

EDITORIAL

Ombudsman



After ten years of lobbying, it looks as though the students of UNB are finally going to be given a student Ombudsman. Last Friday's Board of Governors meeting saw the passing of a motion for the installation of a part-time Ombudsman. Funding for the new position will probably come from both the Administration and the students, however discussion of specifics is still up in the air. The new position will likely not be filled until this year's summer session which is the beginning of the University's financial year.

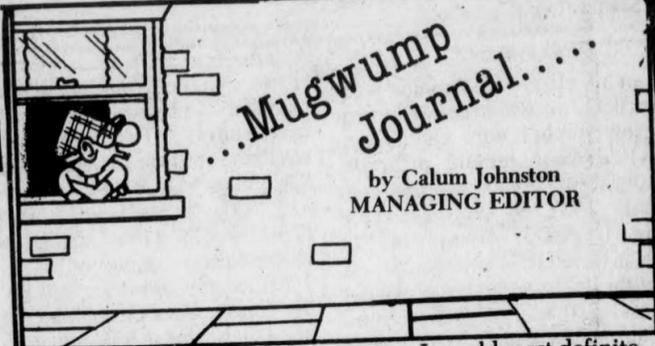
This is a major achievement for the students. It is interesting to note that, according to a student representative on the Board of Governors, University Administrators did not see the need for an Ombudsman, but because the students had fought so consistently for the position, they based their decision on this ongoing persistence.

What we must remember is that this is an experiment. A part-time Ombudsman will only be available certain hours during the week. Presumably, a faculty member will be hired. It is illogical to assume that any outside interest could afford the part-time hours. It is imperative that the Ombudsman, regardless of the hours of operation, fulfill certain responsibilities. In a report on the "ideal" Ombudsman submitted to Senate three years ago, the Ombudsman's role is defined:

The Ombudsman's primary role is to assist all students to resolve problems that arrive with respect to the application of the academic and other regulations of the University or with respect to the decisions of University authorities.

In order for this "experiment" to succeed, students must use the resources of the Ombudsman to resolve any sort of problem whether it be sexual harassment, dispute over a grade, personality conflicts with an instructor - anything where a mediator is required. Ultimately, this experiment will either make or break itself. If the Ombudsman chosen lacks the proper qualities or if the students and Administration do not support this effort, then it will fail. Ideally, we will end up with a system so integral that it will build on itself.

Students at UNB have a history of ambivalence. Issues of crucial importance have often been neglected due to "apathy". However, on occasion we have rallied together to support issues of our student leaders and we have succeeded. Make sure that this is one issue which we don't neglect. Students before you fought long and hard for a student mediator. Obviously (finally, surprisingly) it worked.



Before wumping on to other mugs, I would most definitely like to thank Mike MacKinnon for all the work and assistance he has given to both Hutch and me and the Bruns in general. Everyone has benefited from his experience in layout and other technical aspects of the paper, and I can easily say that we wouldn't have been able to publish the last two issues without his and Timothy Lethbridges help. Thank you both.

Also, to our new editors, Kaye MacPhee and Brenda Paul, respectively entertainment and news editors, we think they deserve a large thank you for taking over the positions on a days notice and doing an excellent job. (to Brenda and Kaye, hey, we'll buy you a beer sometime, okay?)

SPECIAL NOTICE TO ALL CLUBS!

According to the Student Unions financial guide, "No event shall be funded (by the SU) if notice of same is not published in the BRUNSWICKAN'S "Upcoming" column or a letter from the editor-in-chief accepting the blame for not publishing it is received by the VP Finance." The "Upcoming" column is usually on the classifieds page, and ads in it are free of charge to your student groups. The deadline for publication is TUESDAY, 5PM. It is the responsibility of your group to place these ads. There is a basket by the Bruns' office door marked "Upcoming" or you can send them to the Brunswickan's Upcoming, via campus mail.

A note before continuing. Some people have asked me about the infamous Student Union Info Page. What it is is this: the SU is our publisher, they own us and felt that they should have their own page to tell you about all the wonderful things they have planned for you. It is essentially a free advertisement. We have no editorial control over it, we just typeset it and lay it out (done this week by our sports editor mild-mannered Kent Quigley). Okay? If there's a test, will you pass? I won't. Well, onward to more pressing and more important things.

On Tuesday, September 6, 1977, a man named Bantu Stephen Biko was taken by South African political police to Room 619 of the Sanlam Building in Strand Street, Port Elizabeth, where he was handcuffed, put into leg irons, chained to a grille and subjected to twenty two hours of interrogation in the course of which he was tortured and beaten, sustaining several blows to the head which damaged his brain fatally, causing him to lapse into a coma and die six days later.

Steven Biko's death echoed around the world. He was only thirty years old when he died, and had lived in obscurity, silenced from public utterance by banning orders and restricted to a small town remote from the metropolitan areas. He was forbidden to make speeches; forbidden to be quoted; forbidden to function fully as a political personality. Yet in his short lifetime he influenced the lives and ideals of millions of his countrymen, and his death convulsed South Africa and reverberated far beyond its boundaries.

Until the apartheid in South Africa is rescinded and its government open itself to all citizens of South Africa, more people like Steven Biko will die, more people who write, talk, or attempt to influence a change will be "detained" and, most likely, die in detention due to "suicide" or "killed while attempting to escape".

September, '77
Port Elizabeth, weather fine,
It was business as usual
In Police Room 619...
When I try to sleep at night
I can only dream in red
The outside world is black and white
With only one colour dead...
You can blow out a candle
But you can't blow out a fire
Once the flame begins to catch
The wind will blow it higher...

And the eyes of the world
Are watching now...
Watching now.....

-Peter Gabriel