

MUGWUMP

I have a reason (really)

by Allan Carter

Alright, alright, I know I spelled "here" wrong last week in Mugwump. Every time I turn around someone is pointing out what they term as my mistake. Well, just for your information it was not a mistake. No, I did it on purpose. Yeah, that's right, I had a reason. What was my reason you ask? Um, I'll tell ya later.

Who is Derek Dunnett? I'll give you until the end of this Mugwump to figure that one out.

Let us hope Kim Wetlauffer is feeling better. I guess she must have caught this terrible cold/flu bug which is making its rounds. Wetlauffer is the VP activities for the Student Union. I'm not a person who attends many concerts or other "events of entertainment". But from the look of things Wetlauffer seems to be doing a good job.

It looks like Canada can wait for some more great tactics from the government now that mediator Alan Gold has said: "I give up." I'm not sure what will happen next. However, the scene where hundreds of union workers tried to bash in the doors at the legislature about a month ago was a change for the Canadian news on the old telly. I have always found that Canada has been a very quiet country. Although Canadians tend to get upset and complain a lot, we are not a violent lot. I mean let's face it, if we were violent Brian Mulroney would be dead by now!

Speaking about angry union workers at Canada Post, I received a letter in the mail the other day from the Canada Post corporation. What tickled my funny bone about the letter was the envelope it was in. It had the Brunswickan's address then scrawled underneath the address was "not biomedical engineering". I'm not sure if someone from Canada Post put the message on the envelope or if someone from the biomedical engineering department did. However, it is ironic that when Canada Post sends you a letter Canada Post sends it to the wrong place.

Apparently, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney has been added to the Security Council's roster of candidates for the position of UN Secretary Council. Ok, have you stopped laughing? That's not the funny part. Mulroney insists that he knows nothing about it. He is acting quite surprised that his name has appeared as a candidate for the position. I don't know about you but when you are as low as he is in the popularity polls looking for another job is probably a good idea. I think such a position would be a great challenge for Mulroney. Instead of being the most unpopular politician in Canadian history, he could become the most unpopular person in the whole world.

Halloween is close at hand. I'm sure that everybody is excited over the prospect of buying tons of candy and giving it to people you don't know. It is a lot like Christmas, I suppose, except the gifts are smaller (in some cases) and you give to more people. I used to like Halloween at home because I live in the sticks. Our driveway is about a mile long and we own a dog which everybody is terrified of.. So if we are lucky we may get about ten people on Halloween night. Unfortunately, being in the Halloween spirit (the same spirit at Christmas. One could just generally define it as the "let's buy useless things" spirit), my family always buys enough for about forty people. Oh well I guess I just have to do the most honorable thing: Eat what is left over.

Actually people become scary at Halloween time. They get obsessed with getting as much candy as they can. They load themselves into cars and zoom all over their area so they won't miss any houses. In fact, if the kids figured they didn't get enough they just slap on a different mask and venture out again. They become greedy little candy seekers realizing that Halloween only comes once a year and they are going to take full advantage of it. In case some people don't give them anything or have the gull to be away on Halloween night, the kids take toilet paper, eggs and shaving cream with them just to leave their mark of disapproval for not participating in the Halloween spirit of things.

Happy Halloween.

P.S.: Figured it out? Derek Dunnett is the VP internal of the Student Union. What does he do? Hey, I'll give you until next week to figure that one out! Or maybe the rest of the term.

OPINION

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

The Yugoslav War

by Tony Fabijancic

All ten ceasefires in Yugoslavia have failed because Serbia and the Serbian-dominated, communist, Yugoslav army have embarked on a vicious campaign to capture as much Croatian land as possible and decimate the republic in the process. The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that a Yugoslav civil war seems imminent. Make no mistake, any political accord which hopes to stop the fighting must be accompanied by an actual peacekeeping force willing to slow Serbian aggression. And since neither the European Community nor the United Nations seem willing to send in such a force, a quick end to the conflict is highly unlikely.

Shortly after Croatia's declaration of independence, Serbian guerrillas began their assaults on the Slavian district (eastern Croatia) in an apparent attempt to "defend" their people from "liquidation" by a fascist Croatian regime. They contend that Croatian president Franjo Tudjman is really a new, disguised Ante Pavelic, nazi puppet dictator during the Second World War who was responsible for the massacre of thousands of Serbians. Today's Serbians fear a return to the old days. And rightly so. Pavelic's regime was brutal and merciless. But to call present day Croatians, their president, and their government "fascists" intent on "liquidating" Serbians is completely unfair. The Croatian constitution clearly recognizes their right to self-determination. The republic is quite willing to autonomize those regions with a larger Serbian than Croatian population. In effect, what Serbia is doing is projecting its own horrendous treatment of minorities onto Croatia. The Albanians in the autonomous region of Kosovo, for example, have suffered under Serbian martial law over a year. Mistreatment of minorities is a characteristic of the Serbian, not Croatian government.

In the early days of the war, the Yugoslav army claimed neutrality, said it acted as a peace-keeping force in order to separate the Croatian national guard and the Serbian guerrillas, said it had begun a "noble and humanitarian mission", in the words of the Yugoslav defense ministry, to preserve the communist state from disintegrating. The army angrily denounced western reports that it backed the Serbian insurgency. Three and a half months later, after having taken one third of Croatian territory, cut off most of the Adriatic coast, bombarded towns and cities all over Croatia, the army finally admitted that Yugoslavia had ceased to exist and that its most recent and aggressive offensives were for different purposes---namely, ending Croatian blockades of army barracks and protecting the Serbian minority from genocide. More half truths. In reality, the army (or should I say Serbia) has begun a brutal land grab that promises to hurtle Yugoslavia into all encompassing civil war. It has whipped up ethnic hatreds and fears of genocide to conceal its carving out of a new, smaller, Serbian-ruled "Yugoslavia". It fights to remain the last, powerful, communist force in Europe, this despite the fact that it isolates itself more and more with each passing day. It has denied the fact that it is out of control and acting on its own or that there has been a coup against the federal leadership.

Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic insists that the right to self-determination in Yugoslavia applies not to the republic as a whole, but to the peoples or nations as defined by the federal constitution. Although he believes that Croatia's 600 000 Serbians can't be incorporated into a new Croatian state against their will, he conveniently denies the Albanians' claims to self-determination on Kosovo because, according to the constitution, they are not a people or a nation but a national minority. In other words, step on them, assimilate them, and treat them like shit, as the Serbians have clearly done by imposing martial law on the region, because they're only a national minority.

Obviously, the world's response to the Yugoslav conflict--- an arms embargo--- is more damaging than beneficial because it treats the warring sides as equally responsible for the crisis and because it favours the Serbians, who have enough arms to crush the Croatians (being the third largest military force in Europe). The Croatians are relatively poorly armed to begin with and are finding it more and more difficult to acquire the sort of sophisticated weaponry needed to defend themselves. Reports in the press also suggest that the EC is contemplating an oil embargo and, in addition, other wider ranging economic sanctions. Again, these actions are unfair to Croatian towns and cities, destroying its crops, killing its civilians. Sanctions are the EC's attempt to appear active, instead of really being so, fairly and equitably, its attempt to provide a unified policy and maintain credibility as a strong, deliberating body, rather than really outlining a constructive plan of action---in other words, backing up a ceasefire with a Euro-army capable of enforcing the agreement, monitoring and stopping infractions.

The fundamental questions in the Yugoslav war are about territory. Will a Croatia that is no longer part of Yugoslav exercise control over all its presently defined land? Will Serbia give up territory it has claimed in fighting over the last three months, once peace negotiations actually begin? Will Yugoslavia's internal borders have to be redrawn? How will Bosnia-Herzegovina, Yugoslavia's most volatile population mix (Muslim, Serbian, Croatian) be divided? The solutions to these problems are almost certainly military.