

NEWS

Deadline: Wednesday at 12:00 noon Newsdesk 453-4983

SU not satisfied with present Health Care Plan

by Patsy Wallace

Jim MacGee, VP University Affairs, said the Student Union is not satisfied with the present Student Health Care plan administered by the University.

The Student Union is examining a more flexible alternative. The National Plan, sponsored by the Canadian Federation of Students, can be tailored to meet the needs of students by selecting benefits from a menu.

MacGee is comparing the two health plans and discussing possible amendments to the existing one with John O'Brien and Hartley Moorehouse, Comptroller and Vice Comptroller at UNB.

The University Plan does not cover oral contraceptives. This

has been an ongoing issue throughout the previous two Student Union elections. The National Plan does cover this prescription, a common one among a large proportion of the university student population. It is therefore a key factor in the decision making process.

Another benefit provided by the National Plan is an automatic pay-back card, similar to a credit or cash card, to be presented upon purchase of a prescription for an automatic pay-deductible.

The existing manual system requires a student to fill in forms at the business office. These forms are sent to the insurance company. The student may receive their deductible two weeks later.

This system is further aggravated if the student is not informed properly about the plan. Considering the pamphlets describing the current student Health Care Plan are not distributed, it is doubtful most students are aware of the details.

The National Plan also offers a vision - care option. It does not, however, cover wisdom teeth removal. The university Plan does.

The University Plan is also easier to administer as they have student files on hand. If the Student Union decides to go with the CFS National Plan, a staff would have to be hired and files compiled in the Student Union Building.

The Student Union will go with the CFS National Plan if

the administration cannot amend the current plan to suit student needs. If this decision is made the Student Union must meet certain demands made by O'Brien and Moorehouse.

The administration is concerned about the medical needs of its Foreign Student population. For the Student Union to take on the National Plan they must ensure that foreign students at UNB get adequate coverage.

The Student Union also

needs the support of the Graduate students and UNB, Saint John campus.

For the CFS National Plan to be implemented a raise in Student Union fees would be necessary. The present plan is paid for by outside sources.

The results of the ongoing talks between the Student Union and Administration will be announced sometime in February. A referendum will then be held, enabling the student population to express their viewpoint.

Rothesay Paper strike continues

by Allan Carter

"Say no to Irving!"

That is the message from the Canadian Paperworkers Union and the Canadian Labour Congress after an eight month strike at Rothesay paper in Saint John.

The mill which is a subsidiary of Irving Pulp and Paper is still operating through the use of scabs in an attempt to replace the 434 workers who are striking.

According to the pamphlets that are being distributed throughout the province asking people to boycott Irving, "Irving lashed out" when the Canadian Paperworkers Union Local 601 refused to accept concessions and voted to strike.

Now the Canadian Paperworkers Union and the Canadian Labour Congress are lashing back in a national boycott.

Elmo Whittom, of the Canadian Labour Congress, says what effects the boycott is having on Irving.

Yet he claims that they have people monitoring various businesses owned by Irving and the reports that he is getting indicate "the boycott is really working."

Shirley Carr, president of the Canadian Labour Congress which represents 12.5 million members, will be distributing leaflets through the state of Maine in an attempt to make the boycott more successful.

In addition to the pamphlets, anybody interested in the boycott can obtain a list which includes all services and companies owned by Irving.

Whittom argues that because

Irving decided to operate the Mill with scabs it left the Congress with no choice but to take last-resort action.

"We have tried everything humanly possible to get a settlement without going to a boycott."

According to Whittom, Rothesay Paper is the first mill in New Brunswick to have scabs operating during a strike.

Although the boycott may be hurting businesses which are not involved with the strike, Whittom is hoping that these businesses will put pressure on Irving to come to a settlement.

As far as he is concerned, if the company dropped the concessions there would be a settlement.

"They (the company) are looking to take away from us

some of the things we had for years. We are fully satisfied with what has been negotiated with the industry across Canada."

The problem, says Whittom, "is when a company presents concessions on things that unions have already fought against for years."

"In this case here the agenda is the company's agenda", adds Whittom. "We can't change it - it is not ours."

He says the longer the strike and boycott lasts, the harder it is going to be to bring things back to normal."

"If we could have settled it yesterday, I would be the happiest man in the world - boycotts hurt."

On Wednesday, a spokesperson from Rothesay Paper could not be reached.

President Armstrong responds to Iraqi flag incident

The following is a statement from UNB president Robin Armstrong concerning the Iraqi flag which was taken down in McConnell Hall.

The Iraqi flag that was removed from McConnell Hall was one of many flags put on display to recognize the home countries of the large numbers of international students who have attended UNB over the years. These flags were donated by the governments of some of the home countries of these students, in response to an invitation from the University. "The Iraqi flag was received well before that country's invasion of Kuwait. I believe that the students

who removed the flag acted out of sincere feelings against the actions taken by the Government of Iraq. That they did not deface the flag was a mark of their seriousness. They have since turned the flag over to the University, on condition that it would not be restored to the display in the immediate future. I do not approve of their action. It indicates immaturity and intolerance, unbecoming of a university community.

This is a difficult and emotional time. The terrifying development in the Persian Gulf have stirred deep feelings. Some members of the University community strongly oppose the action

which the Canadian and other governments have taken to send armed forces to enforce United Nations resolution. Other members feel equally strongly that Canada, along with other countries must resist Iraq with force.

To rehang the Iraqi flag at this time will only serve as a focus for dispute, and I have no doubt that some group would again remove it, as the university cannot commit the resources necessary to guard it 24 hours a day. I admit that this is a decision borne of pragmatism and not of principle, but I believe that this is an instance where pragmatism can serve us best.

The University community

should be a place for reason, understanding and tolerance. However, the members of this community cannot be immune to the tensions which divide the world. All members of the University community must look to the day when the present hostilities are ended and relations between our nations are restored to a peaceful footing. I hope that the entire campus community will some day feel able to support the restoration of the Iraqi flag, as a gesture of lasting good will and fellowship for all students from other countries, for whom the flag display was intended as a celebration.

Pedestrian safety a problem

by Karen Burgess

Several students have expressed concerns this year about the safety of pedestrians around UNB's campus. One of these students, Mark Lockwood, VP External of the Student Council, voiced his apprehensions to Rick Peacock, director of campus security.

The main area of concern for Lockwood is the area around McConnell Hall (particularly Bailey Drive), which sees a concentration of students walking to and from the cafeteria at periods which correspond with high traffic times for drivers.

Lockwood explains, "This is a pedestrian campus... there's thousands and thousands of us crossing the streets in the course of the day."

"McConnell Hall has a definite blind spot because there's a wall that comes out from the front of the building (McConnell Hall). The driver cannot see the person exiting the building, and the person ex-

iting the building cannot see the driver."

He continues, saying that although the winter weather causes drivers to exercise more caution when behind the wheel, when road conditions improve, the frequency of reckless speeding will again increase.

Rick Peacock acknowledges that there is a definite problem. Of the various options available to him to reconcile the problem, Peacock says he feels that a sign advising drivers to yield to pedestrians would be the most effective as speed bumps would hamper snow removal, and a stop sign where there is no intersection is not feasible.

Although nothing can be done at present until the snow clears, Peacock hopes to have some means of improving pedestrian safety on Bailey Drive by the time the weather improves and conditions become more conducive to high speed driving.