

locked doors and riot gear in a New Brunswick University

10:00," said Roy. Despite the fact that students would probably be aware of any explosive devices they had taken with them, the Taillon occupants prepared for the worst. "We sat around and waited for it to explode, joking about what we'd do after it exploded - who we'd leave our possessions to, and so on," said Roy. "It was a farce."

With the occupation in place, classes were somehow maintained until Wednesday, when Finn shut the University down until the occupation's end. Before the shut-down, attendance was understandably sparse although the occupation committee had not mentioned a class boycott. Instead, they were running their own university.

In the offices and rooms of the Taillon building a new Canadian university had come to life - *l'Université Libre d'Acadie*. In place of the classes they would normally be attending, the occupants began offering classes on Theatre and Dance, dealing with landlords, the question of Spruce Budworm spraying, and other subjects. These classes continued all week.

"We wanted to make it clear we weren't doing this to avoid work," said Alexander. "It wasn't just students out for a lark."

Time dragged on. By Saturday, the sixth day of occupation, there was no indication of when it might end, and students were seeking some new kind of pressure tactic to apply on the university. That tactic occurred at 6:00 the same day when 15 students began a hunger strike to protest the failure of the Administration to faithfully negotiate.

Like many other events of the occupation, the press fallout onto the hunger strike as a good news story. "You wouldn't believe the coverage we got," said Coté. "It was really in our favour - the Administration just wouldn't talk to anybody." This 'good coverage' didn't extend to the local French-language paper, according to Steve Alexander. "We were a bunch of wild, rampaging kids in their eyes," he said. Gilberte Finn sits on the Board of Directors of both the paper and its printing company.

"Somebody said, 'The police are coming! The police are coming!'. And they were."

Then came Easter Sunday.

On April 11, Easter Sunday, the students had planned a small service in the Taillon Building chapel and were going to hand out chocolates. Early in the morning the 250 students who remained overnight were asleep - in classes, administration offices, and spare corners, but mainly in the third floor chapel, which could seat 450 people.

Steve Alexander, who was sleeping in the chapel that morning, recalls what happened next: "About four o'clock in the morning, somebody started hollering, 'The police are coming! The Police are coming!'. And sure enough, they were."

At 4:00 a.m., on the seventh day of occupation, about 75 Moncton city police, RCMP, and University security guards in full riot gear descended on the Taillon building, forcing their way in without any student resistance. Everyone who participated in the occupation had been told what to do if the police arrived - be calm, wait for instructions before leaving, sit down on the floor, and so on - but nothing quite prepared them for seeing the police advance in tight formation, riot helmets on and long billy clubs at the ready. "Some people were freaking out," said Roy, who was on the fifth floor when the 'evacuation' began.

"Everyone was in the chapel when the police came in," said Alexander. "The police chief got a bullhorn and stood at the chapel entrance. Then he said anyone who wanted to leave willingly could do so and just walk out - no arrest, no jail, no criminal record. It was meant to scare the students. Unfortunately, a number of them believed it."

"They gave a time limit of five minutes before they were moving in, and while people were still walking out, they moved in," he said.

However, not everybody had been in the chapel when the police started their evacuation. On the fifth floor, Rachel Roy was awakened by people running around looking for two Radio-Canada reporters staying in the building with the students. Still sleepy, she went to find Brenda Coté in a nearby office. "When I turned around to leave, there was the Chief of Security and the Chief of Police, looking none too happy," she said. "I was thinking of trying to get away, but right outside the door were five big cops with helmets and sticks."

Meanwhile, Brenda Coté had also just been awakened by

the commotion. As she left the office where she had been sleeping, a group of policemen sent out to find her did just that. "There she is! Grab that girl!" she remembers a security guard yelling to the others just before she was caught.

Instead of arresting her, as they did Steve Alexander, the police isolated her in a room and tried to convince her to police the students to leave. This she refused to do, all the while conscious of what was happening outside the room. She could hear the English police baiting the students as they herded them into the early morning dark.

"The police were really bad with us," she claims. "They tried to provoke violence - you wouldn't believe the comments. One Acadian student was talking to another student and a cop hollered, 'You fuckin' French frog. You shut your mouth.'"

Eventually, Coté was released without being arrested because of a police mix-up. "They were going to arrest me for obstructing justice (not co-operating)," she said, "but after they held me for a long time, someone said, 'Did anyone ask her if she'd leave of her own free will?'. Two cops had this big argument over whether they did or not, but they hadn't. They asked me if I would leave and I said yes. So I left."

"Two people got arrested for singing too loudly."

Rachel Roy was one of the first students out of the building that morning. "They kept pushing people out," she said. "After a while there was a big crowd in front of the building. Some people were completely hysterical, but mostly people didn't know what to do."

"Two people started singing 'Solidarity Forever'. They got arrested for singing too loud," she said.

Roy noted how the police kept the crowd intimidated. "Those that were arrested were brought outside, frisked, and put in handcuffs. Then they brought them back into the building. They just wanted the others to see them and be scared."

Eventually a "big line of cops" came along and started pushing the crowd down the stairs. "They were walking slowly, but steadily towards us," Roy said. "They arrested a few people for walking too slowly, talking too much, or whatever. Just to intimidate others."

Twenty-seven people were arrested that Sunday morning, making a total of 28 arrests over the occupation. Those who went home from the Taillon building Easter morning were probably wondering what would happen next, just as other Université de Moncton students were.

But even after calling the police to move out the students, the next move of Gilberte Finn and the U de M administration had many students asking themselves what kind of university they were attending.

When Steve Alexander returned to the campus after being booked at the Moncton police station, getting a hot breakfast was the most important thing on his mind. However, when he arrived at the Taillon building for the cafeteria's food, things weren't quite the same. "I had to have two pieces of I.D. to get into the building," he said. "There were security people looking at everybody."

Later in the day, Alexander attempted to meet with several other student leaders from the occupation, but security guards arrived on the scene and broke it up. They were only following instructions, they said.

What Alexander didn't know was that a new 'informal' rule had been put in place - groups of more than five people were not allowed to congregate on campus.

From that date until the 81/82 school year ended, the campus martial law was in effect. Since all buildings on campus (except the small wooden FEUM building) are owned by the university, the rule was handily enforceable. Students were forced to have meetings off-campus, if at all.

Rachel Roy spoke of a Psychology class who sought special permission to gather in front of a building for a class photograph. They were denied permission. The only exceptions to the rule were cafeterias at lunch time and classrooms. In fact, last year no year-end parties were permitted in U de M's residences or buildings - unless the guest list stopped at approximately four.

Students had another surprise awaiting their return to classes after Easter - padlocks on the Kacho nightclub and the student-run Co-op store, both of which operated from the Taillon building. The administration had never signed a lease with the student federation for use of the space, so

technically the rooms were theirs to repossess.

During the occupation, students had brought their own food to feed those in the Taillon building. They also paid in full a bill for use of the administration's print shop during their Taillon stay. But when the administration padlocked the co-op store and student nightspot, thousands of dollars of alcohol and perishable goods slowly became unfit for human consumption. And FEUM had to foot the bill - a loss of nearly \$15,000.

"News of the expulsions was met with anger."

There were some things to be cheerful about, however. Instead of the rumoured 20-25 per cent increase in tuition, U de M fees only jumped 12.9 per cent, less than the hikes at the University of New Brunswick and nearby Shippegan College. People who took part in the occupation feel they were the deciding factor in the end.

It was enough to make even those facing trial and a criminal record feel justified.

Then, in the middle of June, students began receiving short, terse statements from the University in the mail informing them of their "non-readmittance" to the University. The letters singled out activity in the Taillon occupation as the reason for the expulsion.

News of the expulsions has been met with anger and disbelief both on and off the U de M campus. At its summertime conference in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) passed a motion calling for a national petition should any reprisals be directed at Moncton students. This petition has yet to be organized.

In all, 17 students were denied re-admittance to l'Université de Moncton, including the entire FEUM executive and the negotiating committee during the occupation. Interestingly enough, of the 17 expelled students, only three were also facing criminal charges for their role in the occupation.



continued on page 19