

Blood and Thunder

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rm. 35, Student Union Building, UNB Campus
DEADLINE: 5 p.m. Tuesday

Disagrees on "Ban the Bombast"

Dear Editor:

I disagree with the statement made by Henry Fairlie in last week's Brunswickan ("Ban the bombast") that "the press made too much of a bad thing" in regards to its coverage of the 40th anniversary of Hiroshima.

Whether or not people like what they see in the media there exists an obligation on the part of the press to cover such "bad" things as the bombing of Hiroshima.

As much as people would like to believe in the feasibility and safety of strategic deterrence (a strategy whose days are numbered in light of efforts on the Strategic Defense Initiative) it must be admitted this is simply a continuance of the age-old method for resolving conflict — i.e. through a show of force. To continue to follow such a policy simply prevents the growth of human maturity. America should feel guilty for dropping the bomb, as should any other nation that prepares for war.

Concentrating on the suffering of those victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in no means diminishes the suffering of Dresden and Coventry victims. I disagree, however, that the suffering of the latter is as great. Assuredly, on an immediate level it is, however, those who survived Hiroshima and Nagasaki suffered the ravages of radiation sickness and, for many years, the unbearable prejudice of their own people. All victims of war suffer psychological torment. In addition to this, survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are forced to endure a life of waiting for cancer, accepting disfigurement beyond the loss of a limb, and dreading the birth of children. This is by no means meant to belittle the suffering of any victim of war — all degrees of suffering are too great.

To say that we simply have a new weapon of death and destruction is to ignore the issue at hand. Granted, each war has brought about a new development in weaponry, but because "we entered the atomic age" we now possess the capability to destroy the human race, hardly the same impact as the development of the stirrup. Though I willingly admit the advent of nuclear weapons allowed one empire to succeed another I must repeat that the succession of empires, while bringing about technological progress, is not progress in maturity — it is stagnation.

I disagree that "the power to wipe out human life" is used as

an "excuse for fecklessness in our private lives." While it may be convenient to follow this reasoning, to do so is to simplify the sociological changes that have occurred in the last 40 years. Admittedly we have become a more egoistic race but there are a lot of other factors in the resultant desire for instant gratification and refusal to have children. I agree there are those who refuse to have children because of the threat of nuclear war, but this should not be considered acting irresponsibly. Instead, the people who are irresponsible are those who first started the arms race and have since furthered this development.

"The bomb" is not simply used as a cause and to say this is to do a disservice to those who work for social change. We who take part in the celebration of peace on August 6th commemorate not only the victims of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but ALL victims of war. People will continue to "march up and down" for environmental concerns as well as disarmament and other social issues. Perhaps it is time to find a new way for resolving conflict other than "the exercise of American" or any other power.

Michael R. MacKinnon

Coverage of Media Bowl disturbing

Dear Sir:

Being someone who is heavily involved with Intramural and Recreational sport activities at UNB I was glad to see that the Media Bowl was played for the 19th straight year. It is good to see groups of students take the initiative to plan and participate in sport activities, especially when that activity has a certain amount of tradition associated with it.

I was, however, disturbed by your coverage of the Media Bowl. I don't know how you can justify giving yourselves almost two full pages of photographs and copy. It was bad enough that you took almost the entire front page, but to use the entire first page of the sports section was too much. You obviously feel that the Media Bowl was not only the most newsworthy sporting event of the week but the most newsworthy story period. It would be nice if you put as much enthusiasm and copy space into the coverage of Intramural, Interresidence and Physical recreation activities.

The above mentioned Intramural activities involve more students than any other activity run by or for the

students of UNB (except perhaps the consumption of alcohol). I feel that the entire Intramural program is somewhat more newsworthy than the Brunswickan football team and therefore deserves, at the very least, the same type of coverage as you feel you deserve.

Should you decide to reprioritize your news and sports coverage in terms of the relative importance of the stories I would be more than happy to offer my services to the Brunswickan in the same capacity as last year. Please feel free to contact me through the Intramural office.

Sincerely,
Stephen Young
Intramural Graduate
Assistant

Commentary to 'UNB Divest?'

Dear Sir:

Please allow me to comment on the article "Is UNB Obligated To Divest?" written by Pamela Johnson and appeared in the October 4, 1985 issue.

Having put such prominence of the article in the front cover of your paper one may guess that you are probably deeply concerned with what is going on in South Africa and you are soliciting for possible solutions or that Pamela (Brunswickan Staff) is speaking for you and simply showing your apathy to the situations persisting there. Whatever the object of your special attention however is not the issue but I think you would be surprised if it passed without any comment.

I am making an assumption that the writer is one, speaking for herself and two, she would like us to know that she carries the same opinions like those of her other senior members of the Student Union.

It is quite clear what the writer wants us to know—that the South African problems are not "ours" nor the UNB's but probably the Federal Governments'. I do not care what the position of UNB is regarding the South African problems in fact I agree with the writers quotation from V.P. — Finance that "We are not prepared to say we will not invest in companies which deal with South Africa. This is not an object of concern...". Well, it may be true that if our university broke its investment deals with apartheid loving companies the effects would be minimal but you know "kidogo kidogo hunjaza kibab" (a little each time eventually fills the can).

I find it hard to agree with writer and T. Lethbridge both of who think that "Even if

UNB were to withdraw all her funds, someone else would immediately buy them and no good would be accomplished." I think here they both have goofed and missed the point completely. Even mere moral supports sometimes accomplishes a lot leave alone a dollar of disinvestment.

It is easy for me to make an observation that the writer has no respect for records or even history and that she further does not care about apartheid and its perpetuation.

I think it is time that the students of the world and the universities of the world stand up and be counted to oppose apartheid in South Africa.

By Surprised

Freedom and spiritual dignity

Dear Sir:

Many people in the Western world, "sympathetic" to the anti-apartheid cause in South Africa and "concerned" about the plight of South African Blacks, continually express their "apprehension" regarding the possible harmful consequences that divestment may have on the black majority; and thus, they are, quite charitably, opposed to the economic boycott of the racist regime in South Africa. One wonders whether the same people, given the choice between having adequate economic means for survival in a society which enslaves them and restricts their human rights, and rejecting that inferior status even at the risk of death, would even consider the former option as worth considering. They are most likely to find that option offensive and outrageous, and with suitable contempt and indignation they would, I suspect, reject it outright as being entirely beneath their dignity and self-respect. They would, in other words, rather be dead than red (or whatever else that may be presumed to curtail their human rights and freedom!) In fact, I remember a survey conducted not to long ago in the United States where, in response to a question such as 'what would be your preference given the choice between living under Soviet domination and dying in a planetary holocaust', an overwhelming majority of Americans chose the latter option reflecting, of course, their free American spirit! The implication, thus, is quite obvious: the moral standards and value-judgements that define the priorities of the white North Americans do not apply to the

Black South African; that is, for the blacks, having an adequate amount of food on the table is, or ought to be, a higher priority than freedom and spiritual dignity.

Such paternalistic ideology, sustained by double standards or criteria of judging values and priorities, is, of course neither novel nor incidental, but merely signifies as well as confirms an implicitly racist value-system that pervades the popular consciousness in our contemporary society.

Yours truly,
Shon Dutta

NDP

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lose out on their husbands' pensions.

The Pension Standards' Act is designed with the idea of pensions being a family asset. Recommendations that have been made include: portability of pension contributions; the establishment of pensions for both full and part-time employees; a pre-retirement survivors' benefit; a minimum employer's contribution of 50%; division of pension benefits in cases of marital breakdown; and, allowance for early or late retirement. Roushorne commented that response has been 'fairly positive'.

Roushorne stated that part-time and seasonal workers are a major concern of his department. There are often difficulties for these people in qualifying for holiday pay, rest breaks, for statutory holidays, and so forth.

Shauna MacKenzie pointed out that while the Charter of Rights does address equality, it does not entrench any right to affirmative action programmes. Indeed, explicit hiring quotas have themselves been called discriminatory. In place of quotas, she suggested that serious searching for qualified women as well as comprehensive training programmes would be helpful.

Throughout the evening, there was the sense that the panelists were basically advisors on public policy and not the decision makers. Roushorne used the term 'political masters' to describe those in power while Richards pointed out that the very existence of an Advisory Council on the Status of Women was an admission of a lack of women in powerful positions.

The Fredericton South NDP Association is continuing the discussion process with a panel on poverty in November. Boles considers these discussions essential to the political process. "Once you stop listening, you stop representing people."