

The Brunswickan

Canada's oldest official student publication

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EDITORIAL

SMOKING, COLOMBIANS & COR

I am not a smoker but last year when I noticed that there was a cleverly conceived and shrewdly executed effort afoot to make legislative change in the Student Union Building without anyone asking me anything, I grew militant- that old aggression against the system dormant for about two years, was stirred. I conceived social protest strategies which would at least assure the "system" that students were not pushovers. But wisdom prevailed; or was that it? Was it fear? I went into investigation mode and unearthed the sordid facts. The decision was made by a committee consisting of several student representatives along with hired staff-members of the building. Assumedly, the infrastructure existed for the student representation to be realized. The administration could always hurl that in the face of students: "your representatives didn't halt it, folks. Deal with them." Perhaps if I was a smoker that wouldn't hold me. In fact I would have carried out my protest plan of rallying at least fifty smokers to sit in the SUB Cafeteria with me and "light up" at a single command. Protest: so sweet. Nothing like that has happened. Students area now standing outside to smoke and to litter the area just outside the SUB with butts. No doubt the SUB management will now place CP's there to patrol the place rather than consider very carefully the alternate of finding some for smokers.

I say this guardedly and surely as a matter of principle because I have enjoyed the pleasures of smoke-free air in the cafeteria lately. My smoke allergies have had a rest and it is a good feeling. But smokers should be treated as individuals with some rights as long as smoking is a socially accepted and legal habit in our society. It is somewhat unfair for a society to benefit from the money made from the taxes of cigarettes sale while legislating rules that suggest that it disapproves of smoking. Hopefully, there will be a sensible a fair conclusion to the matter. If an area can be located in the SUB for smokers, all will be well. If the same could happen in the library things will be even better. Somehow, the decision to cut out smoking in the entire library seems terribly unfair to me

Fredericton is going through a exciting time these days. Drug dealers are now becoming a part of our tourist appeal. People-normal citizens- have become marvelously adept at observing strange movements and reporting them toute de suite to the police. A friend of mine was under surveillance by the police because he "looked" Columbian and drove a car with a Miami licence plate. The poor folks down at the craft school in the Justice Building are faced with constant searches by "jumpy" special agents dressed in black and sporting wonderfully complex assault weapons. Is all this hoopla unnecessary? I think not. Perhaps the allegation that the Latin American presence in Canada is part of a plot to break a few prisoners out of jail is well founded; and it is conceivable that these drug and gun possessors considered Fredericton a fairly easy target for their plan. They didn't consider the snoopy suspicion of New Brunswick citizens for anything or anyone that is noticeably different or foreign. I just hope that this spirit of community self-protection does not evolve into something less positive: into a kind of xenophobic paranoia about people who don't look or talk like good old New Brunswickers.

Finally, a comment about responses we have received for publishing the strong negative critique of the COR party in last weeks opinion. We received a number of calls requesting details about the author Luis Cardoso and one call seemed to suggest the possibility of a legal suit. I strongly recommended that the callers and the one anonymous letter writer prepare a rebuttal of the Cardoso article which we would be only too happy to publish as long it meets all editorial requirements. To date no one has sent anything to the BRUNSWICKAN on the issue. At a time when a number of writers have shown significant courage to express their opinions about a range of volatile issues. I find it somewhat disappointing to converse with people who are only willing to rave about issues and not put pen to paper.

**Kwame Dawes
Ed.Chief**