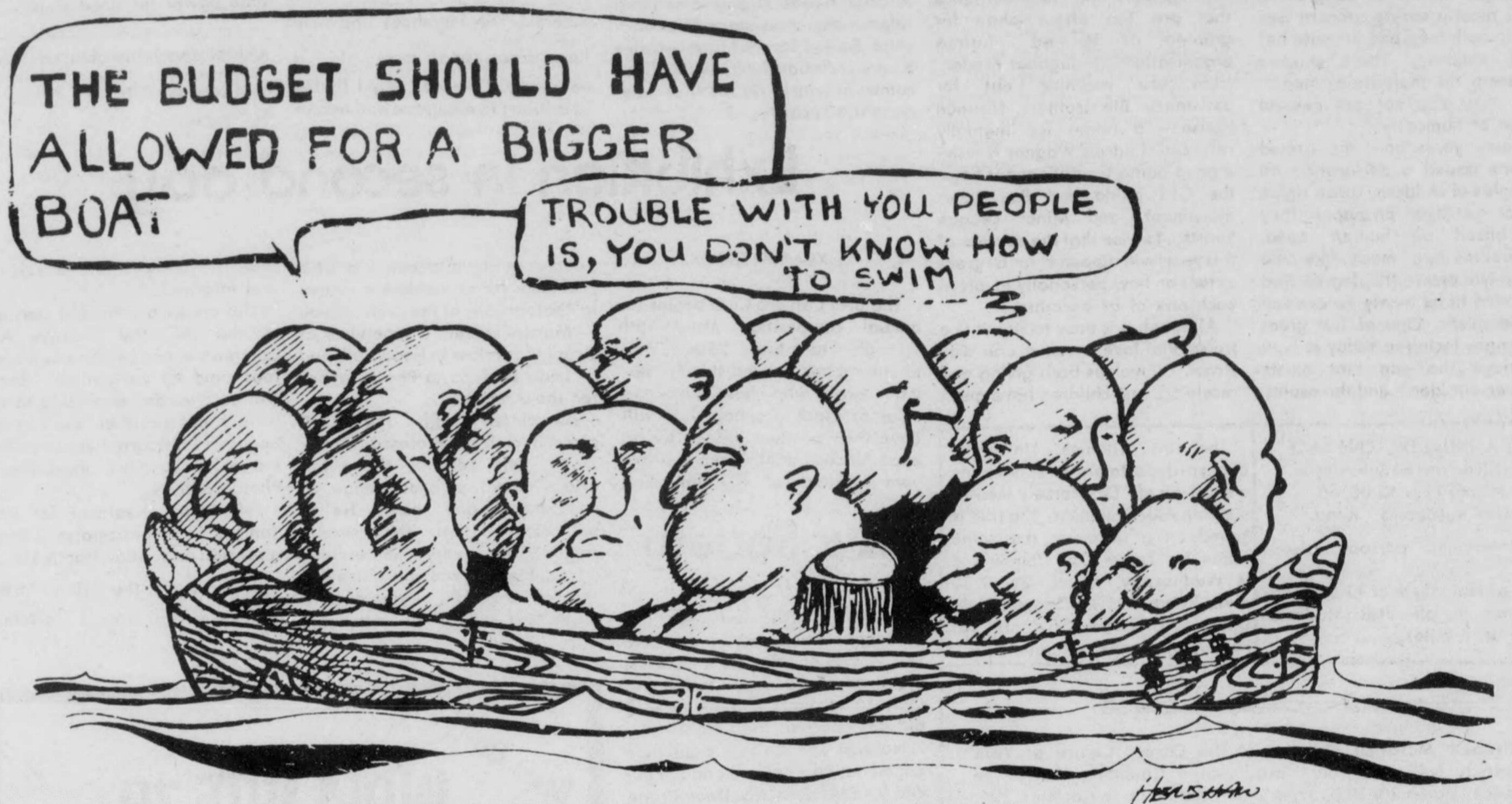


CHSR issue is a serious matter.....



Last week, you may recall, The Brunswickan adopted the position that to allow CHSR to transmit via FM stereo was a project the Student Union should give the highest possible priority. Further it was reported that an analysis of SRC budgets of the past five years indicated an alarming trend.

It was found that five years ago, the total SRC operating budget as a function of the total money which the SRC had to actually spend was about 25 percent. In the present fiscal year, this same figure is 47.3 percent. This means that the money available for clubs and organizations has steadily dropped.

Past SRC President Steve Berube stated quite clearly that he believed that CHSR should be available to the over 4,000 students who live off campus, and those living in residence should be able to obtain a clearer signal. To that end, a committee to investigate this was set up as one of the last important acts of Berube's term. The Brunswickan reported last week that the current SRC executive have not found it possible to give much attention to the question. Indeed, various members of the SRC executive and staff expressed the

thought that a student fee increase was necessary to achieve this goal as recently as ten days ago. Having publicly reversed their position on this matter, it can be asked what level of previous consideration yielded the first statement.

The SRC meeting this past week was an interesting occasion. Some 20-30 CHSR members attended the meeting looking for some leadership from the council. CHSR, through Director Doug Varty made a well-documented presentation to the council concerning the reasons for the proposed CHSR expansion, the need for a speedy decision, and an outline of the costs involved. This presentation was augmented by a technical clarification from Jim Nason, former CHSR Chief Engineer and member of the SRC FM Committee.

The report was very well received by council. Councillors took the time to ask some excellent questions and showed that they wanted to make the serious effort to truly understand the various complexities. SRC Chairman, Gordon Loane commented that the presentation was meaningful and carefully prepared.

The report was not well

received by the executive. Suggestions as to possible wordings of a proposed referendum on the question from CHSR were rejected out of hand. Students do not have the right, said President Bartlett several times, to suggest policy. That, he maintained, was for the council alone.

CHSR and The Brunswickan feel that any referendum on the question should include several ideas. A referendum can be a political tool as much as anything else. Witness the debate on the wording of the Quebec sovereignty-association referendum.

The Brunswickan supports a referendum on the issue of CHSR going off campus. The Brunswickan will not support a council-sponsored referendum which asks merely "Do you want CHSR to go off-campus?"

Students must be given the chance to decide not just the major issue, but the underlying policy at stake. Our system of democracy does not provide for government-by-opinion-polls. The wording of any referendum on this question should include the following ideas: Firstly, "Do you want to expand CHSR to an FM stereo system serving all students?". Secondly, "This expan-

sion does not require a fee increase." Lastly, "The current budget for the project must substantially come from the SRC operating budget as opposed to the budgets of the smaller clubs."

A yes-vote on an appropriately worded referendum containing the above ideas says several things. It says that students want the money spent on CHSR to benefit all students, not only those in residence. It says that students want the SRC to reverse the trend of increased spending on administration which has taken place in the past five years.

The Brunswickan trusts that the executive of the SRC will take this matter seriously. Out of resignation more than anything else, CHSR went off-air for several days this past week. No hue and cry was expected demanding the return of CHSR. It could rather be described as the limit to which people can be pushed. It is a remarkable thing for an organization to overwhelmingly vote to stop doing the activity which has gathered them together in the first place. It is even more remarkable for an executive of an organization to endorse an overwhelming membership decision with a unanimous vote to effect the termination.