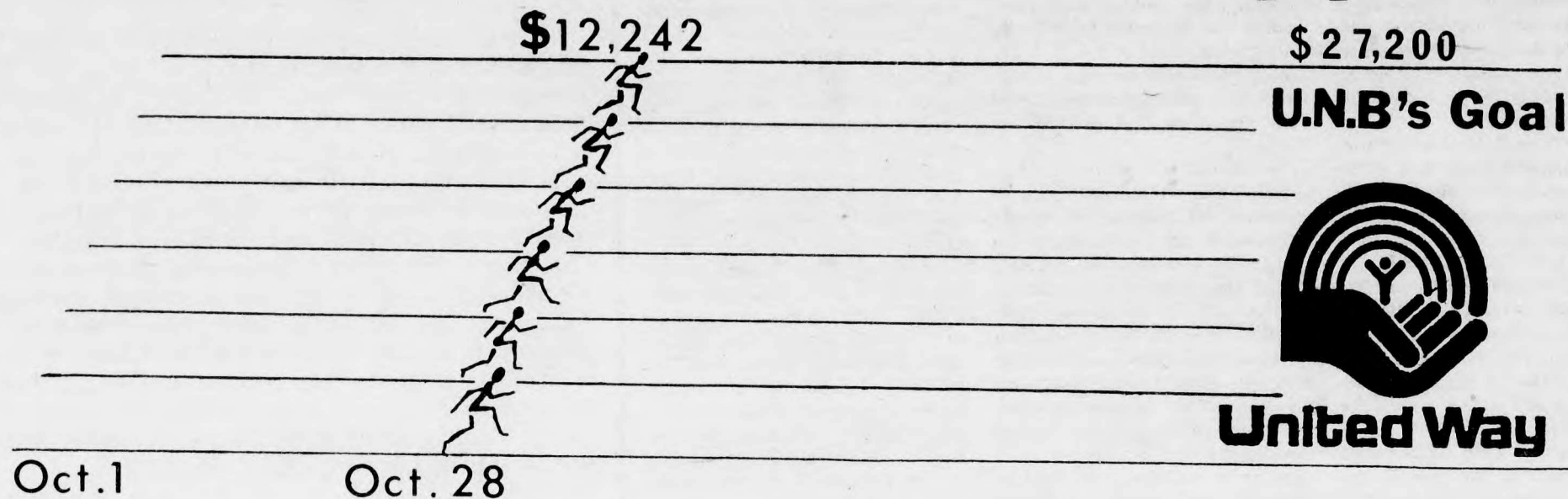


United Way needs support



The United Way campaign for 1980 is well underway on campus. Several weeks ago the *Brunswickan* reported that the United Way objective for this year is \$27,200. To date nearly \$13,000 has been collected on campus and it is hoped the objective will be reached.

UNB President Dr. James Downey, in a letter to all members of the university community, expressed his concern "that the United Way appeal...won't be as successful this year as it deserves to be." Other charitable drives and the admirable Terry Fox Cancer drive fund were given as his chief reasons.

Twenty or so agencies are funded annually by the United Way Fund. Associations such as CHIMO, the Canadian Red Cross, Family Enrichment and Counselling and Planned Parenthood are

just a few of the agencies that students should support. The agencies affect out community life and whether you live in Fredericton eight or twelve months of the year these agencies deserve and need student support. Whether as individuals or a student groups, we should do our part to make the United Way campaign a real success. Members of the Fredericton community will be watching the UNB community closely - let's be leaders and help the campaign.

Dr. Burt, chairman of the department of Biology, is this years campus campaign chairman. He will be only too glad, we are sure, to accept your donation. Student clubs and the SRC itself would be well served to dig down a little bit and help UNB reach its campaign goal.

Let's not forget the students

By THOMAS PATRICK MELADY

As a university president, I sense a serious danger in higher education today. We administrators are failing to measure up to our responsibilities because in our well-meaning but time-consuming efforts to achieve fiscal stability we are losing sight of the human equation in the university experience. We are failing to spend the time to nurture meaningful relationships with students. This strikes at the heart of our responsibilities, and I believe that this problem merits our immediate attention.

People need people. In all the strident rhetoric I read in the newspapers, the educational journals, the prestigious foundation reports, I see very little attention being paid to the primary responsibility of educators - the student. Somehow, amid the balance sheets and the frantic junkets to state capitals and to Washington seeking financial assistance, the student got lost in the shuffle.

As the pressures mount in the coming decade, I believe the real danger to higher education is depersonalization. A serious concern is that presidents and deans will turn themselves into vague shadows on our campuses, into tarnished bureaucrats with no time in their hectic schedules to meet with students. And I am not talking about just "availability" here. I mean we need to make time to develop deep personal friendships that will remain steadfast beyond the four short years of a university education.

Before it is too late, I think, we need to

ask ourselves this question: What is happening to the dream we once cherished about higher education? That we could receive young people at the critical age of young adulthood and play a major role in their maturation, in

developing their cultural and intellectual curiosity, in helping them acquire a healthy sense of values? What happened to our role as counselors, as guides on the path to the good life?

Time. A simple four-letter word. I hear it constantly in the halls and board rooms of academe. Nobody has any time. Our lives accelerate at such a frenetic pace we

have no time even to say hello and goodbye. We rush hither and thither and we don't even know one another. And

when we reach that point, when we finally come face to face with the stranger who is supposed to be our friend, then we no longer can claim to call ourselves a community. When that time comes - and it is almost here - we have lost an integral part of the vision of higher education.

If beg presidents, deans, and faculty members to refuse adamantly to become part of this growing cancer of depersonalization. The students are ready for us. In

this era of compromised values, where we see everywhere the results of the breakdown of traditional structures, where we witness on a grand scale the impact of our highly mechanistic society with its lack of leadership and its sense of fear and alienation, our students are

saying: "We need your guidance, we need you; we need someone who cares."

In spite of the mounting pressures we administrators face, we must recognize once and for all that students are our highest priority. As our time becomes increasingly scarce, we must stop ourselves, stand back to gain some perspective, recognize our shortcomings; and then we must engage ourselves in the herculean effort to wrench more time from our overcrowded schedules, and spend it with our students.

Currently, everyone talks *ad infinitum* about the financial woes and connected problems of declining enrollment and rising costs besetting institutions of higher education. I suggest that one sure-fire way to institutional health is to place more emphasis on the human equation on campus. More specifically, I suggest that administrators must:

Avoid the stagnation of bureaucracy. We must insist that the university administrative structure be personalized.

Teach in the classroom, personifying what the university stands for. I have always taught a course each semester and find it a most rewarding experience.

Shed the image of the distant business executive or the shallow glad-hander and instead become deeply involved in the intellectual and cultural life of the university. A president is neither external nor internal; he is the head of an intellectual community, and he must be close to its members.

Set the tonal quality of interpersonal relationships on campus as part of their

leadership responsibility. I have insisted that the invitations from students to be present at their activities receive a top priority on my calendar.

In summary, we administrators must recognize that while we may balance our budget sheets, while we may attract lucrative grants from Washington, we may at the same time be guilty of cutting the very heart out of the university. Time, we all know, is our most elusive commodity, yet we must accept the challenge to create structures that allow for administrators and faculty members - each in his own style - to spend more time with students. Universities are not factories: students are not employees.

Somehow, in all our frenzied efforts to survive, we began to lose sight of the human dimension in higher education. Now we must work to rediscover that unique dimension.

We need to show our students we care. This is a primary responsibility of university presidents, and we must send forth the message: Our students are our first concern.

Thomas Patrick Melady is president of Sacred Heart University. This article is reprinted by permission of the *New York Times*. Copyright 1980 the *New York Times*.

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