

STRAX AFFAIR CONTINUES

By GREG F. HOARE

"A near-riot occurred early last night as about 75 angry students demanded that the demonstrating group break up their sit-in and leave the location in UNB's Loring Bailey Hall.

At one junction, cheese and eggs were thrown at the group. Only the intervention of history professor Stephen E. Patterson prevented a battle." (The Daily Gleaner, October 12, 1968)

Before October 12, with the exception of a skunk thrown through the open window of "Liberated Area 130," the opponents to Dr. Strax and his SDS group were merely vocal and not physical. Even the administration had sought to remain calm and wait for the group to tire and disperse from Bailey Hall, but all that changed on October 12.

Professor Peter C. Kent states in his thesis that "the growth in the Arts faculty is directly related to a drop in the socio-economic level of the student population. Further, it is tempting to speculate that those students of lower socio-economic background who enrolled in the professional faculties in the 1960's, in an attempt to use their university education as an agency of social advancement were the most vocal opponents of those radicals in the Arts faculty who challenged the social value of that professional middle class to which these students aspired. Perhaps this might account for the violence of the reaction of students in the professional faculties to the radical students of 1968-69."

After the SDS group had occupied "Liberated Area 130" for 46 days, the administration decided that UNB had received enough national attention because of the Strax Affair. On November 10, 1968 at 7 am, the Fredericton City Police were called in to remove the protestors. Seven sleepy demonstrators were arrested. Of the seven, two were UNB students, four were non-students, and one was from the Teacher's College.

When Dr. Strax and the remaining SDS members were informed of the arrest, they went down to the police station and pleaded with the police to arrest them also. The police told the group that there was no warrant issued for the group's arrest therefore the police department could not grant their request. On November 28 the administra-



A composite picture that appeared in the May 1969 edition of the Atlantic Advocate.

tion dropped all charges against the seven protestors.

Meanwhile, Dr. Strax returned to UNB in direct violation of a court injunction. Once again, he was taken in front of the judge for contempt of court. This time, he was fined \$500.00 and sentenced to 30 days in jail.

During this time the administration brought a civil action before the Supreme Court

of New Brunswick to try and get a ruling upholding the suspension.

Thomas B. Murphy, an associate editor of the Brunswickan, was called to testify. After Mr. Murphy appeared in court, he went back and wrote an opinionated column in the Bruns for which the Department of Justice brought contempt of court charges against the editor of the Bruns,

John Oliver, and Mr. Murphy. Both were found guilty. Mr. Oliver was fined \$50.00 and Mr. Murphy received a ten day jail sentence.

Just when the administration appeared to have everything under control, the Canadian Association of University teachers (CAUT) became involved and threatened to censor UNB for not allowing Dr. Strax an "adequate hearing."

After unsuccessful bargaining with the administration, censor was made against UNB.

The May issue of 1969 Atlantic Advocate states that "It should be said that a full censor of a university by CAUT is more than a rebuke.

It is an active campaign to blacklist that university and if it is fully pressed on UNB, CAUT would place advertisements in all educational periodicals at home and in every country of the world warning professors not to apply for positions at UNB. CAUT would actively propagate the idea that UNB was repressive it would attempt to spread a bad name for UNB through all academic channels, it would make the faculty and students so marked at UNB that neither would wish to be associated with the university ever again."

This action caused the students, faculty, and the administration to band together and protest the decision by CAUT. Censor was lifted on May 22, 1969.

Eventually, the administration succeeded in removing Dr. Strax from his job but not

without a number of consequences. Dr. Colin Mackay, President of UNB, found that he could no longer run UNB in the manner he had become accustomed to. Being unable to deal with the faculty and students on a personal basis, Dr. Mackay soon retired.

Another consequence was that although two SRC presidents would resign in one month (one for his handling of the Strax Affair and the other for "personal reasons"), the SRC would eventually succeed in placing student representation on the Senate and Board of Governors, a demand by Dr. Strax and SDS from the onset.

Professor Kent states that there is one more consequence to consider "unfortunately, the main lesson drawn from the Strax affair was that the administration bureaucracy should be enlarged and strengthened and its role clearly defined and that the power of the legislative bodies, the Board of Governors and the Senate should be circumscribed, lest faculty and student radicalism should again question the operative assumptions of the university. The Strax affair effectively aborted a move toward internal self-government of UNB and instead, gave presidential authority in the university a new lease on life."

So where is Dr. Norman Strax now? Rumour has it, he's in California. But wherever he is, you can be assured of one thing: "The times, they will be a changin'."

CONGRATULATIONS

The Partners and staff of the Clarkson Gordon Halifax office offer their congratulations and best wishes to their colleague, Kevin Waller. Kevin, a recent addition to Clarkson Gordon's audit staff, will be travelling to Seoul, South Korea, as a member of the Canadian Paralympics Coaching Team.

A former member of the Canadian National Track and Field Team, Kevin has been involved with the Paralympics program for several years. Clarkson Gordon takes pride in the community involvement of its employees and we wish Kevin and the Canadian delegation every success in Seoul on October 17th.



Kevin Waller

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