

We've got a million, lets put it to good use!!!

The University of New Brunswick has hit the headlines yet again. This time it was not the Brunswickan which brought to light this latest Administration folly. The major papers of this province, including the Saint John Telegraph Journal and Fredericton's own Gleaner have carried items originating with the Canadian Press concerning the University's 1.1 million dollar surplus.

"A few days after predicting financial disaster for Maritime universities if they don't get all of a recommended increase in government grants next year," the news-story states, "the University of New Brunswick has reported a surplus of almost one million dollars for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1978".

The Man on the street could not fail to be puzzled. Here we have a situation in which he has been listening to our President telling him on many occasions that U.N.B. is in desperate need of more public money. But up on the hill, we failed to spend over one million dollars of our last year's budget. The previous statements about financial crisis are perhaps (at least in the mind of the public) 'inoperative'? Premier Hatfield will likely reflect the public's collective quizzical look by knocking a percent or two off our next year's budget. Blame him?

How did this happen? Well, Dr. Anderson has been quoted as saying that "extra revenue from computer and other services, a tight energy conservation program combined with lower than forecast energy costs, steady, instead of declining enrollment and general good management and good luck" resulted in the extra million. One cannot fault that. The benefits of zero-based budgeting and that more students than predicted came to U.N.B. have manifested themselves in this surplus. One would think however, that this money could have been continuously re-invested in the University. Certainly any normal company would be well aware of any current account surplus and provide for improvements in physical plant, manufacturing capacity or staff benefits.

At this university, there are many ways in which this money could have been continuously reinvested. Acquisitions and staff for the library. Finishing the Integrated Science Complex, particularly with respect to the installation of better lighting in

the Science Library. Monies to buy the more expensive laboratory equipment to improve the undergraduate teaching facilities. Perhaps by putting a dent in the estimated \$500,000 unfunded capital deficit on the Aitken University Centre. If a trend was observed, adjustments in faculty salaries could be made, given that our teaching staff (but not our administrators) are sadly underpaid.

The University of New Brunswick has, yet again defied all logic and reason and merely accrued a surplus. An embarrassing surplus. The surplus was discovered by the auditors in November, nearly five months after the end of the fiscal year-let alone during it. Dr. Anderson himself said "if the surplus had been discovered then it could have been spent".

So it seems that the surplus was unknown. The Comptroller's Office didn't know how much money we had. A significant

portion (approximately one third) of the 1.8 million dollars spent administering this university last year went to pay for the Comptroller's Office.

A University which spends 1.8 million dollars trying to manage itself, and which tries to teach business, mathematics and computer science with credibility in the outside world cannot do enough arithmetic to keep its own accounts straight. God help us all.

The sound and fury found in the celebrated A.C.P.C. report of last term condemning the academics and their research must now be further reconciled to this evidence of the competence of the administration which produced it.

The Brunswickan also must point out the responsibility of the Board of Governors in this matter. It is certainly true that if the Board of Directors of a large company were not aware of a current account surplus represent-

ing almost 3 percent of total spending, the shareholders would vote them right out of office. In the case of a non-profit corporation dedicated to public service, as this university is meant to be, the carelessness of the chief

operating officers and Governors is compounded.

This carelessness has embarrassed the University of New Brunswick and gives the government (and the public) further evidence that money given to this university is being managed in a manner which is less than efficient.

From the same team which sends gifts to Upper Canada, which owes half a million dollars on our rink (and won't admit it), and wants to fire 85 professors - we bring you a "surprise" million dollars. Hang on for a tuition increase.

