

Newspaper autonomy

Last weekend over 50 representatives from 10 Atlantic student newspapers met in Halifax as part of the Atlantic Region Canadian University Press conference (ARCUP). The major topic of discussion during the long weekend was student newspaper/student council relations.

The discussion was sparked by the problems of two student papers in the Atlantic region, the *Aquinian*, at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, and the *Athenaeum*, at Acadia University in Wolfville. The staff of both papers are currently in conflict with their respective councils.

Acadia's student council last week refused to ratify Trent Allen as the *Athenaeum's* editor. Allen came well-qualified, as this would have been his second year as editor. He was chosen by the nominating committee (composed of three student councillors and three newspaper staffers). Finally, according to the delegates who attended the ARCUP meeting, Allen was the popular choice of the staff.

St. Thomas' *Aquinian* suffers a different problem. The student council there cut over three

thousand dollars from the paper's budget, and forced it to drop its membership in Canadian University Press, a cooperative of 57 student newspapers from across Canada, for which they pay fees and attend conferences.

In both cases student politicians interfered with the papers' autonomy, and their right to control what they print. The councils denied the staff of the papers the right to act independently from the student council. Without this independence, a student newspaper is open to intimidation, which ultimately affects its editorial policy. If a student union does not like the way a paper is run, and they control the purse strings and/or personnel of the paper, it is highly unlikely they would not choose to effect some changes and therefore have the newspaper "toe the line."

Without some autonomy, both in finances and editorial content, the university community loses a check on the student council. That extra critical voice of student news is being drowned at Acadia and St. Thomas. Hopefully, with the help of the region's other student papers, they'll at least go down fighting.

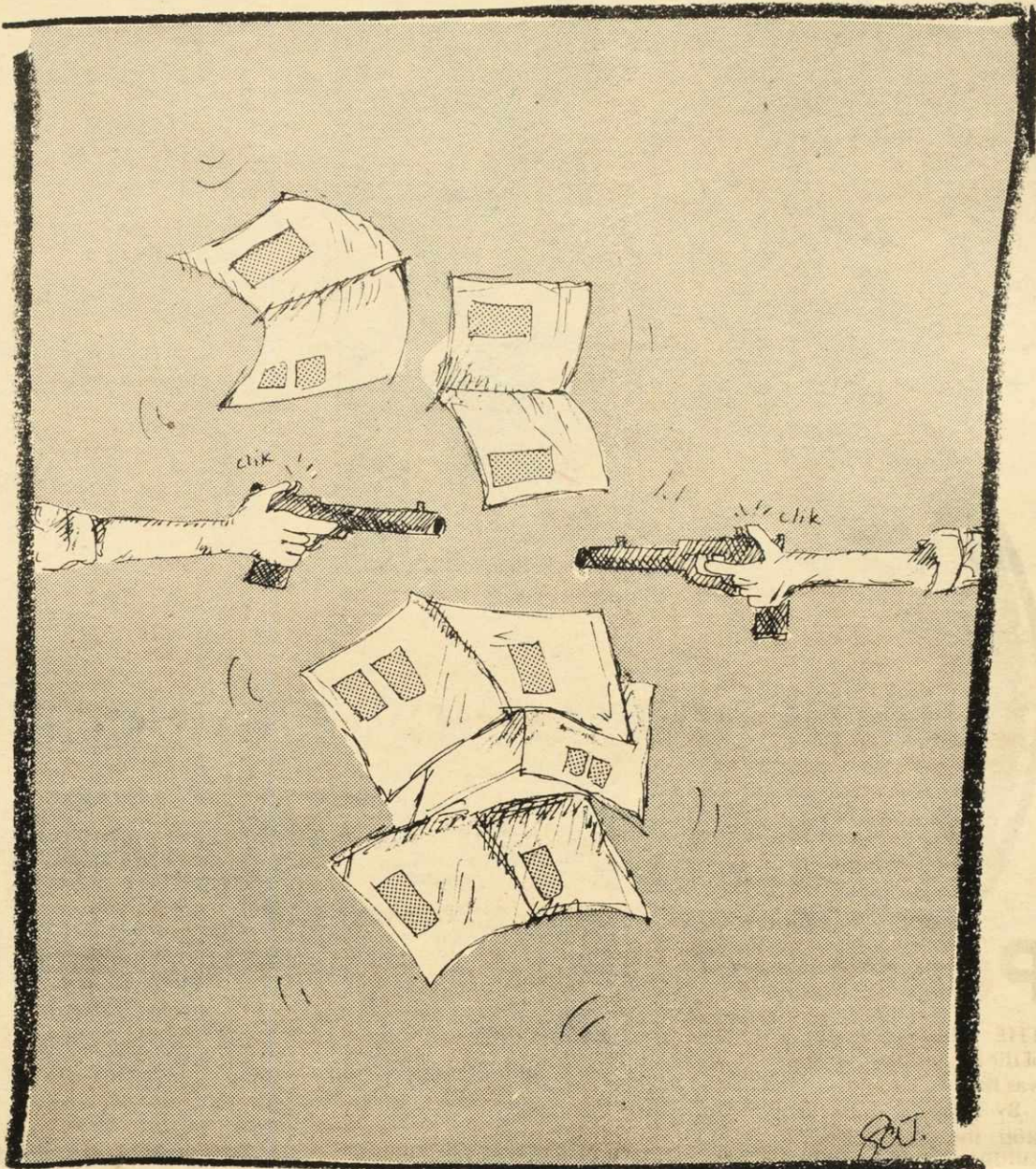


Illustration by Stephen Thrasher

snow patrol

<p>ON THE FINAL LEG OF THEIR MISSION TO DELINEATE THE CANADIAN NORTH, JAKE AND SCOTT HAVE BECOME LOST SOMEWHERE NEAR IGLOOKLIK ...</p> <p>WE'RE LOST SCOTT.</p> <p>HOW CAN YOU TELL IN THIS SNOW STORM?</p>	<p>I CAN SMELL FOOD COOKING.</p> <p>GREAT! THEN BASE CAMP MUST BE NEARBY.</p>	<p>I LIKE THE SMELL.</p> <p>WE'RE LOST JAKE.</p> <p>HI YA!</p> <p>WHO'S THAT?</p> <p>Joel</p>
<p>JAKE AND SCOTT, CANADA'S MEN IN THE HIGH ARCTIC, HAVE DISCOVERED THEY ARE NOT ALONE ...</p> <p>WHO'S THERE?</p> <p>HI YA. I'M STAN LOPEZ. THIS IS SOME STORM YOU GOT UP HERE.</p>	<p>HOW DID YOU GET WAY OUT HERE?</p> <p>MISSED MY SUBWAY STOP. I MUST'VE GONE CLEAR UP TOWN. IT WASN'T SNOWING LIKE THIS WHEN I LEFT HOME.</p>	<p>WHERE IS HOME, STAN?</p> <p>WEST 52 ND STREET. IS THIS THE BRONX?</p> <p>Joel</p>