

New  Nouveau
Brunswick

Most government offices will be

- Closed -

the week between
Christmas and New Year's

Provincial government offices will be closed Dec. 26 and Dec. 27, 1994, and Jan. 2, 1995, for Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year's holidays.

As part of the government's ongoing efforts to save taxpayers' money, most offices will also be closed Dec. 28, 29 and 30, 1994. Vital services will be maintained.

Offices will reopen Jan. 3, 1995.

For information on specific closures, please call New Brunswick Inquiries toll-free at 1-800-442-4400 (453-2525 in Fredericton) until Dec. 23, 1994, or on Dec. 28, 29 and 30, 1994.



An IN-Depth View From the Cheap Seats:

Commentary: Harassment Guidelines, an Affront to Academic Freedom
By Mark Savoie

A prominent topic for debate at this university as of late is the issue of academic freedom and its

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corollary, freedom of speech. The highly entertaining and moderately successful *When Rights Collide* conference provided a forum for a discussion which really got under way when Mathematics professor Matin Yaqzan wrote his infamous date rape opinion piece in this newspaper. During this conference Alan Borovoy, General Council for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, came out soundly on the side of academic freedom and freedom of speech. His only important restriction on the freedom of speech was the prevention of popular publication of designs for weapons.

Svend Robinson, MP for Burnaby-Kingsway, joined Borovoy in a rhetorical defence of both academic freedom and free speech. Unfortunately, Robinson's speech at the conference belied his

retoric. What he said was that he believes in free speech only so long as the speaker agrees with Svend Robinson. He complained a number of times throughout the conference that no one would answer his question as to why professors are unwilling to use their tenure to speak out more often. The ironic thing about all of this was

professors in the awkward position of being forced to read the university administration's mind in order to ensure that their comments and opinions are acceptable. So, of course professors are going to be extremely leery about expressing their opinions.

Unfortunately, universities do not exist in a vacuum; they have

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to get their funding from somewhere. Shortly before the Yaqzan piece went national, UNB had unofficially started a major fund-raising campaign. It therefore comes as no surprise that the university's administration acted in

such a panicked fashion. Undoubtedly, visions flashed through their heads of prospective donors withholding their contributions because of a misconceived perception that Yaqzan spoke for the university. Given this line of thinking, it became necessary to do something about Yaqzan.

that he had already answered his own question by applauding the university's sanctions against Matin Yaqzan. Robinson wants professors to speak out from their protection of tenure, but when Yaqzan voiced his opinion—appalling though it may have been—Robinson said that his voice was appropriately silenced. If a professor expresses an opinion which the university considers to be unacceptable, then s/he runs the risk of employment sanctions. This puts

Perhaps, in the cold world of economics, this is the best policy to follow. Except that it is a fallacy. UNB is not a business; it is a university. Or more accurately, it is in the business of being a university. The administration's attempt to make UNB more palatable to contributors was done at the ultimate expense of the product. As long as UNB retains its present administration, it has effectively lost all of its legitimacy and credibility as a major institution of higher learning. The best thing UNB's Board of Governors could do for UNB is to fail to renew the contract of each member of the administration when these contracts come up for renewal. Two of them are already gone, Eric Garland has retired and Tom Traves has resigned to become president of Dalhousie University, so it should be a simple matter to get rid of the rest when their terms expire.

The ironic thing was that it was all so unnecessary. Yaqzan's piece was merely his opinion. I've heard people say that it was inappropriate for him to write what he did because gender relations is completely unrelated to his field of expertise. Do these people have any idea of what they are really saying? They're saying that any and all people should not be allowed to express their opinion about any subject unless they are an expert. I'm not an ecologist; by this argument, I shouldn't be allowed to write an opinion about clear cutting, recycling, or endangered species. If we limit discussion to the experts, then the rest of us become slaves of the self-appointed intelligentsia. Unfortunately, allowing the free expression of opinions must also mean the extension of this privilege/right to professors; even when they express unpopular opinions.

Pat Fitzpatrick of our Student Union got it half right when he said that the university should not have fired Yaqzan for his opinion piece. The part he got wrong was when he said that he should have been fired "years ago for bringing anti-Jewish propaganda into his classroom." [Maclean's, November 14, 1994, p. 48] First of all, in the course I took from Yaqzan no mention was made of any pro- or anti-Jewish propaganda. Second, if there had been, what of it? A complaint that I have

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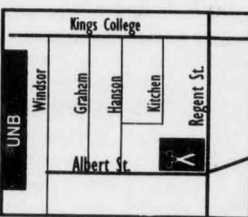
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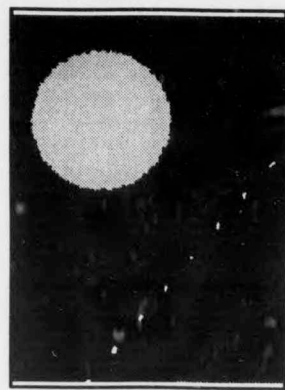


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A Day on the Information Highway



UNB WU Conference Centre
Friday December 2, 1994

- 9:00am Getting Started. An Introduction to the Internet.
- 10:00am Electronic Mail. Communicating with others around the world.
- 11:00am Driving the Information Highway. Telnet, FTP, Gopher and News.
- 1:30pm World Wide Web and CUSeeMe. New Vehicles for 95
- 2:30pm A Roadmap to Electronic Information. Searching on the Internet.
- 3:30pm CampusNet. The Internet from home.

For information contact: Milda Markauskas (453-4573)