

CHSR expansion does not require fee increase

There are two types of students who get involved. One, who is concerned with maintaining the status quo can be called the 'bean counter'. The other is really concerned with bringing some benefit to a number of his fellows as efficiently as possible. These few might be termed the 'suckers for punishment'. In the little game of life in the SUB the bean counters ensure that (1) their pile of beans only grows larger and (2) that the suckers for punishment are given as hard a time as the various bean counters think they can stand.

One can cite the recent actions of the voters of California. In what has been termed a 'taxpayer's revolt', a law was passed by referendum to limit taxation in that state. The bean counters in that state had accrued a large budget surplus and had consistently enlarged their administrative expenses.

Regretfully, the bean counters at the UNB Student Union have done much the same. Some weeks ago, a Brunswickan editorial expressed the opinion that we could not say what students received for their considerable annual investment in the SRC and we were chastised for it. Now The Brunswickan is prepared to say that we get nothing in return.

Although the SRC makes it very difficult to understand their financial affairs without a considerable investment in time on the part of an innocent questioner, the following information can be ascertained. In the current budget year, the executive of the SRC claims control over some \$80,000. Eighty thousand dollars. This represents \$15 per student. Some of this total includes an actual spend (in 1977-78) of \$2.50 per student on things like telephone, student directory, and several minor expenses like charity and postage. Not remarkably, some \$1.50 per student goes to the executive of the SRC in honoraria and salaries. The largest amount in the SRC controlled part of the budget is \$38,000 for salaries. Thirty-eight thousand dollars (the emphasis here is for clarity for those who think we might be fooling). This \$38,000 represents about \$7 per student. The remaining \$4 per student is surplus and padding in the SRC budget.

The salary portion of the budget is just one of the many ways in which the bean counters

at the SRC have attempted to screw students out of a fair shake for their money. Less than five years ago, the salary portion of the SRC budget was less than \$15,300. Regardless of the merits of the full time employees of the SRC, UNB students do not need \$38,000 worth of administrative help. You can be certain that it makes the bean counters feel pretty good to have so many valuable employees though.

Some perspective is in order. The SRC dispensed some \$3.50 per student to some 30 small clubs and organisations ranging from the African Students Association to the E.U.S. to the Women's organisation representing some 1,500 students all together. The Brunswickan, which distributes a free 24 page paper to over 7,000 people on campus weekly received \$2.50 per student as did CHSR last year.

It is pertinent to examine the accounts of the SRC at any time. At this point, it is rather important to examine them carefully.

It has been widely reported that CHSR could go off campus FM Stereo. Many people feel that most students, particularly the 80 percent who live off-campus want CHSR available to them. Through no help from the bean counters at the SRC, CHSR has built itself up from humble beginnings in Memorial Hall to its present location in the Student Union Building. For the first ten years of its existence the members of CHSR, through various fund-raising activities, purchased much of the equipment needed. It is interesting that when some of that

very equipment was sold recently, the SRC forced CHSR to give them the money despite the fact that the equipment was purchased with club funds. Although it was and is not widely known, CHSR went out and raised money for the present Student Union Building and in 1960 donated some 850 dollars to that cause. In 1969, CHSR donated \$1,000 raised through the making of a record to help defray the expenses of a new master control in the present SUB. How many organisations can say that?

CHSR has advanced considerably in the second decade of its life. The facilities in the Student Union Building are second to none. Although the SRC has not fought against CHSR (on the whole), this again is through no real action on the part of the SRC.

The progress at CHSR has been made possible by a dedicated membership. This year some 80 students paid \$5 to join CHSR from STU and UNB.

When CHSR applied to the CRTC in 1971 for an AM license, the equipment was designed, purchased and installed by students for less than \$6,000. Six transmitters to serve 20 buildings. At Acadia, when their student radio station did the same thing, the Student Union had to hire professional engineers to do this work and paid nearly \$20,000 for two transmitters serving three or four buildings.

The bean counters at the SRC SAY that they want CHSR to go off campus. To that end they established a committee to examine the situation. Most of the work has been done by the CHSR representatives, with the full SRC delegation missing more than half of a limited number of meetings. The fact that a previous FM committee of the SRC (in 1970) strongly recommended that CHSR be taken off campus seemed unimportant in this attempt to delay decisions further.

The real deliberations of the committee have been concluded. Two budgets have been prepared. The equipment to send CHSR to all students in FM stereo and to over 40,000 people in this city can be purchased (at today's prices) for less than \$27,000 - a one shot expense. Equipment from the old system will be easily sold. The SRC has this much money in current surplus. The increased operating costs, already approved by the bean counters at the SRC, amount to \$14,000 per year. Two dollars fifty cents per student. Without a trace of simplification or understatement, CHSR can serve the entire student population and more for around \$5 per student total.

At the present time, \$16,000 is spent to serve a maximum of \$1,200 students. \$30,000 per year will serve all 6,000 at UNB and STU.

The SRC has stated (through the Comptroller) that CHSR cannot go off-campus without a fee increase. To that end, they propose to ask for a fee increase in a referendum perhaps as soon as this spring. In doing so, they have bureaucratically ensured that CHSR will continue to serve only a limited number of students. A fee increase based on

need is absolutely indefensible, and The Brunswickan will not support it. CHSR does not ask for it. It was, after all, just a few weeks ago that the outgoing SRC President and Comptroller acknowledged that \$3 per student was wasted. That money would not be wasted on this project.

Some weeks ago, a letter to the Editor of this paper pointed out that an important function of The Brunswickan was to ensure that the SRC was kept in line. With a spend of \$80,000, with \$38,000 of that going in salaries, it is clear that they are out of line.

The students of this university want the \$30 they spend on SRC fees to be used efficiently. A history of continued support for CHSR in the past nineteen years means to The Brunswickan that students want to take CHSR off-campus. The time is right now. Further delays could kill the project as costs rise, surpluses drop and technical expertise graduates.

In the name of all students, The Brunswickan joins the eight members of CHSR and demands that, if the proposed capital and current budgets are reasonable, the SRC authorized the money to allow CHSR and the Student Union Executive to apply to the Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission for a low power FM stereo license.

It is further demanded that the SRC find this money largely out of its own budget area and not take the current money away from surplus or small clubs. The indefensible \$38,000 spent on salaries must be reduced.

As is usual, the bean counters stack the odds in their favour. Unlike in California, there is no provision in our constitution for an initiative. A petition signed by any number of students has no force. Remarkable? What we can do is overturn motions or recall elected (or acclaimed for that matter) representatives. Any attempt to stymie this project on

the part of the SRC will be regarded by this paper and others as an act of bureaucratic aggression by the SRC towards students. The executive who can collect upwards of \$7,000 in benefits can expect a lot of questions.

The message is clear. Cut your own budget and provide more service to students.