

EDITORIAL

"A change is gonna come"

Kwame Dawes

The March Break will be a welcome respite from the monotony of campus life for many of us. Hopefully, it will be a time for reflection and preparation for the final haul of the year. The reflection should include thoughts about the leadership of students for the coming year. When we return from the break we will not only be encountering the usual academic challenge of exams, but we will be faced with the prospect of electing new officers for the Student Union and all the other clubs and societies that are led by students. One hopes that this year's Student Union elections will boast a long list of hopeful leaders giving us a fair choice as to who will lead us for the coming year. Naturally, many students will seek to avoid running for posts with the typical excuse that they don't have the time to do the task. Such assertions must not be dismissed entirely for many students at this university do have responsibilities that demand a great deal of their time. With the ever-increasing number of mature students (over-twenty-six) at the university, it should be clear that the demands on the time of the average student have increased significantly.

Nevertheless, the Student Union must be led by willing and able students who will make the necessary sacrifice to gain experience in administration and leadership. If we were to take the high level of absenteeism in the current council as indication of the willingness of students to commit time and energy into the running of the Student Union, we would have cause to worry about the future of student government at UNB. It is encouraging to see that the executive has felt it necessary to address this issue at the council meetings, but one hopes that they don't hesitate to take appropriate action where it is necessary. Councillors who fail to attend council meetings should seriously reconsider their position with regard the council. One truly hopes that these will not be the same people running for office this year.

The Brunswickan will be going through its annual changing of the guard this Spring as well and we expect to see a staff that includes new faces. Hopefully, the change of leadership will inject a fresh spark into the paper and will introduce students to far more interesting issues that we have seen over the past year. One expects that the march of time will bring with it positive changes that will build on the good things of the past. It is important, though, that during this March Break, students seriously consider whether they would be interested in being involved with the campus paper. This is the time to make one's presence felt for it is now that the process of direction-setting and tone-setting begins to take place. Many of those who responded to the questionnaire expressed a reluctance to work at the paper because of an assumed ideological direction that the paper seemed to have. They may have been correct, but the only way to alter this is to enter the fray and seek to redress some of the questionable things. There is no better time to make that move than during the last term of the year. Come in and assert your views and opinions. It is likely that while there may be resistance, there will be useful and healthy discussions as well.

St. Thomas Student Union flexes muscles

The St Thomas Student Union is flexing its muscles with some energy these days. As you would have read in the news section of this issue the leadership of the Union has effectively orchestrated the removal of the Director of Student Affairs, Jane Buckley. Buckley has expressed significant dissatisfaction with the manner in which this issue was dealt with and one can understand her dismay in light of the fact that she has held this post for the past ten years. It would seem that the Student Union acted out of a conviction that the post held by Ms. Buckley wielded too much power in student affairs. They have proposed a revamping of the position to one that is noticeably free of any political or administrative clout. One can't help noting that this issue has also been characterized by a clash of personalities in the political arena power such that the current president of the SU, Kelly Lamrock, regards the recent development as a victory. He certainly has more power now than he did a few weeks ago. There is much talk about legal action and the like and one is left wondering whether this is in fact more than a case of students trying to assert their right to self-determination in the university setting. In the next few weeks we will learn whether proper protocol was followed in the execution of this deed.

Thank you

I want to express gratitude to all those who wrote responses to the questionnaire. Some of the responses were brutally frank and quite painful, but they were important and thus treated with full consideration. Many of them were positive and those encouraged us. We are aware that the questionnaire does not epitomise the ideal of sociological research methods, but it seems to be doing the job adequately. For those of you who have not responded please do so in this issue. In the issue that comes out after the March Break we will have a story that reviews the responses. We would like to encourage the non-student readers to feel free to respond to the questionnaire (omitting the answers that are not relevant to you) for we are fully aware that while our primary target is the student population, we do service the entire Fredericton community as well.

Enjoy the March Break! The brevity of this editorial must be seen as a gift to those readers who have termed my editorials "long-winded." Sadly, I cannot promise that I will be able to sustain this type of terseness in the future, so enjoy it while you can.

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