemployment are not merely a matter of returning people to the workforce: "not all work gives persons the potential to develop their full humanity" (p.8).

Why are these matters of such importance? They have to do with healing and salva-

tion for Canadian people. The crucial question is this: to achieve such healing and salvation, where do we place our hope and trust?

Many of our economists, business leaders and politicians have placed their hope and trust in the marketplace, an expanding economy and increased material consumption. For the last four decades, or more, we have been led to believe that if we produce more and consume more we will all enjoy an increased standard of living, prosperity and happiness.

No doubt, some of this has come to pass. But it is also clear that such enjoyment is achievable for an increasingly smaller proportion of the Canadian people. More evident is that poverty, unemployment, and the social deterioration that it spawns, are the predicament for an increasingly greater percentage of the population. Were the economic policies we pursued intended to produce this situation? What has gone wrong? Why have they not delivered on their promises? Are the poor, marginalized and vulnerable, the cause of the failure?

The Catholic Bishops' statements are similar to those uttered by the Hebrew prophets of old? The prophets did not blame the deterioration of ancient Hebrew society on the poor and vulnerable. They pointed instead to the political leaders, and condemned their exploitation and neglect. They urged those in power to shape a just society, one that took care of the "poor, the unprotected, the widows and orphans." The prophets also predicted that any society failing to do so would eventually crumble. Unfortunately, history has proven them correct.

This bishops conclude with some profound comments. They challenge us to place our hope and trust not in current economic policies but in the Creator: "behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Could it be that a clearer investigation of how God instructed leaders in the socio-economic contexts of the past would help us significantly in the present, as we move toward the future? The bishops remind us of the New Testament teaching: "the social order and its development were for the benefit of the whole human person" (p.3).