

Editorial and Mugwump

On October 5 and 6, the Student Union, for those of you who didn't already know, will be holding a byelection. Several positions will be up for grabs, including two at the vice-presidential level.

The tiny percentage of you who do vote will decide the fate of the entire student body. In addition to determining who will lead us in the upcoming academic year, those elect few will also be faced with another dilemma—one which bears careful consideration.

The byelection will include a referendum on a new health plan.

The proposed plan is one which is administered by the Canadian Federation of Students, and would be implemented in the fall of 1994 at a cost to students of \$50 per term.

Pros of the plan include a pay-direct card covering 80 per cent of prescription costs; coverage for oral contraceptives and paramedical practitioners such as psychologists and physiotherapists; vision care to the value of \$80; and a provision for students covered by other plans to opt-out and have their fees refunded.

Cons are, of course, that given the apathy level on this campus, it's questionable as to whether most students are aware of the fact that there is currently a health plan at UNB, let alone that they may already be covered by their parents' plan. Another drawback is that the cost of the new plan is four times that of the existing plan.

In an article in an earlier edition of

the Brunswickan, the university comptroller was quoted as saying that students may not be willing to pay more cash for their health coverage. But let's take a closer look. Oral contraceptives, which constitute 30 per cent of current prescription claims, cost approximately \$20 per month, or \$240 a year. With the CFS plan, students and their spouses (covered providing an additional surcharge is paid) would receive this prescription at only 20 per cent of that cost. This could be very significant considering that oral contraceptives are the most commonly claimed

prescription among students. As well, the new plan is simply more convenient than our current coverage, eliminating the need to file a claim and wait for reimbursement each time one gets a prescription filled. Students pay 20 per cent up front, and that's it.

While some may doubt the imperative nature of treatment by a naturopath, coverage of therapy by paramedical practitioners will actually have a significant impact on students' lives. Physiotherapy, covered by the CFS plan, is a commonly incurred expense, especially among the athletically inclined, and funding for visits to a psychotherapist could be life-sav-

the major deciding factor in this debate, was brought up three years ago in a similar referendum. While UNB Fredericton students came out, marginally at least, in favor

of a plan which covered the pill, the proposal for comprehensive coverage was scuttled by UNB Saint John's students. The UNBSJ student body and the Graduate Student Association both voted to reject the referendum proposal.

This could be the case again this year. The university's administration sees the participation of students at the Saint John campus as a deciding factor in the health plan debate.

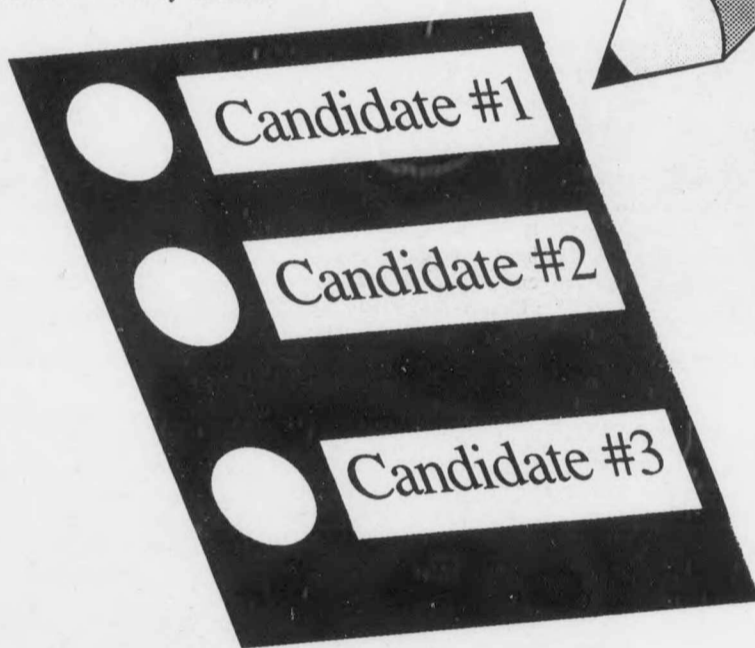
What the university needs is for its students to send a clear mandate to implement the proposal. Apathy from students, the beneficiaries of the CFS health plan, will most likely be construed as a lack of support. Even if you disagree with the proposal as you've seen it outlined, make your opinion known. It's very simple. Voting is easy and harmless, and won't cost a cent.

Missing your chance to direct the actions of the Student Union will, however, be expensive. If you don't make your opinions known by casting a ballot, you'll be throwing away \$99 in student fees. As well, if the people you didn't vote into power (or out of it) drive you crazy, you may end up footing the bill when you seek help.

ing. With students facing long waiting periods (especially during peak, high-stress periods) to see university counselors, and private practitioners' prohibitive charges, knowing that relief is easily available may make all the difference to a distressed and struggling scholar. However, the question of oral contraceptives, which is realistically

should wait until they're actually in power before beginning the Blitzkrieg. But, just so they know, I already have material written and ready to go depending on who wins. I believe in starting off on the right foot with people: meaning I like to kick them in the butt with my right foot. I firmly believe that I have not, as yet, been nearly mean or cruel enough in my Mugwump columns. After all, casual cruelty is almost a part of my job description—what is Mugwump without bitterness and vitriol? I mean, I have been much too kind. If I was really feeling ambitious or cruel (with less than 40 minutes to deadline), I would launch an in-depth analysis of the election platforms of the various candidates and a satirical review of their election write-ups. Unfortunately, this might throw an unintended chill over the political process, because it discourages keeners from running for office. I mean, if you get attacked before you even get elected, a lot of people might be scared off. Again, as if I care. The political process is the responsibility of every Canadian. Everyone must do their part by voting (SU Byelections Oct. 5 & 6, the important election Oct. 25). I always vote, but I'm also going to do my part by shutting up for a few days.

I still haven't filled my space yet. If I had lived in Green Valley like the previous editor, I could regale you with stories of Frogs and the horrors of life in a small, small, Ontario town. Unfortunately, I'm a townie born and bred. Even the Frosh have been in Fredericton long enough to discover every possible interesting, humorous or entertaining thing about this godforsaken burg



MUGWUMP

JAMES ROWAN, MANAGING EDITOR

What's on my mind this week? Well, despite being a dyed in the wool Macevangelist, I have been forced to question my dedication to *The Macintosh Way*. You see, we ordered four Macs, three nice new LC 520s and a super cool Centris 650. Yesterday we found out that all of those machines had been wiped out. Completely eradicated. No longer existing. You see, Apple chose to rationalize their hardware line just as we decided what we wanted to buy. So, after a year of handwringing and debate over what to buy, we finally find out what we want...and they cancel it. It's almost enough to make you buy a PC clone...no, no, not quite enough. After all, Friends don't let Friends do DOS.

Well, on a less personal note, though no less damaging to my emotional well-being, the Student Union Byelections are next week. Raise your hand if you had noticed. Go on, raise your hand. One, two, three...thought so. Well, for you devoted SU watchers who had noticed, we're going to the polls next week. The jobs up for grabs include two of the three most important jobs in the student movement at UNB, VP-University Affairs and VP Finance and Administration of the Student Union. I won't rip in to any of the candidates, because I might display a bias and unfairly prejudice the electorate. Yeah, as if I care. But the reality is, I will end up working with (and for) whoever wins, so I



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Words of Wisdom: Money talks, it
usually says "bend over."

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