

Our complaints against the Governors still stand

We have received two letters and several comments from students this week on last week's front page story. The fact that our new President will be living in a \$92,000 home provided by the university seems to have angered some, but left others untouched.

Unfortunately, we feel, our headline and the story underneath may have been misinterpreted. Others just misunderstood our editorial. And although the story and editorial appeared (and still appear) understandable to us, we herewith comment further on the subject.

Our complaint with the university Board of Governors - and those students who represent us - is that UNB lost the opportunity to make money. It's definitely true that we sold Sommerville House and bought another with the funds. And it should be abundantly clear to all that we didn't lose a cent on the deal. (We may lose money on taxes, maintenance costs, etc., but that's another point.)

The fact is that UNB is providing a residence worth \$92,000 to the President during his stay here. Whether that residence is Sommerville House (donated by Lord Beaverbrook) or whether it's 58 Waterloo Row makes little difference.

No matter what way you look at it, we're still putting him up.

But no doubt this hasn't soothed your minds. So here are some points made in the letters to the Editor with our comments. First, though, we must state that Ken DeFreitas, one of the Student Governors and a member of our Editorial Board, has disassociated himself from the opinions contained in both this and last week's edition. Now back to the letters.

- we were told that we have "pre-judged" the President. Most

certainly we have not. The purchase of the house (or, if you will, the provision of any house) is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, and not the President. We have no reason, however, to believe that the President will be any more capable in office simply because he "lives high on the hog."

- we have been told that our accusations against the Student Governors were "unjust." Again, we feel that we were right in our criticism. And we still maintain that the only person - student or otherwise - to speak against the purchase was Mayor Lockhart. We must emphasize that no other objections were raised. Of this we are certain.

- our entire argument, says one letter, is based on Mayor Lockhart. By no means is that correct. Had no one objected to the purchase of the house, the story would still have been written, as would the editorial. Whether Lockhart agrees or disagrees with The Brunswickan is immaterial.

- we have been told that because Sommerville House was donated by Beaverbrook, UNB is obligated to buy a house of equal stature and value. This is hogwash. Fact: UNB has never used Sommerville House, in all its years, as a residence for the President. It has, we understand, been substantially renovated to accommodate the Law School and recently, the New Brunswick government. It has, therefore, been used other than as a Presidential palace, but still to the betterment of the university. Fact: UNB, while not a poor university, is not a rich one either. Because we must obtain the permission of Sir Max to sell Sommerville House, but only under the condition that we buy a house of equal value, are we therefore to assume that Sir Max has no interest whatsoever in

maintaining academic standards? Are we to believe that Sir Max (or any of us) wants to let prestigious material goods take precedence over the education of the students? We think not.

- we have been told that the acquisition of 58 Waterloo Row is an investment for the university. If it is, we feel it is a poor one. For investments are only worth making if money can be made either immediately or at some point in the future. Unfortunately, such is not the case here. Chances are the university will spend more on yearly maintenance and other costs than it will gain on the sale of the house in the future. As a result, money will be lost, not gained. A very poor investment.

- we have been told that to make

say, \$50,000 on the deal by buying a cheaper house would be immoral. But can it actually be immoral if, instead, we face a tuition fee increase? Can it be immoral when budgets are either being frozen or reduced by 10 percent? We doubt it. If Sir Max - who has generously donated sizeable sums of money to UNB - is genuinely interested in our education, would he not (or should he not) understand that funds are sorely needed? We believe he would.

Finally, we must maintain that the provision of a \$92,000 residence for the President - even temporarily - is not in UNB's best interests. While no money has actually been lost, the opportunity has. And that's a very sorry situation indeed.

Leaders should attend meeting

One of the most overworked cliches on this campus is "student apathy". The leadership conference to be held this Sunday, March 4, will attempt to do something constructive about this problem, but unless there is a good turnout nothing will be accomplished.

The conference is supposed to bring together the leaders from all the organizations on campus including the various clubs, the SRC executive, and the student senators and governors to discuss matter of mutual concern.

It is sponsored by the Alumni.

Besides serving as a basic means of communication between these organization (which is sadly lacking the rest of the year) the conference could well prove to be a breakthrough in many ways.

To our way of thinking a student who doesn't get involved in extra curricular activities is losing a valuable segment of his education. Too often we've seen senior students get involved in organizations and wonder out loud why they didn't get involved sooner.

But another cliché tells us that you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink. Things being as they are, the so-called "leaders" of this campus must collectively decide to do something - together - to improve the way of life at UNB.

Before we get the 'student-horses' to drink from the trough, our 'leader-horses' will have to be firmly determined to lead them there. It is our hope that we can at least get the leaders to the trough on Sunday.

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