



the BRUNSWICKAN

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CASA members demand answers

GORDON LOANE

THE BRUNSWICKAN

Editor's Note: Pat FitzPatrick is a staff photographer for The Brunswickan.

Eleven members of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, representing over 150,000 university students across the country, have issued a joint news release demanding to know why charges have not been laid by Fredericton's Crown Prosecutor in the Pat FitzPatrick case.

FitzPatrick was both Interim National Director of CASA and chief organizer of a Fredericton conference on Post Secondary Education until January of this year.

CASA officials said FitzPatrick was asked to leave his post after allegations surfaced that \$10,325 was unaccounted for.

Approximately \$8,100 of that was said to be associated with efforts to organise the Fredericton conference.

Fredericton City Police have been investigating conference spending for several months and have since turned over their file to the Crown Prosecutor's office.

Matt Hough, National Director of CASA, said he spoke with Crown Prosecutor Kevin Connell earlier this week.

The file has been under review since July 29, but no decision has been made yet on whether charges will be laid.

Meanwhile, new allegations about FitzPatrick surfaced this week from CASA members who were in town for a conference.

In a news release, the CASA-affiliated Saint Thomas Student Union alleges that \$1,116 paid to FitzPatrick for the CASA National Conference remains unaccounted for.

A further \$2,000 loaned by the STU Student Union to the National Conference through FitzPatrick has since been repaid this summer, according to Hough and STU SU President Carrie Ricker. The money was received from CASA's Ottawa office.

Asked about the \$1,116 cheque earlier this week, FitzPatrick remembers getting two cheques from the STU SU for the conference.

"I will have to pass on this one for now," he said. "I have got basically a dollar-by-dollar breakdown of items but I will have to go over it at home before I can give a clear answer."

CASA members also allege this week that FitzPatrick withdrew \$725 from the national conference account for unspecified purposes.

Questions were also raised by The Brunswickan this week about \$2,000 in petty cash FitzPatrick received to take care of hotel, meals, conference room rentals and other miscellaneous expenses at a CASA Board of Directors meeting in Ottawa last December.

FitzPatrick said he received the

\$2,000 in petty cash, and that the bill at the Travel Lodge Hotel in Ottawa was covered out of the advance, as were the food and miscellaneous expenses throughout the week.

As to the allegations by CASA officials that no receipts for the \$2,000 in petty cash have ever been turned over by FitzPatrick, he said, "that may well be true."

"I know there were receipts issued for meals at restaurants and I signed off agreeing to pay the charges at the Travel Lodge when they presented me with the bill," he said.

Hough confirms that FitzPatrick was given \$2,000 in petty cash to take care of expenses that week and said CASA has not received an accounting of expenses to date.

Hough said FitzPatrick gave a cheque to Travel Lodge Hotel Ottawa for \$1,427.69, written on CASA's Ottawa bank account. FitzPatrick also said last week that he paid the hotel bill on December 24, 1995. In fact, The Brunswickan has obtained a copy of the cheque in question. However, the connection between the \$2,000 in petty cash and the cheque remains unclear.

Then there is the story of a \$225 cheque that FitzPatrick made out to himself on October 5, 1995.

CASA officials confirm that the cheque was signed by FitzPatrick, who was not a signing officer for the CASA bank account.

FitzPatrick does not dispute this and said CASA as an organization knew about this problem in late October or early November.

"It was at that time that we found out from the bank that I was not a signing officer," FitzPatrick said.

"Only Alex Usher [National Director] and later Irving Gold [Research Officer] were signing officers," he said.

FitzPatrick maintains that members of the CASA board of Directors were told they were signing officers for the corporation.

"In actual fact the only signing officer the bank had on record was Alex Usher," said FitzPatrick.

"It is written in the constitution that we were signing officers and could authorize expenses, sign cheques and authorize payment."

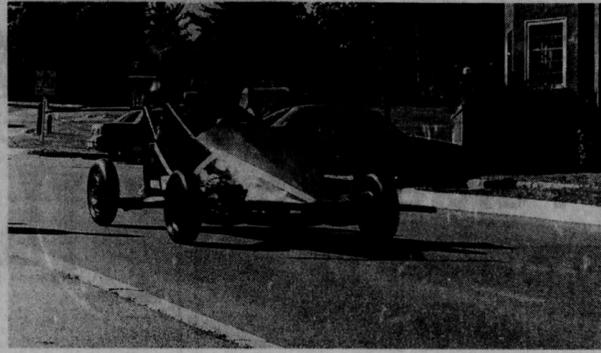
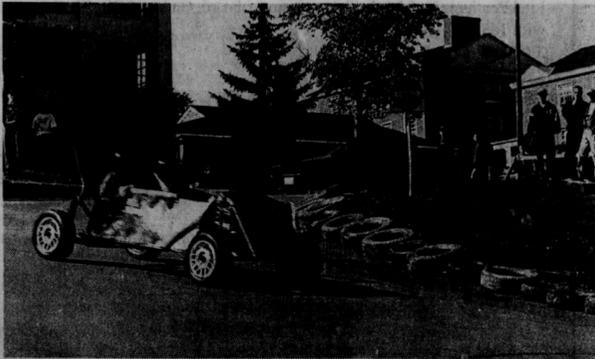
Article 11.3(c) of CASA's constitution does allow the Board of Directors to "approve all expedient extra-budgetary appropriations and expenditures made in connection with the operation of CASA's national office." It goes on to say that the extraordinary expenditures cannot exceed \$5,000 in any fiscal year or \$1,000 for any one item.

Based on the materials provided to The Brunswickan by CASA, no further mention is made of signing officers in the by-laws.

FitzPatrick said the \$225 was reimbursement for gas expenses incurred in travelling between Ottawa and Fredericton last October.

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Mechanical Engineers: roller derby goes downhill



An annual event of thrills and spills, high speed chases, but no Roscoe P. Coltrane. The Student Society for Mechanical Engineers runs the Coaster Derby where teams of students design and build a gravity-driven vehicle to plummet to their certain demise at the bottom of the perilous College Hill. No casualties (were reported) and fun was had by most of the people who survived the SSME BBQ.

CHRIS DUNNETT PHOTOS

CASA holds policy conference

GORDON LOANE

THE BRUNSWICKAN

Delegates to a policy conference of the Canadian Alliance of Students Associations (CASA) fear cuts in government funding and resulting tuition hikes are beginning to take their toll on universal access to post-secondary education.

The delegates, representing eleven student associations at various universities across Canada, passed a resolution calling on both the federal and provincial government to undertake a comprehensive and credible study on the effects of tuition fees upon accessibility.

Until the study is done students want tuition fee increases each year to be held to the rate of inflation.

"Because of inadequate funding universities have been put in the position of raising tuition fees just to maintain some degree of quality," said Kelly Lamrock of the New Brunswick Student Alliance.

"The result has been both a negative effect on student debt loads and access to post-secondary education," he said.

Students also want a more comprehensive work study program to be introduced by both levels of government.

"Work study programs allow students to work for their assistance," said a resolution adopted at the conference.

"We are not asking for a free ride," the students maintained.

"Giving students the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge to practical work is a benefit to all involved."

The students emphasized that work study programs should not be seen by government as an opportunity to cut back other forms of assistance like summer work projects or student loans.

Students further asked the national association (CASA) to lobby the federal government to introduce a

Graduation Incentive Rebate.

"The federal government should commit to a one-time tax credit to a person upon graduation," said a third resolution adopted at the conference.

Student leaders were also concerned about the interest rates commercial banks are charging when student loans are consolidated upon graduation.

The delegates felt student loan interest rates should not exceed those that otherwise would be required for a personal loan.

Students expressed concern about the level of government taxation and emphasized their irritation.

"New taxes related to education are unacceptable," the delegates maintained.

"Education must be supported through taxation not the other way around," they said.

The subject of new taxes under a harmonized sales tax is a particularly touchy subject in three of the four

Atlantic provinces.

Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland are set to adopt the (HST) next April 1st.

Chief among student concerns is a possible eight percent tax increase on books, photocopies of educational material and library books and journals.

"The new tax will greatly affect the library acquisition budget," according to Chris Lydon, Vice-President Academic/External of the Dalhousie Student Union.

"Dal has the highest level of library and journal acquisitions in the country and we are kind of proud of that."

"But if we are going to keep that up it will likely affect our tuition I would think," Lydon continued.

"Besides if Dal wants to keep its number one spot in the MacLean's survey, I would think they will have to find a few extra bucks," he said.

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