

MUGWUMP

Christmas is here

by Allan Carter

I went to the shopping mall the other day. It was quite ugly, actually. They had Christmas decorations everywhere. People were flocking to the department stores and Santa Claus was on a lunch break. It must be hard explaining to children how Santa Claus made it to Fredericton on his sleigh without any snow on the ground. Anyhow, I got to see Santa after his lunch break and I asked him for a bigger Brunswickan budget. Unfortunately, it wasn't Santa it was really James van Raalte, the Student Union's VP Finance. Needless to say, I won't be getting a bigger budget.

I was listening to CBC radio the other night and a bunch of so called experts were claiming how merchants will be forced to change their ways because people won't be buying as much this Christmas season. They argued that due to the environmental lobby groups, the GST and the overall increased costs of most articles, people's attitudes are changing and they are buying less at Christmas. Unfortunately, I think they are wrong. The only thing that will change this Christmas is that more people will become temporary Americans while they shop across the border. This is what the Canadian merchants will have to deal with and Sunday shopping isn't going to solve that problem. 'Tis the season to be jolly.

I just love the Mail Order Market in the *Globe and Mail*. On Monday there were some interesting articles advertised. One was a \$750.00 statue of the Queen Mother who is celebrating her 90th birthday. I wonder how much she'll be worth when she reaches 100? Another interesting article was the Glow in the Dark Boxer Shorts. But the one that took the grand prize was an ad for a 25 minute movie created just for cats. The catnip video for just \$19.95. And, yes, cats will watch it (according to the ad). Some great gifts for the Christmas season.

Jon Lazar, one of our illustrious students at large, took the time out of his busy schedule this week to come down to the Bruns office and personally showed me his last paragraph in this week's student at large column. I don't know, maybe he wants my approval. Anyway, in this last paragraph he thanks all those who have commented on how much they enjoy his propaganda. It's nice to see that his family takes the time to read his column.

Sometimes the people from the Physical Plant amaze me. Apparently, they were working on the roof of the SUB building during the weekend and had to close the heat vents. Unfortunately, they forget to reopen some of the heat vents after they were done. Some of these forgotten heat vents travel to the Bruns' offices. We didn't have heat again until Tuesday. Not to worry, the fruit flies kept us warm. But our plants didn't do as well. It was so cold in our office during the weekend some of them are in such poor condition I don't think they will ever recover. I'm afraid you won't see the cactus in Viewpoint anymore, it just isn't up to its usual prickly standards.

The Student Union office also didn't have any heat on Monday. I guess they finally found some use for those Student Union scarves they tried to sell a few years ago. Some of the workers used them as leg warmers. The misers could have sent a few down to us.

You know what is really funny? Somebody getting their pinkie jammed in a door. Do you know what is even funnier? Somebody getting their pinkie jammed in a door which they just locked. My roommate does this once and a while and she has to fumble for her keys in order to unlock the door and get her pinkie back. It's great dinner entertainment.

I came across an article on how to admit your mistakes. For the next couple of weeks I will share these with you. They fill up space and they are funnier than anything I can come up with.

Never, ever say: "I fell asleep in class".

Instead say: "Notwithstanding the scintillating repartage concomitant to this scholastic assemblage, intransigent preternatural biological functions conspired to surmount my fragile resolve, plunging consciousness beneath my direct autonomy and thus insuring a rapid decline into somnolency.

Taken from *The Ultimate Student Handbook* by Alice and Steve Lawhead, published by CrossWay Books, 1984..

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those people who have enjoyed the Mugwumps which have slammed the student at large column. And by the way Mugwump is not very funny this week so if you wish to split a gut, read the student at large column on the Student Union Page.

OPINION

The opinions found in Opinion are not necessarily the views of The Brunswickan

Politically Correct, And Proud Of It!

by Tony Johnson-Tracy

Recent debate within the Brunswickan has brought the issue of "Political Correctness" to some prominence. In the past three weeks, letters to the editor written by Andrew Gorman and Gary Craig have attacked the so-called Political Correctness movement. The letter from Gary Craig, however, bears the most attention, as it is a direct attack on the "PC" movement, and not simply an anti-French racist diatribe.

Craig's letter claimed that "fascist tendencies" are apparent in the PC movement, making vague reference to the American Civil Liberties Union's legal defence of legislation put forward by a "conservative Republican representative" to "protect students" as proof. Craig puts forward the argument that the ACLU is "an archival (sic) of conservatives in America", and their support of this legislation indicates that they agree that these "fascist tendencies" are present. Interestingly enough, Craig neglects to make reference to the Republican in question. It is worth noting the *real* facts of this situation, as Craig's distortion of the truth could lead one to believe his inherent thesis. In fact, the sponsor of the legislation in question is none other than US Rep. Henry Hyde (R-Ill.), a notorious right-winger whose legislation would outlaw codes against hate literature and speech. And what of Hyde's apparent support from the ACLU? In fact, Jay Miller, the director of the Illinois chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union admits that Hyde "wants to protect the kind of speech you hate: racist, homophobic and sexist kinds of things. He represents the extreme right . . . the people who put the Reagan Revolution in place . . . and they're coming out for free speech for themselves". Given this type of sentiment, it would seem shocking that the ACLU has provided legal support to Hyde's legislation. But it must be remembered that this is the same ACLU which protected the "right" of the Ku Klux Klan to march through a predominantly Black neighbourhood in robes to intimidate the residents. Hardly "an archival of conservatives in America"!

It is quite clear that the attack on Political correctness has nothing to do with "free speech", but rather is a well-orchestrated right-wing campaign against anyone who would challenge the prevailing conservative status quo. Right-wing crusaders against PC are for free speech only when it suits their purposes. The crusade against political correctness has become a central component of the right-wing's attack on all the significant reforms won by the radical movements of the 1960's and 70's. Bush and other anti-PC crusaders intend to return the universities to an era of stultifying conformity, when liberal ideas were unpopular and "communists" were witch-hunted off campus. Thus while the Bush administration repeal the reforms - affirmative action, multi-culturalism, abortion rights, anti-discrimination statutes for lesbians and gays - they are also conducting a campaign against the *ideological impact* these movements have had on society, and in particular on the campuses. If half of what the anti-PC campaigners claim were true, campuses would be hospitable places for women, Blacks, lesbians and gays, radicals, and socialists. But the reality is quite different. . . while they denounce the tyranny of the radical "thought police", even right-wingers grant that university campuses have become more *conservative* throughout the 1980's and into the 90's. The picture of university campuses as bastions of intellectual tyranny ruled by radical professors is a figment of the PC bashers' imaginations.

It should not be surprising that the attack on PC comes from ideologically committed conservatives - it is not the work of disinterested students and scholars, but of a small core of right-wing ideologues. This group is not the embattled minority that they pretend to be, but rather a highly organized and well funded movement led by racists such as the former editor of the conservative university paper Dartmouth Review, Dinesh D'Souza. Under the editorship of D'Souza between 1981 and 1983, the Dartmouth Review printed such quips as "genocide means never having to say you're sorry" and advertised an interview with a member of the Ku Klux Klan with a staged picture of a Black man hanging from a tree. D'Souza later left the paper to pen a biography of the far-right Rev. Jerry Falwell, but most recently has written the "bible" of the anti-PC crusaders, *Illiberal Education*.

The charge of today's PC-bashers that anti-racists and feminists are equal to "McCarthyism" is utterly absurd. The real McCarthyism was an all-out attempt by the US government and institutions to enforce ideological conformity. Today's supporters of affirmative action, gay liberation and women's rights - the so-called "McCarthyites of the left" - find their positions and jobs under attack by the US government, while the *real* McCarthyites have the full weight and power of the government behind them. In fact, many of the people who today warn us of PC "intellectual tyranny" were supporters of McCarthyism in the 1950's.

It is important that persons who believe in the rights of women and visible minorities, as well as those who support lesbian and gay rights, oppose the anti-PC campaign. It is time that more people announced that they are, in fact, Politically Correct, and proud of it!