

Is another move for Saint Thomas really feasible?

Only one startling recommendation was evident in the report on UNB's Saint John campus released by the Deutsch committee last week.

The committee recommended UNB and Saint Thomas consider the possibility of trading STU's facilities in Fredericton for the UNBSJ facilities in Saint John.

How this recommendation will be received by the administrators of STU is another question.

STU has been plagued with a serious decline in enrollment in recent years. The decline has been attributed, in part, to the courses offered by STU. The university offers only courses in arts and education, both disciplines with low job preparation levels.

Enrollment trends indicate students are becoming more interested in courses with a high level of job preparation - such as business and engineering.

Actually, students are becoming so interested in business administration that Canadian universities are having extreme difficulties in hiring qualified professors to teach in that faculty.

At present STU manages to satisfy students who wish to study courses not offered at that institution by allowing them to take courses at UNB through an exchange arrangement.

Moving STU to Saint John will remove the possibility of students trying courses in other disciplines, and would probably result in more transfers from university.

The only alternative would be for STU in Saint John to widen its curriculum to offer courses in science and other disciplines. But this would result in the duplication of services the Deutsch committee warned against.

With Statistics Canada predicting a decrease in student enrollment during the 1980s, moving STU to Saint John could have serious repercussions for the university.

The Deutsch report recognized the need for a university in Saint John to offer courses more aligned to the needs of the community. Such courses are not being offered at STU at present.

We feel that STU would place itself in a precarious position by agreeing to a trade of campuses with UNBSJ.

However, the Deutsch committee report did contain many recommendations we feel would be beneficial to the Saint John campus, as well as the city, students and faculty.

Rather than being a "branch plant" of the Fredericton campus,

UNBSJ should begin to develop in its own right. The first step in its development will be the implementation of the recommendations put forward by the Deutsch committee.

The committee recommends more autonomy for the campus with an expanded curriculum and more fiscal responsibility.

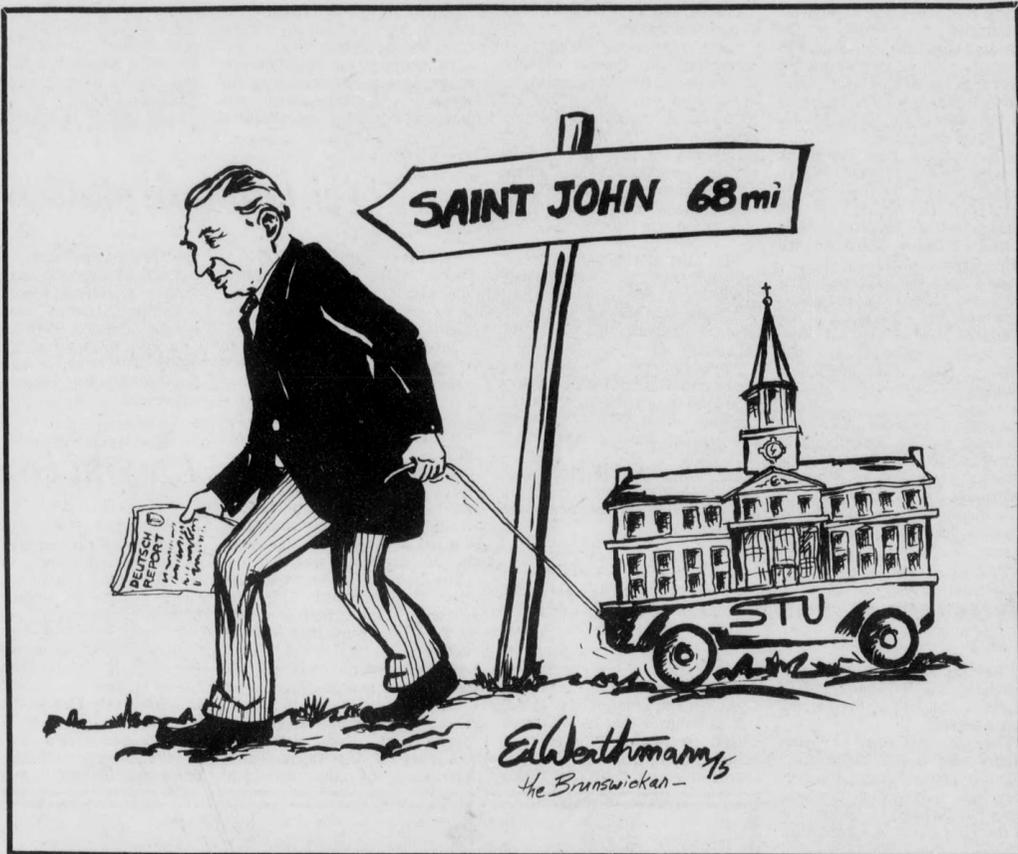
It's time these recommendations are implemented to stop the disappointing trend of low enrollment at the Saint John campus.

If implemented, the recommendations of the committee should help to relieve the tension

that has been developing between the faculty members of the two campuses, and the leaders of the two communities.

Saint John city council, naturally, wants to see their campus develop as quickly as possible, while the Fredericton city council wants development of UNB to center on the Fredericton campus.

The Deutsch report's recommendations may provide an opportunity to satisfy all persons involved with the university's two campuses.



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Historical

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