

# President Anderson speaks on University problems

By GLEN ARGAN

University president John Anderson recently discussed which way this institution was heading as an educational institution with The Brunswickan.

Anderson seemed quite anxious to discuss the future of the St. John campus of UNB, although he prefaced his remarks by saying that this whole matter is under investigation by a committee headed by John Deutsch. Thus his remarks couldn't be regarded as official university policy.

The problems with the S.J. campus are monumental. Although a new Athletic Centre will be officially opened on October 14, the campus faces a serious under-utilization of its present facilities. Future development is aggravated by the fact that most university students from Saint John choose to expand their horizons elsewhere in the Maritime provinces while many others who could be in that enviable (?) position terminate their education with secondary school. Of all major Canadian cities, Saint John has the lowest percentage of its young people in the corresponding age bracket attending university. Perhaps more would do so if the UNBSJ campus were better tailored to suiting their needs.

Nevertheless, Anderson reaffirmed faith in the one-university, two-campus structure. He contends that this notion has both academic and economic merit in that the two campuses will complement each other in terms of facilities and endemic attitudes.

In terms of facilities the campuses share a research vessel in the St. John harbour and a computer. Our president has the feeling that cooperation on the use of these facilities would be more difficult to organize if Fredericton and St. John were separate institutions.

The attitude at a new institution such as UNBSJ should be adventurous and innovative compared with an almost necessarily more traditional and cautious approach which an old school such as UNBF may exhibit. "The public thinks that we're not tuned into the real world and we're always hatching-up hairbrained schemes. Well this is not true of the university: professionals here are very conservative, very reactionary, perhaps as a consequence of being scholarly where you must be very careful when you make a statement. You can't go out on a limb because you can be chopped off by people who know what you're talking about."

When suggested that perhaps the interests of the older campus in this city often took precedence over the growth interests of UNBSJ, Anderson admitted that this was an often expressed view, while at the same time stating his unequivocal opposition to it. "I don't look at the campus at St. John as having been 'done in' by this campus. But it's a matter of record that there is some basis for concern, or scepticism or suspicion... on the part of people from St. John because some of the faculty here on this campus are on record as being very opposed to the establishment of UNBSJ in the first place, saying that it is going to detract and take away... But those voices now are very weak and faint."

The Integrated University Com-

plex or Science Centre which is going up behind the Old Arts Building will bring all the sciences together into one unit where there will be easier flowing back and forth between departments.

The Science Library will feature a roof which is grassed and landscaped so that students will be able to walk over top of it from the Geology and Old Arts Buildings up to the Chemistry Building. Although the Library may be lacking somewhat in furniture at the time, both it and the adjacent Physics-Administration Building should be ready to open by next fall. Unfortunately, the Forestry Building will have to wait a little longer before it is finally finished.

Reaching for another cigarette, Anderson proceeded to describe new problems which are facing the already beleaguered Aitken University Centre. It is well behind schedule at this point because the builders were unable to get it closed up before freeze-up last fall and in order to avoid a similar sort of problem with the roof this year some alterations will have to be made.

A Hamilton plant was supposed to perforate the steel for the roof which was to be part of the acoustic treatment. However, they are suffering as the result of a strike. Nevertheless, the steel will go up unperforated but an alternative form of acoustic treatment "which seems to work pretty well" will be employed.

The University is well over the budget for this building and although the situation has been somewhat ameliorated by an alumni fund-raising campaign, the administration is still seeking ways of cutting costs. One possibility that is being toyed with is employing students to install the seating which would save paying the transportation, accommodation and high salaries of bringing a crew in from Ontario.

On the question of student aid, Anderson expressed sympathy for some of the constructive suggestions put forward by Warren McKenzie for "improving the system". Also he offered some suggestions of his own, but paused long enough to say that he thought that the call for a weekly student living allowance was "unrealistic".

Although he was able to casually disregard that proposal, he believes that the student loan and bursary system aided only middle-class students and did nothing towards bringing those from a poverty environment into the university. Yet he had no suggestions of his own as to how that barrier might be at least partially overcome.

One of his own worries was that the government might look upon student financing and university financing as all part of one lump with the consequence that if student aid were increased, the government would be prone to cutting back the university's operating budget. "Robbing Peter to pay Paul" was the way our University President put it.

"Universities in Canada generally, are about as low on the totem pole of priorities as you can get... We have the situation in Ontario where Mister Davis has certainly been very hard on the universities there to the point where it's incredible that they can survive without incurring an enormous deficit. Mister Nixon, the Liberal

Opposition Leader, has decided that one of his platforms is not to say what a terrible thing has happened to the universities: he's saying, in effect, that I'll go the Conservative government one better—you haven't seen anything in terms of cutting back on



President John Anderson

budgets... He's saying this, because this is what the public of Ontario feel: that universities have had their day and are ripping the public off. But we're not! I don't think that we've ever served the country better than we are now."

The university serves society directly through various sorts of research projects and indirectly through the graduates it turns out, Anderson said.

Many of these research projects aim at helping the provincial and federal governments and one of the one described was that of a fish farm connected with the Point Lepreau power project. If nuclear power should go through, the power plant would throw off excess heat energy which would be equivalent to five times the output of the Mactaquac dam.

The problem was posed: What can we do with this non-radioactive excess energy which might be useful? So, the university went ahead and performed a feasibility study on using some of this excess hot water to maintain an aqua-culture for fishes, animals and plants. Such a project would increase the growth of the wildlife three to five times in the winter months.

According to Anderson, the university is the only institution uniquely fitted to providing the varying sorts of expertise needed in the building of such an industry.

However, "There's no way the university's going to run a fish farm. That's for industry to do. But what we're going to be able to do is hold onto the package and say

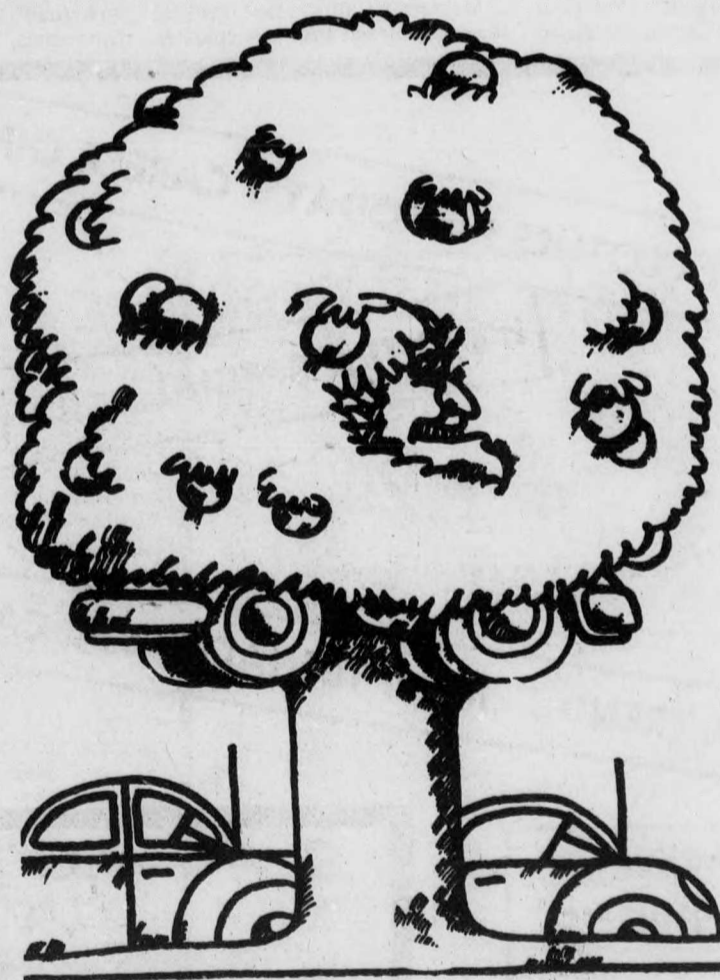
'Look! It's going to work!' And we hope that people are going to stand in line wanting to invest, in the normal way, entrepreneurial dollars into the industry."

But while "we do do applied research, it is an orphan in the bonafide research activities of a university... I think there's room for some research with practical application to become part and parcel of a university's activities." And when Cyril Belshaw, an educational philosopher, was quoted as saying "universities do not exist in order to serve society in particular ways", Anderson expressed his strong disagreement with that approach.

But he did say that "The most important contribution of the university to society... just has to be our graduates. But in the process of teaching students how to cope with the real world outside, we can combine theory with application."

Later he added that universities could never be satisfied with mere rote learning and that students would have to learn how to make judgments on the facts that they learned. "There has to be an inculcation of teaching people how to think for themselves and how to be independent and resourceful and imaginative that makes a difference between a good product and a bad product."

And, down in the Old Arts Building, that is the type of university which John Anderson is struggling to create.



Remember to call Dad to assure him you really can find a place to park on campus.

Tell him not to worry about the fenders. He'll be glad you called. You will be too.



WOMENS YEAR