

Premier puffs pot?

By CLAYTON BURNS

Richard Hatfield's marijuana may have been planted in his luggage at the Fredericton airport, local radio sources (CFNB) state. They stated RCMP said the reason there have been no charges laid (the marijuana was discovered September 25th) was that the police are trying to determine who planted the marijuana in Hatfield's bags.

RCMP and the Federal Justice Department are to make the decision on any charges. An assistant to Solicitor General Elmer MacKay said that the investigation is continuing. Public reaction in Fredericton was clear: Hatfield should have been charged. But in his criminal law class at the University of New Brunswick, Professor John Beaton said that merely charging someone with an offence may be enough to ruin their life, even if they are innocent. He cited the Nelles case in Toronto as an example. Beaton stated that the Narcotic Control Act, section three, defines the offence; anyone having a narcotic in his possession is liable on summary conviction for a first offence to a fine of \$1,000, to imprisonment for six months, or both. The Federal Prosecutor must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the accused had knowledge of the presence of the drug. Also, to establish possession it is not enough by itself to show that the fingerprints of the accused are on the drug's container. Hatfield has apparently been voluntarily fingerprinted by the RCMP and there apparently was a print on the marijuana bag. Beaton said that

although Hatfield denied any knowledge of the marijuana (which was in the outside pocket of his luggage), he would probably have been charged in most similar situations. He said that although knowledge is a necessary element of the offence, that is usually determined by the judge after a charge is laid. Beaton said: "I'm sure that the Mountie who found it...his heart went to his mouth." Radio sources stated that an RCMP supervisor told a junior officer to put the marijuana back in Hatfield's luggage.

Tom Evans, who operates the Community Legal Centre, said that "the perception is that our criminal justice system works fine for you and I, but when you get to the high level politicians and their friends the system gets a little weak-kneed." He said that the facts to date indicate that Hatfield should have been charged and the case determined by the court. Evans linked the delay in the marijuana episode to the handling of the Progressive Conservative kickback scheme and the non-investigation of the Saint John ballot-stuffing allegations. He said that with the Conservatives in power federally, no local lawyer who wants a judgeship or a prosecutor's job will "foul his own nest" by accusing a ranking politician of wrongdoing. Evans also stated that John Townsend, the probable new federal prosecutor for drug cases in the region, is Pat Ryan's partner. Ryan is the area director for legal aid, and a recent controversy concerned the issuance of a legal aid certificate to former Conser-

vative cabinet minister Lawrence Garvie. Evans said that the system works fine "when you're dealing with the average speeding ticket or murder, but it is not so quick when the upper echelon is involved. We get into the close network thing. There is a clear pattern that checks and balances are not operating."

Evans called for an immediate return to the Grand Jury system in New Brunswick: "When it comes to investigating the political elite, the theory that the Attorney General's office is independent is like me deciding whether to charge my mother."

Doug Rutherford of the

federal Justice Department in Ottawa stated that the recent speculation on whether charges would be laid against Hatfield was ridiculous, and that the public should wait for justice to take its course. He said the newspaper and radio speculation before there is even a case brings the procedures of the law into disrepute.

SUB Staff firings revisited

By KAYE MACPHEE

Everyone on both UNB and STU campuses is probably now aware of the fact that the SUB Board and Acting Director of the SUB, Mark Slipp, were relieved of their duties in late September and replaced by a Board of Trustees and Kim Norris, respectively. After being informed of ALL the facts and due consideration, the individual reader will be able to make a decision as to whether or not they agree or disagree with the action taken by UNB President, James Downey. What followed Downey's action is now presented for the reader's consideration.

1. Did Slipp have the power to hire, fire and make policy decisions?

When John Webster was asked he stated that he assumed Slipp got his instructions from the SUB Board or the Executive of the Board, but that the "appointments he made were on a trial basis" and that shifts were "trial shifts". Slipp was to evaluate the workers after observing them in the workplace.

Kim Norris, the present Interim Director of the SUB stated that "Slipp could not make policy nor hire anyone"

that those who worked there under Slipp were a "fill-in staff" and at a later date a staff would be chosen. According to Norris he never saw anything in writing that gave Slipp the authority to hire.

Slipp stated he did have the power to hire. When the Brunswickan asked who gave him the authority to do so Slipp stated that consent came "from the majority of the Board, the Board of Governors and the chief spokesman of the Board of Governors" pointing out that the latter meant Downey. Slipp said that he was told verbally by these Boards and Downey that he had this authority.

2. Did these people have jobs?

Webster: Only on a trial basis.

Norris: Only a fill-in staff.

Slipp: By virtue of the fact that I hired people, they came to work, I drafted pay cheques and people returned to work - of course they had jobs.

The Brunswickan spoke to a number of employees who were not hired. Some expressed dissatisfaction with Norris for not choosing them as they had worked in the SUB under Slipp. One worker in particular said she felt it was

unfair, and that she was told by Norris that she was "too aggressive". Norris admits to citing that as a reason but that he did not want to extrapolate. Other employees however, said they found this particular person difficult to get along with.

Another person who had not been hired by Norris after summer experience at the SUB was a foreign student. When the Brunswickan asked why he was not hired we were told that he only had one year left at university (i.e. graduating in May of 1985) and that he had no supervisory skills. However, apparently, this student will not be graduating until May of 1986 and though he worked only during the summer he had supervised other students and had, in fact, trained some of them.

The Brunswickan asked Norris that if the foreign student could train people well enough to be hired (or considered for hiring) why wasn't the foreign student hired? Norris said that "it doesn't take anything to train someone; show them where the doors are and that's about it." --new developments, if any will be reported by the Brunswickan.

EXCUSE ME LIZ, DO YOU MIND IF I SMOKE.



CFNB reported Thursday fingerprint. RCMP apparently morning that the RCMP are say that Hatfield will not be unable to match a print on the charged and a statement is ex-marijuana bag with Hatfield's pected shortly.

BRUNS EDITORIAL COMMENT:

We at the Brunswickan have always had a sneaky regard for Richard Hatfield, the audacious way he governs the province, and the lifestyle he is rumoured to get away with while doing it.

This last little episode leaves even us breathless. That Richard would allegedly have marijuana in his possession on the Queen's aeroplane is just too much. We find it difficult to believe that a politician as canny as Richard would be stupid enough to carry drugs into an area so lousy with security. If he did it would indicate that maybe he is getting just a little too bold.

We really admire the calm thoroughness with which the RCMP are investigating the incident. What irks us though is if said drugs had been in our luggage, we would have been in the dock facing Duff Harper or Blake Lynch so fast our heads would still be spinning. There would have been no investigations to determine if the drugs had been planted. The only question that would be asked is whether to charge us for simple possession, or possession for the purpose of trafficking. While we realize Richard Hatfield is well heeled enough not to have to push, still we ask ourselves what makes him less likely to have marijuana for his personal use than us.

Well anyway, Richard we wish you the best of luck facing the crisis. Remember we have four years to forget before you have to call an election. Besides we are proud of you. You do bring New Brunswick a little colour and excitement that it would otherwise lack.