

BLOOD & THUNDER

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OPINION: RUSSIA— ONE STEP FORWARD, TEN STEPS BACK

By Kevin Birsson

In last December's elections, Russia had once again stumped the world with another political development, striking dumb those who never truly believed the possibility of totalitarianism ever returning again. Since the complete collapse of the Soviet system back in 1989, Russia, under the leadership of the pugnacious and temperamental Boris Yeltsin, has awkwardly struggled towards building a democratic and capitalist system, all in the hope of preventing itself from slipping further and further behind the advanced, industrialized nations of the West. But given the recent success of right-wing nationalists after Russia's first multi-party elections in 75 years,

it would appear that the continuation of this pursuit may yet prove even more arduous.

Leading the new political body - called the Liberal Democratic Party - is the mercurial and grim-faced Vladimir Zhironovsky. Zhironovsky has shocked many with the daring and audacious promise to restore Russia back to greatness by seizing back those newly-independent republics which once made up the Soviet empire. President Bill Clinton described the election as a protest vote, a frustrated reaction over the present government's inability to produce any significant, positive change towards a sick and faltering economy.

Compounding the problem of healing Russia's economy back to health is Zhironovsky's pledge to reject Western aid and any form of foreign investment. In a world rapidly becoming more and more intermestic, it is difficult to see how Russia, despite its immense natural resources and enormous labour force, could in the future survive and progress without involving itself as an active member of the world economic community.

Russians are a people of great pride and so it is quite comprehensible that they would reject the aid that has already been given to them, but to scorn foreign investment would be an act which would potentially hold further debilitating consequences for their country, leaving one to ask the obvious question: why? Why would Russians still view foreigners with suspicion regardless of the help that's been offered to them by the West? Why return to a governmental system which has done more to increment suffering than alleviate it?

Those familiar with Russian history will immediately know that it is a history plagued with wars and invasions, ranging as early as the 200 year Tartar occupation between the 13th and 14th century to as recent as June 22nd, 1941 when Adolph Hitler signalled the order to commence operation 'Barbarossa', a military strike which inevitably led the German Army to temporarily capture 40 percent of Russia's population and 75 percent of its industry. It was an act which nearly crippled Russia and one which could only be seen by Russians as pure treachery. Given this, is it really any wonder why Russians tend to be apprehensive towards foreigners, especially those of the West?

But do Russians today truly feel that the West is still a threat? The first episode of the Dec. 12th broadcast of Sixty Minutes consisted of an interview with the commander of Russia's Nuclear Rocket Forces who was on an inspection tour in the United States to determine if American nuclear missiles were being dismantled in accordance to nuclear disarmament guidelines as agreed between Russia and the United States when Gorbachev

was still in power. He was later asked by a journalist whether he still considered the West as a threat. He immediately answered 'no' reassuring the interviewer with a warm, disarming smile, appearing more as someone's kindly grandfather than as a man potentially capable of unleashing forces which could destroy every living thing on earth.

Perhaps the next logical question to ask ourselves would be: would the Russian military listen to and obey someone like Vladimir Zhironovsky, especially after publicly threatening Germany and Japan with nuclear destruction should he feel that it is interfering with Russia's internal affairs, further stating that they should not forget what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Anyone who knows anything about the Cold War will understand that for the last 45 years, Allied forces in Germany have actively averted it from pursuing any sort of aggressive foreign policy, leaving it to develop into one of the world's strongest economies. And as such, Germany is among those countries of the world reputed for its heavy foreign investments, including Russia. In fact, Germany is Russia's largest foreign investor. Though Germany may have some influence because of this, it is highly improbable that it is interfering with Russia's internal affairs, especially after finally witnessing the end of 45 years of occupation through the withdrawal of Russian troops from eastern Europe. Its doubtful that the Germans would really attempt to do anything to provoke the Russians into coming back. And perhaps one way of allaying Russian fear over the possibility of future conflict is Germany's willingness to commit large-scale, long-term investments in Russia.

But Mr. Zhironovsky, has made it quite clear to Russia and to the rest of the

world that he is, pure and simple, a lunatic. Lacking the basic intelligence to understand what the world is really about and how it generally works, Zhironovsky is unquestionably the product of a disaffected group of people undergoing the turmoils of a governmental metamorphosis from a totalitarian state to a democratic one. History has often shown us that during hard times, people will gravitate towards those who they would normally avoid or scorn during better days, often believing that extreme ideas spewed by extreme people can solve extreme problems. Those who voted for Zhironovsky were probably motivated to do so for the same basic reason as those who voted for the Confederation of Regions Party (CoR) in New Brunswick: the desperate desire for change. That segment of the electorate which voted for CoR did so, not because they sincerely believed that CoR could actually improve the economy with sound wealth-creating policies but because they were simply frustrated with the long-reigning Progressive Conservatives and were no longer willing to tolerate its stagnant policies. Much similar to what occurred last December in Russia, New Brunswickers too produced a protest vote.

But let us not look upon the people of Russia or any other nation which has suffered terribly under despotic rule and judge ourselves above them, for it was not that long ago that we ourselves allowed a political party to rise up from out of the backwoods to become this province's government opposition, only to discover that it suffers from impotency, a condition brought about as a result of needless in-fighting, rendering it incapable of properly recognizing the needs of New Brunswickers, thereby the strength and insight required to provide clear and effective solutions to our own ailing economy.

ZOOMER VIEWS

WHERE IS C.A.M.P.U.S.?

by Valerie O'Callaghan, C.A.M.P.U.S. secretary/receptionist

Hi Zoomers! Breathe a sigh of relief, C.A.M.P.U.S. has a new location. Finally, we can provide you with a place where everyone wants to know your name and a place where someone is concerned about how university life's ups and downs are treating you. Our office is located on the lower floor of the Alumni Memorial building, Rm. 3A, Tel: (453-3596) Remember, we are here to HELP and to give Mature students any assistance that is required during the year. To give you an idea of how we work for you, here is an outline of our aims and objectives:

- to act as an advocate on behalf of mature and part-time students.
- to provide a support network for mature students.
- to create an environment in which members can enrich their experience as mature students.
- to provide information on services and resources available on campus.
- to initiate and sustain activities which will be of interest and benefit to mature students.
- to articulate the issues and concerns of mature full and part-time students.

See, we really are here for your benefit. But, I'm not quite finished yet. Please allow me to take this opportunity to officially introduce myself. My name is Valerie O'Callaghan, (Val, to most) and I grew up in Sydney, Nova Scotia, (yep, a Cape Bretoner). You should see the Highlands and the Ocean, Beautiful!! I'm currently attending UNB as a full time graduate student specializing in the field of Adult Education, a program which I thoroughly love and enjoy. I welcome the chance to meet new people and share in their life experience. So, don't hesitate to drop in and see us at CAMPUS. We'd love it! The office is opened on:

Monday & Thursday's: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 Tuesday's & Wednesday's: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 Friday's: 12:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 P.S. We at C.A.M.P.U.S. are working together to create an environment especially for YOU so we need your input, opinions, and comments. We urge you to DROP IN.

THANK YOU, UNB

To the Editor:

Just a few words about "I love UNB, but..." In 1989, after a comprehensive research upon five universities that offered me an opportunity to pursue my education I was convinced by a faculty member in the Banting Institute (University of Toronto) to choose UNB.

Why UNB? The combination of medium size learning environment and the high quality of graduates that had been produced throughout past years are the two major reasons.

However, the 41/2 years stay in UNB leads me to discover the most important fact, that I will add to the list when I make recommendations to others in the future, namely the two people who made me feel comfortable at UNB, Monte Peters (Campus Ministry) and Kay Nandall (International Student Advisor/CIDA Coordinator) have given me the greatest and most willing to help. In addition, they also put a lot of effort in promoting UNB and international relations.

I would also like to thank Dr. Chaplin, Dr. Thring, Dr. Van Heiningen, and Dr. Ni, they are professors that taught me how to think and prepare for the challenges of the future. Canadian students like Derek Peters, Russell Girard and the many others (both in my very

undergraduate and graduate years) have proven to me that the decision to come to UNB was very right. I will convey all this to the students in my country, Malaysia, when I get there next week. I will also help the International Student Advisor/CIDA Coordinator's office to recruit new students to UNB from Malaysia.

My appreciation to all of you, especially Monte Peters and Kay Nandall for their help. It is much more than I could express in words. Thanks!!! I love you, UNB, but it is time to say good-bye. I will keep the fond memories of my stay here.

Sincerely,
 Stephen Ooi

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

This article is addressed to all those who have ever been offended by "bad reviews" of a performance. Let it be known that I am not biased, having been on the receiving end of such reviews numerous times. Although I may not agree with the reviewers perspective (though I usually do and try to learn

from it), I am never offended by it either. Although the Bruns. reviewers are inexperienced and often fail to understand the categorical perspective (for instance a UNB show should not be regarded in comparison to a Broadway show by frame of reference), they are presenting the honest opinion of their experience. I feel they should be respected for having the integrity to be honest. Truly it would be more rewarding to them if they praised a show and said what people wanted to hear, but that would not be a review. The reviewer has

the obligation to the readers to present what they thought about the show, from an unbiased perspective.

Keep in mind that a reviewer is presenting his/her option, which may differ from yours. It is not the end-all truth in the matter, simply the thoughts of one person. Do not be offended if a reviewer holds a view that contrasts your own, or if you have felt the sharp point of their critiquing scalpel. Everyone views their world through a unique perspective, thank God or we'd all be clones.

Darren Elliot, UNB actor


MATHEMATICS DROP-IN HELP CENTRE January - April 1994

The Department of Mathematics & Statistics will operate a drop-in help centre at various locations on campus. The centre will provide free tutoring for mathematics courses (including upper level courses) and will be staffed by graduate students, Yongyi Bi and Xiubin Xu.

MONDAY:	1:00 - 5:00pm	C307A
TUESDAY:	1:00 - 5:00pm	H303
WEDNESDAY:	1:00 - 5:00pm	C307A
THURSDAY:	1:00 - 5:00pm	N12

The MATH HELP CENTRE operated through the Dept. of Extension at the Wu Centre continues to offer free tutoring for first-year courses on a by-appointment basis.

UNB & STU
 Caribbean Circle
 PRESENTS:
 CARIBBEAN Nite 94



Saturday, March 19th,
 SUB CAFETERIA
 7:00pm - 1:00am

Tickets Available:
 • Student Help Centre
 • International Student Advisors Office
 • Members of Caribbean Circle

DINNER ~ SHOW ~ DANCE
 GENERAL ENTRY: \$10.00 DRY EVENT

Features

The "Features" (centrefold pages) articles for the rest of this term have already been scheduled. Therefore, I can't accept any more submissions. Many thanks to everyone who has shown an interest in contributing.

Mimi Cormier
 Features Editor

WANTED

Submissions for BLOOD & THUNDER.

Please remember to include your name, student number and phone number, or your letter cannot be printed.