

news

Thorbourne, Howes defend summer hours

By KEN CUTHBERTSON
Brunswickan Staff

Office hours became a recurring item at Monday night's SRC meeting which lasted about four hours. President Perry Thorbourne's credibility and trust surrounded most of the discussions.

Rep-at-large Ross Libbey opened the question of office hours by presenting council with a letter from Phil Bonin, director of Beaver Foods Ltd. He said in an interview that "The reason I find the issue of office hours questionable is simply because through discussions and a written statement, I was informed that regular office hours were not kept during the summer."

In the letter from Beaver

Foods, Bonin claimed "Had we had access to the SRC photocopier, at our convenience, at least during business hours, we probably would not have purchased one. I should emphasize that this was not our main reason, but it certainly was deciding factor."

Physical Education Rep Margaret Bannister continued the attack by repeatedly saying that office hours were not kept. "I understand that the office is supposed to be open certain times during the day," he said and at times it just wasn't open.

SRC Comptroller, Steve Howes claimed he had been in the office at least 40 hours a week and at times until one o'clock in the morning. In response to

Bonin's letter he continually said he kept the office open, despite what Beaver Foods said to the contrary.

Thorbourne admitted at one point that office hours were not always there and he was not always there. Both Thorbourne and Howes claimed that at times they had meetings to attend. Science Rep Mike Hughson counter-attacked the idea of attending meetings by specifying that Thorbourne had missed several important Alumni meetings that could cause the student union to suffer.

Bannister said later on in the discussion that "I think it is pretty poor if we have to police the executive." She then questioned Thorbourne's credibility and debated the trust that he put in the council. The physical

education rep was angered that she had not been contacted if there had been a problem in the office.

Thorbourne said it takes eight months to get used to the job to find out what was going on. "I made mistakes, I'm human," he said. Bannister then brought up the suggestion that the president draw up a job description. She said at this point that a credibility had to be achieved before they could move on.

Bannister said the executive should have been made accessible, and the office should have been kept open. There were claims by other councillors that they tried to get in the office during office hours but were unable to get in because the office simply was not open.

The question of office hours seemed to be unresolved by council, as neither the executive or members of council could come to any agreement.



Perry Thorbourne

Thorbourne still president

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and denounced the "Petty internal squabbling" among council. Should the motions be defeated, said Moore, council should expect the immediate resignation of both Hughson and Laurence, as the "perpetrators" of the motion.

It as moved by Ross Libbey and seconded by Arts Rep Lynn Fraser that the vote go to a secret ballot.

Howes interjected that every student must be made aware of how his representative voted. He

said a secret ballot would be unfair to the student body. Libbey and Fraser then withdrew the motion.

Libbey told council he would like to point out he found it

questionable that Thorbourne and Howes should be permitted to vote on their own respective impeachments.

The vote was then called and both motions were defeated.

Editorial comment on Monday's SRC meeting

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following comment is by graduate student J. David Miller, who has been at the university for seven years. During this time, he has been actively involved with the campus media and a keen observer of student politics. Considering what went on at Monday's SRC meeting, we feel Mr. Miller's comments on the meeting will provide an interesting insight into it that could not be gleaned from the news stories.

By J. DAVID MILLER

Since the removal of an SRC president is a fairly novel event, I took the time to see how the proceedings went. The last time an SRC president was asked to leave, it was approached in a different manner. This was on October 9, 1975 when the council demanded president Warren McKenzie's resignation (a motion requiring a simple majority as opposed to the two-thirds requested for an impeachment). This move was prompted by the other members of the executive finding that he was apparently registered in four courses instead of the allowed three (in order to get the president's weekly salary). The motion was passed that day, but rescinded shortly after at an emergency meeting because McKenzie wasn't registered in too many courses at all. McKenzie accepted their apologies but resigned about one month later.

In the Thorbourne case, no objective listener of the debate could doubt but that there was indeed fire where smoke could be seen. Thorbourne *et al* had acted in ways which were at least morally wrong if not in breach of trust. Certainly a good majority of the council felt so.

The contempt shown to students and the student council by the SRC executive was made clear on many occasions in Thorbourne's "I don't give a damn what you say" attitude, and in Howes' acutely patronizing manner.

The arguments for the impeachment were presented fairly dispassionately, but not methodically. In nearly every case, Thorbourne admitted his errors, but was unrepentant. Howes would promptly contradict this and proclaim that they were innocent and had worked savagely hard for their summer money.

The chairman of the debate, David Kay was only passably fair in his handling of the discussions. Many times councillors were cut off for straying from the point and making alleged emotional statements. Ex-roomie Thorbourne on the other hand seemed to be allowed the widest latitude which on a number of occasions provoked outbursts of protest from councillors and spectators. Kay also made a number of technical errors in applying *Roberts Rules of Order*, the most serious of which was to allow Thorbourne and Howes to vote 'for themselves.' On the October 9, 1975 meeting referred to above, the chairman did not allow McKenzie to vote, which is correct.

Objectionable too was the constant reference to various incidents which either did not happen or were gross distortions. For example, Howes stated that "in 1974, the union made arrangements for the SRC executive to work at Physical Plant." Howes also said Dr. MacKay was the university president at the time. Both of those statements are nonsense. MacKay was long gone and the fact is that Dr. Anderson suggested to the board of governors that a motion be adopted which provided that executive members of any organization on campus who are not paid for being here should be given preference for Physical Plant jobs if they need to be here. This motion was adopted and has, for example, allowed CHSR executive to stay on campus and work on the FM project. The truth is that the policy was adopted in some measure because of CHSR, the Bruns and organizations other than the SRC that had no money for summer salaries.

Howes also said no other situation in the past was comparable to theirs, particularly with respect to bookkeeping. This again is not true. In 1976, after the bookkeeper left, the comptroller of the day kept the books with no extra remuneration. He also suggested that there was no money for the comptroller in the summer. This again is not true. In the summer of 1974, the comptroller of the day was paid for approximately 10 hours of work per week because the SRC president was absent.

Any observer would have to agree that the council conducted itself in a reasonable manner and acted for the students in the face of many dishonourable actions. Congratulations.