

# EDITORIAL

City council skirts issue



"Whereas 1986 has been declared International Year of Peace by the United Nations; Be it resolved that the City of Fredericton declare itself a nuclear weapons-free zone, forming a link in a chain of peace that seeks to bind all peoples in a common stand against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and in shared concern for life on this planet." That was the resolution as it was proposed to the Fredericton City Council last Monday night. The proposal sounded great but that alone could not persuade the council members to act in a decisive manner on the issue. Over 60 concerned citizens, representing more than fifteen supporting organizations, gathered at the council meeting to no avail.

George Semeluk, a chemistry professor at UNB was the spokesman for the groups who were instrumental in getting the issue on the council agenda. Semeluk introduced the proposal and even during the introduction it was clear that he was faced with closed-minded councillors. From comments I have received from people who were at the meeting it was obvious that the councillors had made up their minds long before the issue was brought to council. I do not think that is entirely fair considering the fact that it took great effort on the part of many groups to raise what they felt is an important issue.

Many councillors contended that the matter should not be dealt with at a municipal level and that it was out of their jurisdiction. That is clearly a weak argument - failure to deal with an issue that concerns citizens of this city is a failure (on the part of councillors) to exercise their power. It must be noted that in spite of their reluctance to deal with the issue a motion was put forward by Councillor Sterling Gosman and seconded by Deputy Mayor Don Kelly. The motion to make Fredericton a nuclear free zone was defeated by 8 to 4. At least the council dealt with the matter.

There are however, certain points that should be raised. A lot of councillors really felt that the issue was out of their hands - that it should be taken up at a national level. One councillor even asserted that she was in support of the proposal and she felt that "the council should make this symbolic gesture."

I hardly think that making Fredericton one of Canada's 139 nuclear free zones is a "symbolic gesture". Grass roots? Ha! You could parallel the whole thing to a lake and a drop of water. The drop of water might seem inconsequential but it isn't. In this case particularly, it is a small step by small step process that should not be crippled or ignored at the municipal level. There are several councillors side stepping the issue. I feel that the councillors seemed to be resigned to the fact that the country is committed to a nuclear-oriented defence policy and that their voice(s) would not be heard. When they were forced to deal with the issue brought up by concerned citizens they dealt with it in a way that was not really dealing with it - that is, they dealt with it negatively. If councillors were convinced that the issue was a symbolic one then what difference would it have made if they would have put forward the motion to make the capital city a nuclear free zone?



## Mugwump

By VALERIE WHITE  
Managing Editor

## Journal

For the first time I am able to write Mugwump Journal in the privacy of my own home. Do you know why I am able to do that? Because I am sick. Very sick. And I don't feel like doing much of anything. Especially sitting here wasting valuable time writing this column when I have three 3000-word essays due within a week. However, I will attempt to scratch down a few lines, if only to serve the purpose of filling this space.

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Speaking of being sick, I really hate to disgust everybody so early on a Friday morning, but a friend of mine from Bridges House told me something very interesting the other day. He mentioned the fact that his house janitor charges extra for cleaning up after socials when he is forced to clean up the remains from someone who has overindulged on alcohol. Ten dollars each time, to be exact. That's sort of a 'sick' way to do business, but I couldn't agree with the janitor more. Only if I were in his position, I might even refuse to clean up messes like that. After all, when students reach university age, and are supposedly responsible enough to live away from home, they should also be responsible enough not to drink to the point where they can't hold it down any longer. I'm not picking specifically on you guys from Bridges House, because I've seen it happen everywhere - house parties, bars, etc. I'm not condemning drinking, but just keep in mind to stop (that time usually comes somewhere between the point when you start to talk funny and when you start dancing on the tables).

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Kim Norris, SUB Director, has informed me of some sad but true events that have been occurring in the SUB. Have you ever noticed the pictures and prints hanging in various rooms of the SUB? Well if you haven't before, you certainly won't now because people are actually stealing them off the walls. There was once a large, attractive painting of a surfer in room 26, but no more. I can't imagine how someone ever got that thing out of there because it was huge. Nevertheless, they did. So now, Kim Norris is running around trying to gather up the remaining pictures so he can have them reframed and bolted to the walls. And that's what you get for trying to make the SUB look better. Sad, sad, sad.

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As I have said before, I am pleased to see the progress being made on Singer Hall. However, I have a slight problem with the fence which surrounds the construction site. I was proceeding to class on that miserable, rainy, Monday morning and I took my usual route down the sidewalk beside Tilley Hall only to discover myself soon trapped in a plywood jungle. I thought for sure there would be an opening through the fence, but there was no such thing. So I was forced to head back in the opposite direction and circle up and around, walking through the library parking lot (where I might add I was almost run down by an impatient librarian). I know, I'm a whiner, but it's getting too cold to have to take the long way around.

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I'm beginning to feel worse so I'm not going to write much more. I will remind those of you that are interested to show up for the entertainment and sports elections which we had better have today. Let's get this over with.

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Before I pass out I would like to say Hello to my friends up at St. Thomas. Hi Jill! Hi Becky. Tune in next week when I break all the rules of journalism and use this ENTIRE column for my personal use! What the heck, it's the Christmas issue and I can't afford to send cards.