

African student speaks out

Dear Editor:

After reading the article, "White Students Society — a bunch of bigots?" in the last issue of the Brunswickan, March 24, I was shocked with the amount of misleading information, hatred implication and lack of accuracy displayed by the writer. Firstly, the writer of the article defensively jumped to this conclusion, "A lot of people obviously think that the bigots of the campus are banding together to rid UNB of the minorities." I have talked to a number of people since I read the article and they do not seem to share that conclusive opinion at all. Most people's reaction was based more on the choice of the adjective "white" than on the objectives of the association.

Let us face it, here at UNB, people of the white race are of many nationalities: Canadian, Americans, Europeans and Africans. (There are white Africans). Therefore forming a society called White Students Association has no connotation less of racial parading. It is not surprising a lot of people were perplexed. There would have been a more positive reaction if the new society was called something like CANADIAN STUDENTS' SOCIETY (UNB), because such a name is nationalistic and inclusive. Otherwise the White Students Society has intrinsic segregative intentions that are hard to deny.

The writer mentioned that on campus we have such societies like the Black Students Association and the African Students Association. The existence of such associations on campus is imaginative. I know there is the African Students Union (A.S.U.) but not A.S.A. The A.S.U. is not a racial society at all. Our constitution states that any student registered

at UNB can elect to be a member of the A.S.U. Our membership is 130 strong and six of these are white Canadian students. You can verify this fact from our records.

Making assumptions and unfounded allegations to the press is not a sign of civilization at a Canadian institution of high learning like UNB. I am referring to this sentence: "There are presently on campus seven groups which fall into the same category as the White Students Society." That statement is very unfortunate. In my capacity as member of A.S.U., I would like to state categorically that our society does not fall in the same category as the White Students Society. Our society is completely non-racial. Take other associations on campus and examine them critically. You will come out with the same answer — the objectives or even the names of these societies are non-racial. Do not overlook this point because it is the major difference between the societies on campus and the newly formed White Students Society. In my opinion the writer quoted the fictitious Black Students Society for nothing but to justify his/her use of "white".

According to the opinion of the writer, his/her conclusive idea that the existence of the societies on campus is for isolative reasons is erroneous. May I correct that mentality by outlining the objectives behind the formation of A.S.U. were and still are educational, orientational and cultural. We have people of all colors you can think of in Africa, but we never identified our society by color. We identified it by the geographic name of the continent. There are 48 independent countries in Africa.

Africa is not as homogeneous as the U.S. when we come here at

UNB, we are as strange to each other as we are to the North Americans. A.S.U. serves the purpose of getting the African students from about eleven countries represented on this campus, to know more about each other. A.S.U. also is responsible for getting the fresh students from Africa climatized to the Canadian environment. Most important of all, A.S.U. strives to create harmony and understanding between us African students and the rest of the students at UNB. During the Africa Night we try to express the similarities among the African peoples so that the Canadian people among whom we are living now can understand us. In so doing we also come in closer touch to exchange ideas and appreciate the cultural differences of each other.

A.S.U. serves as an ideal forum for the different African students to know more about each other. Africa was fragmented by colonialists who divided the continent to rule. The majority of the African countries are independent now and it is interesting to know what goes on in each country.

KENYAN EXAMPLE

I am an African, native of a former British colony called Kenya. Kenya has 42 tribal groupings and other racial groups who originally came from Britain, India and Arabia. We in Kenya never categorize people by color. We identify people by their original nationality and their present nationality; for example, An Indian-Kenyan, British-Kenyan, etc. Where a Briton could be confused with a North American, or German, we refer to such a person as a "mzungu" a Swahili word which simply means non-Indian or non-Arab.

Africans are of a variety of color shades; chocolate, brown and light brown. Black is not a human color in Kenya. In fact such adjectives as black or white in reference to people is abhorred because of the segregative motives behind their use. We never segregate the minority groups in Kenya — and the minority groups are the so called whites and the people of Indian origin.

PREJUDISM AT UNB

Albeit some Canadian students at UNB are very enlightened and great foreign students with respect, others are very prejudiced. A case in point exists in the MacConnell Hall. Initially we tried to sit anywhere at the dining tables during meals. We found that we were not welcome. Students other than foreign students avoided sitting with the Africans. On two occasions I remember students transferring to other tables because the African students had joined them to share that table. If you have not been discriminated against you may not know how humiliating and how much it hurts to be rejected on the basis of the color of your skin. It is a terrible experience, especially as we are here for no other reasons but to get the education from UNB and go back. There is no African student who has the intention of staying here forever. Anyway, the African students ended up sitting at segregated tables feeling unwelcome. We could as well have gone to study in South Africa. The attitude of students at UNB seem to be unique however. The situation at St. Thomas University is terrific. The students in this institution are more enlightened and exceedingly humanistic towards foreign students who stay there.

SRC AND THE SOCIETY BUDGETS

The writer said something to the effect that SRC favors societies and it dishes funds to these societies without need for such tokens. There are no differential tokens which SRC dishes to societies. SRC is, or tries to be impartial as much as possible. As a matter of fact students in general use more of SRC's pooled funds than any one single association on campus. There are such activities like the Winter Carnival which SRC finances. Students from tropical lands do not take part in such activities for obvious reasons. Such students have not come out to complain about this kind of expenditure.

Before one questions the SRC write of society budgets, one should be realistic and go to find out what really happens at the SRC budget meetings. Representatives of various associations and societies go to defend their estimates at the budget meeting. During these meetings, everyone is free to ask questions. I have never seen any sign of intimidation in such meetings.

All of us students pay for what we get; in 99.9 percent cases we get less. SRC does not give out funds to societies because of their color. What we all pay to the SRC is allocated as fairly as possible to make it possible for every student on campus to enjoy the benefits of having paid \$45 a year.

No Sir/Madam, I cannot admit that the article contained anything that had any speck of logic. I am not opposed to the formation of the White Students Society, but I am sceptical about the purpose it will serve besides alienation and segregation.
Tony Nasirembe
Former President
African Students' Union

Ackerman doesn't want it

Dear Sir:

Recently in your newspaper one of your writers, with courtesy and goodwill, nominated me for an honorary doctorate in sociology, suggesting that this might contribute to "the betterment" of that department. I am deeply sensible of both the honour implied and our mutual hope that somehow "sociology" in this university might be improved.

As your writer pointed out, the university has solicited from us nominations of persons who, we feel, deserve honorary doctorates. He should note that another kind of nomination is now also being solicited. The Board of Governors has struck a committee to appoint a committee to suggest a replacement of John Anderson as President of the University of New Brunswick. Yes, they "struck a committee to suggest" — in such a matter circumspection, i.e., darting glances all around, is politically important and we go forward (if at all) like crabs, scurrying sidewise.

One of my political advisors has told me to treat serious matters comically and only comic matters seriously. I shall, therefore, treat seriously the cases of "sociology" and John Anderson's presidency, and suggest to the community a prayer. Attributed to Reinhold Neibuhr, it goes (my paraphrasing from the original German): "Lord, grant me courage to endure the evil I cannot change, strength to combat the evil I might change — and the wits to know the difference."

What I cannot change is "sociology" in this university. Sociology is a study of (principally) complex urban industrial society — only one of the more than 500 modes of social adaptation studied by anthropologists. Within their limited range "sociologists" are (occasionally) sophisticated aboriginal informants to be interviewed and observed (here, albeit, with somewhat averted eyes) by anthropologists. Until "sociology" in the University of New Brunswick is given its proper

place as a minor field within anthropology, its condition is something not even I can change. I have the "wits to know" this and decline your writer's kind nomination. In any case, I already have an earned doctorate in sociology (Harvard University, 1965). I suggest we can only pray — faculty and students alike — the Lord grant us "courage to endure" the Department of Sociology.

What about Governors and their search for a new president? It occurs to me that John Anderson may want to get (not to say "earn") his salary for many more years; and he may intend his own reappointment. For what should we pray? We have already — Governors, students, and faculty — demonstrated our "courage to endure" the Anderson presidency. Let us now pray the Lord grant us "strength to combat" a continuation of it. Or have we lost our wits?

Charles Ackerman
Professor of Anthropology

FOR SALE: Hand-made soderman guitar. Presently strong left-handed but can be re-strung and right-handed may need some work \$175.00 call Marc at 454-4657.

MUST SELL: Kenwood receiver (KR 2300) PE turntable, Goodman speakers, Koss headphones, and 30 albums. Reasonable price. Phone 455-2824. Ask for Wayne.

ATTENTION: Long-lost and ailing comrades!! The Spy Club is now in the HUB — as opposed to the SUB. Beware — it's a long summer. Be prepared . . . be paranoid . . . signed . . . J. Raunch (perhaps).

Another response

Dear Editor:

Of late, most of us readers have learn with a lot of interest the birth of yet another organization on campus, "the White Students Society". The spokesman (or is it spokesperson) for the society started it off as a joke but when you brought it in your editorial I thought I should also contribute to the whole idea.

Every society has its own culture. Wherever we come from and whatever our colour is, we have our own society norms. In some uncivilized societies some cultures have suffered a lot in that they now have no culture of their own. Hence some of the famous cultures have come down in history so much polluted that one wonders whether some communities we see around us actually have their roots.

The week your paper published the news of the birth of White Student Society, the "Times" published a rather related article "Reliving the Iron Age in Britain". Both articles fascinate me because they both suggest the need of

reviving one's culture. The need of making sure that our future generations will know what our society valued for what reasons.

While it is a general feeling that it has taken a lot of time to realize the need of such an important society in a campus of our size I feel congratulations should go to the gentlemen working for the society. We actually look forward to seeing the first "White Night" (or is it "Stone Age Night!"). I really long for those hot dogs and hamburgers not talking about ice cream as cultural foods. Also all us are looking forward to attending your Discos (if the keeper of faith accepts anyway).

The only problem I do figure you might encounter is purifying North America, with all these races swarming all over the place. You might have to close all international airports in North America. However the indigenous Americans might suggest that those who want to work for them should

remain, after all, the pure Americans are too few, they might need some help in their industries and government. Anyway keep it up! I can see success at the horizon. In fact most white students do not belong to any of these so called cultural societies. It is just the right time for the White Student Society.

Yours in support
Gichia, Ed.

Dear Editor:

Last week (Steeves) com word 'shit' in buffoon is ob times. Anyone this word mu capacity of pe 1978, where h atrocious pers type that wou seeing Satur Ritchie York, a rock contribut quite frequent articles. So her you: F---you!!

Dear Editor:

I am writing in wasn't on the CHVW "Game seems that I was "townee" from for ply by play t game at the between Freder Wings and Cape The ratings for way down. In tel tions with sev residences dur weeks, it was percent fewer vi the game. The

Dear Editor:

I would like to advice to a stude be having proper face of challenge Student, don't classmates who d in class. We are al as much as you score as high as t with your grade

Dear Sir:

I would like to ta the unfortunate lea the March 24th Brunswickan. The "Counselling Ser while the article v reported on the fail Contraceptive Gro the response they students.

The Counselling University was not