



Established 1867

Semi-weekly Journal of the University of New Brunswick
Member of the Canadian University Press

Office: Memorial Student Centre, U.N.B. Campus. Phone 8424

Subscription \$2.50 per year

Opinions expressed not necessarily those of the Students' Representative Council

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VOL. 89 FREDERICTON, N.B. MARCH 5, 1957

CBC Necessary In Canada . . .

Periodically, newspapers will feature statements by well-known persons, on the merits, or demerits of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The main point under discussion is usually whether the CBC should, or should not carry on the activities it does, or is alleged to do. In a lot of cases these arguments would be resolved, if those concerned would only inquire a little more closely into the purpose of the CBC. The lack of such examination, resulting in gross misrepresentation and distortion, accounts for much of the adverse criticism of this institution.

To begin with, vast numbers of people are obviously unsure as to what the purpose of the CBC is; There are at least two extreme positions in this regard. The first claims that the CBC ought not to interfere with the "rights" of the private radio stations. What these "rights" consist of, is never explicitly explained. However, the value of this judgment could be considered on the basis of a few statements in a booklet published by the Private Broadcasters, wherein, for example, they claim that the CBC's emphasis on Canadian Talent would rule out the possibility of production of Shakespeare, or reading of the Bible. This viewpoint is chiefly supported by the private radio stations.

The other extreme is represented by those who advocate greater control of communication by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. This attitude takes several forms, ranging from complete government control, to censorship of programs in the interest of the children.

While it is obvious that both of these extreme positions are untenable, it is clear that a compromise between the two would give the widest possible satisfaction. No sensible person would deny private enterprise, in the form of independent radio stations, the right to make profit. On this our system is based. However, once radio is completely in the hands of private businessmen in Canada, several representative groups of Canadians would not be serviced with the kind of entertainment they appreciate. In New Brunswick this is painfully obvious. It must be emphasized that this consideration is valid only in Canada. In the United States, the Broadcasting Systems are so large and diverse, that practically all tastes can be satisfied simply by turning the dial. In some areas of Canada, the only way to escape the trash served by private radio is to turn the dial . . . off! In this instance, then, it is necessary to have a National Broadcasting system, whose programs reflect something other than a pandering to mere commercialism.

Private Radio ought to be allowed the right to broadcast their own programs, whether local or imported. This is not or at least should not, be a blanket policy, just as it would be equally unhealthy for the CBC to have complete control themselves.

A panelist in the recent "Television and Education" feature of Founders' Day, expressed the view that the CBC should be under some measure of censorship, other than the existing code of decency, libel, and good taste, that characterizes all forms of public communication. This was qualified, in such a way, as to compare the consumption of television, and presumably, radio, with the consumption of alcohol, drugs and food.

This type of control would be extremely dangerous. It would herald the curtailing of the freedom of the press, one of the foundations of democracy. In this instance, because the target is to protect the child, it would, in effect, be a policy designed to reduce TV entertainment to the level of the child.

Canada has a unique radio system. It was an experiment. All evidence seems to indicate that it will be successful. But this success depends to a large measure on the ability of Canadians to grasp the idea behind the CBC. It is not a purveyor of Canadian Culture. It is not a national body committed to a policy and arbitrary control. It is simply a radio system, designed to present programs of the widest possible interest to a

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THE OLDEST PAPER IN CANADA NINETY YEARS OF PROGRESS

The year of 1867 has particular significance in Canadian History. I need tell no one, I should hope, that that date marks the Confederation of Canada. Another event in that year, perhaps not so far reaching in importance, but of undeniable significance to the University of New Brunswick, was the first issue of what is now known as the *Brunswickan*. As in the case of Canada, the *Brunswickan* has undergone many changes since its inception. However, it still retains one characteristic, that a criterion for a college newspaper — a forum of student opinion. This year has clearly indicated that.

The first college newspaper at UNB was a monthly. It was essentially, under such restrictions, a literary magazine. Its staff was much smaller, its administrative problems minute by modern comparison. But I will venture to say that it held the same important position, relatively, as the *Brunswickan* has held for the past three decades. It is interesting to note that the content of those early papers was by far, of a more profound nature than any material today. The students were much more preoccupied with the vital questions of public policy; much more interested in a solution of their own problems, than we are today. I do not mean only in the editorial columns of the paper, for there, at least, the essential character has not changed. What I do mean, is that the general writing, especially of features, took on a much more serious tone. I do not mean to imply that this is any better than what is done today. However, it was clear to students then, that theirs' was an important and integral contribution to the thinking of the country. I think this has been lost. In essence, we no longer have the time to consider such matters. There has been such a variety of activities developed in which we participate, that the more serious, and therefore dull aspects of college thought are ignored. If this trend continues, universities are liable to lose their place as the "centres of thought" of the country. What institutions will take over at that point is hard to imagine.

Several important dates in the history of the *Brunswickan* come to mind. There was that important day in the late 1880's when the first co-ed was admitted to the sterile maie surroundings of the Arts Building. Comment in the paper was of a diverse nature, but taken broadly, supported this new concept of education, this "co-education". What a surprise these pioneer co-eds would experience should they appear, by some marvellous matter transfer on the campus today. Perhaps they would be shocked? Who knows?

In 1931, the editors of the paper made an important and wise decision. They changed the former monthly to a weekly. This transformed the publication into an effective and useful vehicle of student news, something which had been impossible under the old set-up. Since then, the *Brunswickan* has continued to grow and expand. It has had a long list of distinguished editors, among them many Rhode Scholars, and the present President of the university, Dr. Colin B. Mackay. Last fall, yet another step forward was taken. The paper became a twice weekly publication. Thus, the *Brunswickan* has entered the ranks of the larger college publications. We have the only twice-weekly paper in the Maritimes and one of four in Canada.

Students should realize the important progress the *Brunswickan* has made, because it reflects the many strides students themselves have taken. While perhaps we are not as aware of some of the more important considerations on the world stage today, yet students have taken on many new and significant responsibilities that would have been inconceivable to our predecessors. Among these is the vital part the students council plays in college administration.

Let us hope that the university and the *Brunswickan* continue to grow and prosper. In the broad sense the university is the breeding ground for future leaders. The college paper, as part of that ground, is one of the roots of free and independent thought.

* * *

WHAT IS WRONG WITH US?

Probably the most used word in editorials written by Canadian University Press Editors is 'apathy'. This is the favourite word used in the summing up of student reactions towards extra-curricular activities. It is often the first word a freshman hears, on his arrival at the University, when he asks how the student body reacts towards their own activities.

Student apathy is the favourite excuse for campus societies who fail to attract large followings of students, yet the immediate question one must ask is, to what extent is this the fault of the students themselves? They must take a large share of the blame, but the societies who fail to attract their interest are not without guilt.

wide variety of Canadians. Thus, its policy of private radio restraint. If this restraint were not exercised, many people would not be able to obtain the type of entertainment they want. If the CBC did not exist in its present form, many valuable and beautiful plays, books and music would be lost to the public. In its place we would be faced with Elvis Presely, continuous western swing and the \$64,000 Question . . . decadence.

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Gabriel Gagnon, National President of NFCUS on his recent trip here.
" . . . what NFCUS has to offer UNB . . . well . . ."

On this campus most societies have complained bitterly about a lack of student support. Of these perhaps the Drama and Debating societies have most cause for discouragement. For, over the last few years, student support for both these societies has been noticeably absent. Admittedly the participants in both these activities are working in them because they do derive pleasure from them, however they do have a certain commitment to the rest of the student body; to entertain them as well as themselves. They seem to have forgotten this commitment during the last few years, and seem to have given up the student body as an organ of support.

This, although a natural, is a mistaken attitude. It is defeatist and negativistic. The organizers must realize that they will have to tempt people to their activities. The Drama Society did this for the first time in some years by inviting the audience to the preliminary adjudication of their festival production last week. Memorial Hall was fuller than it has ever been for a Drama Society production, there were almost three hundred present. The experiment succeeded, but this must merely be a first step in the attempt to make the student body aware of their activities. They must think up more ideas to tempt the students to attend their productions or debates. When they do this they will be succeeding in providing entertainment for the non-participant as well as the valuable work they do in providing a small section of the student body with an outlet for their emotions and energies.

S.F.J.F.

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