

# The SRC - a broken council

Remember the 'Student Representative Council' a.k.a. the 'S.R.C.', a.k.a. the 'Students' Union'? The Brunswickan lives just a floor below the SRC offices in the SUB, but we must admit that they have been pretty quiet beyond Steve Berube's occasional television appearances. On the whole, The Brunswickan has adopted a policy of ignoring the SRC on the theory that maybe 15 percent of the student body significantly interacts with the SRC, whereas 100 percent are effected by the administration and faculty of the University.

This past week, The Brunswickan has turned up its collective hearing aid and tried to make head and tail out of the current activities of the SRC. We think it may be broken. Our hearing aid seems OK.

With the acclamation of the new SRC president and comptroller, the entire executive was/is unelected in the conventional sense of that word. With no evidence of support by even an upward twitch of the student body's little finger. The last meeting of the SRC was unable to do anything (technically) because the councillors had other places to be.

It can be said that there are three student-organized 'services' which really have an impact and give relatively good value for money to the UNB student. The Student Union Building, CHSR and The Brunswickan. Even the most retiring of students will during the course of his time here have some contact in some way with one of the aforementioned three.

The Student Union Building costs us \$15 per student per year and regardless of what you think about the SUB, you are making a donation to something which will functionally grace this campus for a very long time. The SUB provides employment, sells us food, clothes and what not and houses the Social Club.

CHSR may have the odd problem, but it has a very large and enthusiastic membership and, if given the chance, could potentially do a lot more than it currently does. CHSR costs us about \$2.50 per student per year. Regardless of whether you are one of the 3,200 students who cannot receive CHSR, you can join. In any event, a contribution is made to the development of one of Canada's oldest student radio stations (CHSR enters its nineteenth year of broadcasting this

year). You are also making it possible to continue a trend which has seen many alumni of CHSR and this university end up in key positions in Canadian broadcasting.

The Brunswickan? Well, hell, almost everyone reads a page or two of The Brunswickan on Friday mornings. The Brunswickan has not cost the students anything so far this year, and in the end, will cost less than \$2.00 per student. Which is about a dime an issue. As they say on the cover of Mad Magazine (or used to): cheap. The Brunswickan is the oldest student paper in Canada and its alumni can be found in newspapers and press bureaus across this country.

A look at the SRC audit will tell you that by far the biggest expense is - you guessed it - the SRC itself. Expensive beast, checking in at nearly \$8 per student per year, give or take. What do we get for our money? Damned if we know. Can we feel value from the money we spend on it? Who knows?

Based on the usual voter turnout - approximately 30 percent of the student population - The Brunswickan would have to say no.

Ten years ago, people were interested in politics. Nowadays, the price of beer and a degree

makes the time available to worry about inconsequential student politics pretty limited.

Since an elected (even acclaimed) student government (or indeed any kind of government) is meant to change priorities to meet the changing needs of the day, the SRC should have reduced its costs to meet the services demanded.

Without question they have not. Indeed the real costs of the SRC have doubled in the past five years. As an organisation they have done very little to be responsive to or seek out student needs and done everything to preserve the *status quo*. 'In lethargy we trust' could very well be their motto. The SRC maintains the *status quo*, accumulates a surplus of revenue proportionally greater by a full order of magnitude than the University did last year, and does nothing new.

The Brunswickan feels that money which is spent running the SRC could be better spent on making services available to the student. Not the minority who belong to the many little clubs, but to the average student. A mere one third of the amount spent on the SRC per year, in addition to the current level of funding would enable CHSR to broadcast in FM stereo to Fredericton and Oromocto.

As little as one quarter of the amount spent on the SRC would provide meaningful help to Counselling Services. Nearly 1,000 students use this service directly every year. Can the same be said of the SRC?

As little as one eighth of the money spent on the SRC would buy an hour of ice time in the Aitken Centre every school day of the ice season. One could go on and on. Why with three twenty-fifths of the SRC budget, The Brunswickan could have a colour photo on its cover every week!

This week, The Brunswickan has to report to you that we think that the SRC is broken. If you think we may be having you on, take a look at this week's letters to the Editor. Last week we reported that the Ingenious Claire Frupp was thinking about going to the N.U.S. conference coming up. Next we were told that we had no right to talk about it because N.U.S. was paying. Then we heard the the N.B. Coalition of Students was paying for this perk, but that the whole idea was being rethought. In any case, the letters from the Sincere Blair Moffat, the Honest Steve Berube, and the Righteous Geoff Worrel tell us that it will be carefully studied. Wouldn't want to move too fast.

Can someone fix the S.R.C.?

