

Ladies & Gentlemen presenting --

# The Greatest Show on Earth ...

Rumours circulating on campus that students actually have a government of their own have been discredited by the actions of the Student Representative Council (sic) at Monday night's council meeting.

Council exhibited a perfect assortment of Barnum and Bailey famed circus techniques in all but the high diving act. The clowns were out in force but unfortunately the meeting lacked a qualified ringmaster.

Outgoing president Steve Berube's act was even more uncoordinated than usual, although his famed sermonettes contained an interesting diversion when he and comptroller Geoff Worrell brought up the reduction of student fees. His balancing act between ego and his position on council was exceeded only by the disappearing act of his status as a student representative. While the motion may be great public relations for our talented juggler it might have been appropriate to let the executive know what the motion was beforehand. A split in the executive is hardly an inspiration to councillors.

Berube was not functioning either as a representative of student opinion or even of executive opinion - which the vice-president internal rather sloppily let him know. Whining aptly describes his tone and general demeanour. However, a few other discerning councillors managed to defeat the motion despite several abortive attempts to actually explain why they were against it.

Chairwoman Patty LeBlanc evidently feels that only elected councillors have the right to speak at council meetings and on several occasions ignored the right of observers to address themselves to the meeting. What was especially notable was the manner in which two students who were observing the meeting were ignored, although given the right to speak, it was like blowing in the wind. The SRC circus has been yelling apathy and groaning at the lack of concern among students and when two students offer their services on a cutback committee chaired by external vice president Claire Fripp then they are ignored. A delightful contradiction if you ask us.

Last week's council meeting had its share of clowns as mentioned previously and was adequately staffed with spectat-

ors. It appears that with the exception of a few, it's not the responsibility of council members to say anything, merely to sit and look generally astounded.

We would like to see a little coordination in these meetings. A three ring circus can be amusing but not when it's meant to be a government. We think someone should gently break it to the councillors that they DO have a few responsibilities other than sitting in on Monday meetings. It may be a good idea to inform the executive that its usual practice (and only polite) to make decisions together rather than alone. Strangely enough most would agree that "democracy" is a very workable way of getting things done or at least resolved.

And while we're on the subject of the SRC — the performance or lack of performance of Dave Bartlett as the new president was even more startling. We're not sure exactly what his act would be labeled but suffice to say that Barnum and Bailey wouldn't have been hiring the day Bartlett came to call.

He might win a prize for rambling discourses as long as rules stipulated that a minimum was said in the course of the

speech. The amount that was stated did little to enhance Bartlett's reputation as a politician. His performance on the commercial media does not indicate to us that he is really aware of what is involved in his position either.

The president of the Student Union has an awesome responsibility to fulfill and we are the first to admit that it is far from easy. Mr. Bartlett has been on a number of committees and organizations, both student and non-student, on campus and he should have some idea of the volume of work he is responsible for.

Very little is known about the university community insofar as the outside world is concerned. Brunswickan distribution, down-town and comments from the student union on commercial media comprise a large part of that public image.

As president, Mr. Bartlett supposedly represents the entire University of New Brunswick student body. It is from HIS attitude, from the direction of HIS concerns and from the manner in which those concerns are presented that we are either praised or criticized. If we do not

show a strong front, if we do not have a strong president to represent us to institutions and organizations which affect us then we are in trouble. The provincial government decides what percentage increase the university will receive over last year's operating grant. Already Premier Hatfield has stated that a tuition increase is almost inevitable, stating this directly to Mr. Berube's and Mr. Bartlett's faces.

Mr. Bartlett is just barely in office, and he has not yet had a real chance to prove his worth.

We are not currently impressed with Mr. Bartlett's performance but in light of the above would like to remain optimistic. Concrete plans to combat increases in tuition and residence, intensive research into the improvement of student aid programs, a determined effort to combat the past few years' trend of "less for more" are what students have a right to expect both from their union and from the president of that union. We hope the new council and especially the new president won't give us another circus act.

