

# Blood and Thunder

## Give it some thought

To the students of U.N.B.:

I hope you will take the time to read, and to think about, what I have to say.

Almost one year ago, on October 24, 1985, my brother David was killed in an automobile related alcohol accident. He died instantly when the car in which he was a passenger left the road, flipped and rolled over several times before smashing into a tree. He was nineteen. He was a student at U.N.B. Some of you may have known him. Many loved him. I did.

The driver was intoxicated and his blood alcohol level was well beyond the legal limit. He was unhurt. Two other occupants of the vehicle emerged unhurt while a fifth sustained a very serious fractured skull. I believe that his recovery is proceeding well. All were approximately the same age as David. All had been drinking.

This was a senseless tragedy. We can all agree on that. Yet, we continue to condone drinking and driving. That's right, we continue to condone it and it continues to occur, and it appears to be on the increase.

In my opinion, the driver involved in this accident received no more than a slap on the wrist. Recent amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada (Bill c.19) now reportedly "makes it tough for impaired drivers." This is a joke. For a first conviction of impaired driving, an offender will receive a fine of \$300, or more, and a prohibition from driving for 3 months or longer. In fact, under the Motor Vehicle Act of New Brunswick the prohibition is extended to 6 months. A second conviction will result in an imprisonment of 14 days or longer and a prohibition from driving for 6 months or longer and, again, New Brunswick laws extend this to 12 months. Personally, I feel that a first offence should result in a minimum fine of \$1,000.00 and a prohibition from driving for at least 3 years so that a second offence can be prevented. Should a second offence occur, driving privileges must be revoked for life. This is a serious crime! We must come to understand that!

There are additional amendments which introduce 2 new offences - impaired driving

causing bodily harm, and impaired driving causing death. While the penalties for these offences may, at first glance, appear severe, it becomes apparent that final authority rests with our justice system, but this is a justice system which condones drinking and driving just as we all do!

While I feel that a tougher stand against drinking and driving is imperative, I also think that we must now begin to focus on the problem behind the problem, a disease which is running rampant in our society - alcohol abuse.

Please bear with me as I explain my views.

In this society alcohol abuse is accepted and even encouraged. Before we are of legal age to consume liquor, pressure is placed upon us to drink - and to drink to become intoxicated. My point is that drinking to become intoxicated is drug abuse and is wrong! Alcohol is classified as a hypnotic drug and actually causes a depressing of the central nervous system. High doses will cause slurred speech, staggering, double vision, and stupor as we all know. Eventual long term effects are liver damage, brain damage, heart disease, certain types of cancer, blackouts, impotence, and ulcers, and of course, one can become addicted. So why is this pastime so important to us? It appears that drinking is a standard approach, in our society, to meeting people and having a good time with friends.

Must we get drunk in order to socialize? Must we endure the headaches, the nausea, the loss of memory, and the vomiting to have a good time? No, of course not! If the attitudes of our society could reform to this way of thinking, I feel that we would see a marked decrease in automobile accidents, boating accidents, housefires, rapes, wife beatings, child molestations, unwanted pregnancies, and the deaths, injuries and heartache related to them, because the common factor in many of these incidents is alcohol.

I suggest that we must all work together to deal with this problem. It is essential that we begin to accept some responsibility and become involved if progress is to be made. I urge you to support the efforts of groups such as PALE, CADRE, TADD and PRIDE who continue to implement educational programs and to promote new legislation where required in hopes that drug

reform and education will result.

I hope that you recognize the importance of this issue, and that you will get involved. The all important first step is recognition of the scope of the problem. Let's go for it!

## Credit not recognized

Dear Mr. Quigley:

Congratulations on your editorial, *The importance of Choice*, in *The Brunswickan*, Sept. 12, 1986. Your final paragraph in which you tell your readers "Here at the Brunswickan we are well aware of the power we possess to shape student opinion around this campus. And we appreciate the fact that you are willing to take us into your confidence, but we won't be a healthy medium unless you realize that without your understanding of our influencing ability, you will never be able to think or analyze independently or put the reporting in its proper context," is a vital one.

You see, I feel you and your staff missed the mark during Orientation Week with your selective editing. That began with your page one photo, in which the name of our Commission was removed from beneath the motto, More Hugs, No Drugs. We at The Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Commission of New Brunswick were more than a little impressed with the work done by the Orientation Committee before they approached us for our financial support.

After considerable negotiation, we agreed to provide money to purchase the T-shirts distributed to about 1500 Frosh. Since alcoholism and alcohol abuse is the Number One drug problem in Canada, we felt the university campus was an excellent place to invest some of our resources.

We feel it is important for people to be made aware of the resources available to help them, if they require assistance. Nowhere in your coverage of Orientation Week was any mention made of the Commission or its contribution. Unless students are aware of our existence, they will have considerable difficulty in accessing our programs.

It is possible to "shape student opinion" through omis-

sion just as thoroughly as it is through negativism. Perhaps, in your future dealings with a topic as serious as drug and alcohol abuse, you might like to contact us for assistance.

Yours sincerely,

G. Everett Chalmers,  
O.C., M.D.C.M.  
Chairman

## Our side of the story

To the Editor

I am writing this letter to inform students why we (the present student union council) took over the old Student Union Executive positions, (Bennett, English, Brown and Bosnitch.)

The situation that existed was one of grave mismanagement.

Believe it or not!

- The student union had liabilities of approximately 150,000 dollars and a bank balance of approximately 4,000 dollars.

- No substantial records were kept from the first of February/86 to mid April/86.

- The yearbooks for the years 84-85 and 85-86 are nowhere to be found.

Obviously, the state of the student union was one of distress and confusion and if it wasn't for our little coup, the student union would not exist today.

At the beginning of last year I must admit that I was fooled. I actually thought that John Bosnitch had changed. I WAS WRONG! Things looked good on council until about Christmas then all hell broke loose. Council meetings began to take alot longer and much of the time it was due to the verbal diarrhea of certain individuals. One of the boys will probably write in asking how I would know because I missed alot of meetings but I ask you students, would you attend meetings where you had to wear hip-waders in and out, so you wouldn't soil your pants.

Then came the famous poster incident. Would you believe that intelligent human beings could put up a poster calling people MONKEYS. On top of that they used Student Union Resources to produce these libellous posters.

Also, do you remember the referendum? Mr. Bosnitch was the Chief Returning Officer

(supposedly unbiased) and he was openly campaigning for the "YES" vote.

When, worst come to worst, and the University said they wouldn't collect student fees for this year, the majority of councillors, spearheaded by Stephen Smith, Mark Lutes and Eric Semple, decided to take over the union. I applaud their initiative and hope that other students feel the same, because if these actions had not been taken, the Student Union would no longer exist.

At present, the Student Union Executive and the Student Union Councillors are being sued because they took action and saved the Student Union.

I urge all students to support the present Student Union Council and to keep your eyes open the next Student Union Elections because you know who will be back in the political ring.

Yours informatively,

Andy Savoy  
Eng. Rep.

## To make things a little clearer

Sir:

There comes a time when those people who have worked hard and put themselves and their reputation on the line should be recognized and praised. At U.N.B. we have such people: the majority of Student Union Councillors who stood up for what they believed in by doing what they thought was right.

In the midst of last April's examination period, they took a carefully considered path when they decided to remove an executive which was widely unsupported by students on campus and whose president had ignored an impeachment petition which had been duly verified and accepted. Alternatively, Council elected from amongst its members an executive whose mandate expires when elections are held on October 22, and whose objective is to put the Student Union back on its feet.

Unfortunately, the executive stepped into office with a balance in the bank which was much less than the amount of money the Union owed its

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rm. 35, Student Union Building, UNB Campus  
DEADLINE: 5 p.m. Tuesday