

EDITORIAL

Are refugees a victim of tunnel vision?

Canada has just closed its doors a little tighter. This time on refugees. More quickly now, it turns a cold shoulder to those on its doorstep who earnestly plead for a haven of peace and security. What does this say about us as a people?

We audibly chastise a government for its blunders. We invoke a one-hand applause when it does our biddings. Whatever the case, those "on the hill" are there to represent our views. If we don't like what they do, we can constitutionally "kick'em out". After all, power (theoretically) lies with the people. We all cherish that democratic right.

What does a tighter refugee policy reflect about Canadian sentiment? Are we not afflicted with some tunnel vision when we assess known oppressive countries as "safe"? From our own comfortable and secure "vantage point," can we really fathom the extent of the physical and psychological damage inflicted on those whose only desire is to live as human beings?

The entire world knows that Canada is a great country. If you yourself weren't aware of that, travel abroad some. You and I both want to keep Canada "glorious and free." But, that does not entail heeding Judge Kline's advice by "keeping it white."

For the sojourner, the poor and the oppressed at our "gates," we owe compassion. That is also part of being human. Refugees have been deprived of their humanity by oppressive governments. We deprive ourselves of our humanity if we have no compassion.

That has been the message of Christianity through the ages. Mind you, its track record has not always been good. Nor has its press, if we read the latest scandals from south of the border. However, in terms of the refugee problem, the Canadian churches have shown positive leadership. In the past decade, church agencies have built a strong and reliable information network to eliminate the kind of tunnel vision and self-interest into which we so easily slip. The Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America, established in 1973 and supported by seven major church organizations, has become a respected monitoring body for human rights violations. It has also formed a effective lobbying power (big business is not the only one who know how to "twist arms"), encouraging the government to exercise compassion to those in need.

Now the ball is in your court. Looking out only for "number one: me" is sure to whittle away at our own humanity. We could, on the other hand, become enlightened, involved and strive for a better humanity globally. We could support these agencies, and thereby indicate to the government that Canadians do have compassion. Or, we could sit back, sip our beer and do nothing. That's also sending a message to them.

JOHN VALK,
Campus Ministries

Arts: the first casualty

Apparently James Downey has finally admitted that the library situation is critical. Unless funds are made immediately available, quite a few departments at UNB are going to find themselves without the resource material to support a number of undergraduate and graduate programmes. And, as usual, the Arts Faculty appears to be the first casualty.

To add insult to injury, *The Brunswickan* has recently learned that the bequest left by Sadie Singer (which was used to finance the new extension to Tilley Hall) was originally designated for the Faculty of Arts. Yet despite objections from Professor Peter Kent (History), the money was "re-directed" to the Faculty of Business Administration. According to Dr. Downey, this transferral was in keeping with Ethel Singer's wishes.

The rationale behind this rather slick "re-direction" is a little complicated. It appears that when Ethel Francis Singer graduated from UNB, Business Administration was considered part of the Arts Faculty. Furthermore, James Downey claimed that the extension would alleviate the pressure on office space in Tilley Hall.

But what bothers me is that very few people in the Faculty of Arts were even aware that they had a stake in Sadie Singer's will. In all the press releases issued by UNB's Public Relations Department, it was never once mentioned that the bequest had initially been left to the Faculty of Arts.

Perhaps a little more openness on the part of the Administration wouldn't be amiss?

MARK STEVENS



Mugwump Journal

Another week, another Mugwump, another writer. Ernie, whose job this is, refuses to write more than one column a term. Last week's was his attempt for the term.

Is it just my imagination, or is the traffic worse than usual this year? Where do you all get the money to run a car, anyway? We're supposed to be poor students.

Parking is also a bit tight. Singer Hall knocked off about five spaces while the Head Hall extension has wiped out an entire parking lot. Speaking of that extension, how come when Tilley Hall gets two extra classrooms and a broom closet built on, the thing gets a name while the Head Hall addition gets zip? This calls for a contest. Please submit your ideas for the name of the new addition to: The Bruns, Rm. 35, SUB. The contest closes at midnight, Nov. 5 or when we get three entries, whichever comes first. The winner will get a free subscription to the Bruns for the rest of the school year.

I refuse to write about the miserable, pathetic, scum-sucking excuse for weather this past week, since that's what you would expect in this column. Instead, let's rag on the Administration for awhile. With all the expansion going on around campus, one would think that office space would no longer be a problem. But wait, we are forgetting a fundamental law: Administration expands like a gas to fill available space. Maybe they should keep expanding Head Hall until it reaches Smythe Street.

Did you know that Beaver Foods is out? That's right, no more fries. Instead, we'll be getting Buddy's BBQ with chicken and ribs from now on. Centers are being set up around campus to handle people going through french fries withdrawal.

In the Entertainment section, there is a review of the show last week at the SUB. It sounds like you girls had fun. Does this mean that Playmates are not far behind? Can you imagine the uproar if there were female "erotic dancers" on campus? I believe the appropriate phrase here would be "double standard".

Well, I'm just about wumped out. I wonder who will be doing this next week?