

BLOOD AND THUNDER

Letters to the editor reflect the views of our readers and not necessarily those of the Brunswickan. Letters may be sent to Rm. 35 in the Student Union Building. Deadline: 1 pm on Tuesday. Usual maximum length: 300 words. Please include name, student number and phone number.

Facts of Holocaust not a matter of belief

Dear Editor,

"Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past" Nineteen Eighty Four - George Orwell.

The last "Opinion" column was graced by yet another semi-coherent rant from that past master of scattergun rhetoric and gratuitous abuse, Matin Yaqzan. He seemed to be fishing for a definition of "holocaust denial" dressed up in the usual self-serving, pedantic garbage, including the bizarre notion the Holocaust constitutes a religious belief. And has some sort of parity with the "sincerely held religious beliefs" of all manner of cranks and social misfits (Ross, Keegstra, Zundel, et al.).

The term "Holocaust" he refers to, is in fact, a crude English translation of the Hebrew "Shoah", meaning "annihilation", an infinitely less ambiguous word denoting the attempted extermination of European Jewry between 1933 and 1945 (notice 12 years, not the 1-1/2 to 2 years Yaqzan disingenuously quoted). This extermination was advocated in "Mein Kampf", and put into practice in a number of ways. Before 1938, the practice consisted of segregating Jews into ghettos, where they were raided to provide slave-labour, subjected to persecution under the Nuremberg Laws, and gratuitously abused and murdered. After the outbreak of war, and especially after the invasions of Poland and the USSR, the ghettoization programme reached a new intensity, while at the same time, "Einsatzgruppen" commandos, irregular forces under SS command, systematically rounded up and butchered Jews, usually by shooting. As an example in two days in the Ukraine in September 1941, 33,771 were killed at Babi Yar and another 35,782 (Jews and Communists) were killed at Kherson and Nikolayev (the SS's own figures).

At the Wannsee Conference in February 1942, Heinrich Himmler proposed the "Final Solution" to the "Jewish Problem". It was a problem to the Nazis because the activities of the Einsatzgruppen, and policing the ghettos was a drain on man-power needed for the Eastern Front. While in the ghettos, despite indiscriminate massacre and starvation rations, Jews were simply not dying fast enough. Aside from this, some of Hitler's allies were being less than fully cooperative in deporting their own Jewish populations. To implement the "Final Solution" the slave-labour system was modified, new death camps were established in occupied Poland, like Treblinka, whose sole purpose was extermination, while older industrial complexes, like Auschwitz-Birkenau were modified. All Jews were to be transferred to these camps, where the able-bodied were worked to death, and the rest killed by gassing, and their bodies cremated after they had been "processed" for hair, tooth-fillings, or useful medical prostheses.

When the Reich collapsed in early 1945, tens of thousands of survivors in the death camps of the east were transferred hurriedly further west, away from the advancing Red Army. These survivors were dumped in slave-labour camps like Bergen-

Belsen and Dachau, and left to starve. These were the camps open by British and US troops, and most familiar from old news reels. Of the eastern death camps, Treblinka for one was destroyed by the retreating Nazis, while Auschwitz fell intact to the Red Army (complete with gas chambers, crematoria fertilizer plant and soap-works).

These facts are not a matter of belief, any more than Hitler's existence, or Churchill's speeches. No-one I am aware of claims all the Jews caught up in the Shoah died in the concentration camps - millions never saw a camp. No one suggests all were gassed - millions were shot or died of starvation and overwork. No-one claims that Shoah only lasted 1 - 1 1/2 or 2 years. These are fictions Matin Yaqzan chooses to quote for whatever motive he has. As for the numbers game - 6 million is simply the best estimate based mainly on pre-war census returns and archival research. New access to Russian archives suggests the number may be higher. But is the horror lessened if it was only 4 million? These were human beings not real estate!

All the surviving records that did not fall into Russian hands are kept in the Central Tracing Agency's archive at Arolsen in the Rhineland. Only some 25-30% of this archive has ever been properly documented or processed, and as most of it is not on acid-free paper, now rapidly deteriorating it is unlikely the bulk of it ever will be. Nevertheless, some 2 1/2 to 3 million Jewish victims of Shoah have been traced through it, as have millions of other victims of the Nazi slave-labour system and their war on the infirm, mentally ill, disabled, Communists, Gypsies, gay men and political dissenters.

Shoah is an historic fact, as much a fact as the Dieppe Raid, the Battle of Stalingrad, and the bombing of Dresden, Coventry and Hiroshima. It is a part of the broader tapestry of nightmare the Fascists and Nazis inflicted on the world five decades ago.

In short, Matin Yaqzan, "holocaust denial" is a lie. It is a lie conceived in hatred and nurtured by enemies of every civilized value we should hold dear. It is promulgated by Neo-Nazi thugs, Hitler apologists and professional anti-Semites, intended to deceive the innocent, the ignorant and the gullible. It is intended to trivialize the victims of totalitarian terror in order to make its perpetrators appear less evil than they really were. That Israeli terrorists at Deir Yassin, or Serbian irregulars in Bosnia use the same methods as the Nazis merely demonstrates that the cancer was not fully excised in 1945 and that there was nothing exclusively German about the pestilence. Perhaps if those who cried "Never Again!" had more influence, or more heed had been paid to them, we would not now be watching the unfolding nightmare in the Balkans, or the barbarities inflicted on foreigners in Germany.

I do not know which planet Matin Yaqzan is on, but on mine the carnage in the wreckage of Yugoslavia, has rarely been absent from the TV, Radio or printed news for the last 18 months. In that news we have been treated to Croats denying their past atrocities against Serbs, and Serbs dressing up their genocide in euphemisms like "ethnic cleansing". In the midst of it all, Bosnian Muslims find themselves as helpless and almost as

forgotten as the Jews of Europe found themselves fifty years ago.

Those who do not learn from history are, truly, doomed to repeat it, and those who distort it, and who spread lies and slander or trivialize its victims seem hell-bent on ensuring the repetition.

Adrian Park

Funds have not been misdirected

Dear Editor,

An article which appeared in the "Wimmins Room" column of the Spectrum section of the October 30, 1992 edition of *The Brunswickan* has recently been brought to my attention. This article, written by Rita Boudreau, and entitled "So Where Is the Money?" causes me great concern. Not only does it contain inaccuracies, the message of the article is that the government has misdirected funds intended to provide services to victims of crime. In fairness to those victims who have already received assistance and to ensure that no victim requiring help from the government will be discouraged from seeking it, I will answer the question "So Where Is the Money?"

While it is true that the Victims Services Act was enacted in 1987, it was not proclaimed and did not come into effect at that time. Subsequently, significant amendments to the Act were made and a Regulation developed. These changes were coordinated with the creation of the Provincial Offences Procedures Act, a new enforcement statute for provincial offences. Both statutes were proclaimed in force on May 1, 1991. At that time, a 15% surcharge on provincial offence fines commenced. The Victims Services Fund, a special purpose trust account within the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the province was created. Since that date, all provincial surcharge revenue collected has been deposited to this Fund. The only expenditures from this account have been authorized by the Solicitor General pursuant to Section 24 of the Victims Services Act. In other words, this revenue is exclusively reserved for activities which benefit victims of crime as outlined in the Victims Services Act.

Prior to 1991, direct services to victims of crime provided by the Department of the Solicitor General were paid for by budget allocation. These programs are now self-funded from provincial victim surcharge revenue. As required by the Act, the Solicitor General has appointed a provincial Victims Services Committee to review applications from individuals and organizations seeking funding for projects which will benefit victims of crime. Several such applications are currently under consideration by the Committee and the Solicitor General.

In summary, the accusation of misdirection of funds is completely unfounded. All monies collected pursuant to the Victims Services Act continue to be deposited in the Victims Services Fund for use by the Solicitor General to provide information, conduct research, and deliver direct services to victims of crime in New Brunswick.

D.E. (Doug) Naish,
Coordinator, Victims Services Fund

CFS does not endorse NDP party

Dear Editor,

I just arrived in Fredericton in time to note a letter in Blood and Thunder from Brad A. Mullin, questioning the ties of CFS to the New Democratic Party, and, through a fascinating leap of logic, the cuts to student bursaries made by the NDP government in Ontario.

Let me assure your readers that there is no motion, policy or agreement whatsoever wherein the CFS supports, endorses or forms links with the NDP or any other political party.

Let me further assure Mr. Mullin that CFS is on record as opposing the NDP cuts to bursaries in Ontario, and in fact demanded the resignation of the Minister of Colleges and Universities over the issue.

If Mr. Mullin or any other student is concerned about CFS, please take the short jaunt to the UNBSU offices and talk to Tammy Yates, your representative on the CFS executive.

Thank you for letting me set the facts straight.

Kelly Lamrock

CFS National Chairperson

UNB benefits as a CFS member

(Ed note) This letter, written by Tammy Yates (VP external), is in response to Brad Mullin's letter in the last issue of *The Brunswickan*.

Dear Mr. Mullin,

Why did the UNB Student Union Council vote in favour of increasing our membership fees to the Canadian Federation of Students (-Services)? Because we believe UNB students benefit from being CFS members. CFS is the national voice of post-secondary students. We lobby governments at all levels on issues ranging from student aid and tuition to the problem of systemic racism on campuses. As well, CFS-Services offers high-quality services to our members (eg. SWAP, Studentsaver, and Travel CUTS). This is a pretty good deal for just a few dollars per student. So why was the fee increase necessary? Well, CFS(-S) was formed in 1981 and membership fees were set at \$4 per student and have never been increased. Unfortunately, inflation has hit the national student movement just as hard as everyone else, so the four bucks in 1981 is equal to almost \$7 today. I believe we must adequately fund CFS(-S) if the organization is to continue to be successful.

You mentioned that CFS has ties to the NDP - let me assure you that we are an apolitical organization (How else could we represent 450,000 students from across the country?). We lobby all the major political parties in the hope of making post-secondary education a priority in Canada. Sadly, there is no party which has yet proven itself truly committed to education (eg. Ontario's NDP government just eliminated its bursary program for students), but we are continuing to work with them.

I hope this response has alleviated your concerns. If you have any other questions, please drop by the Student Union office and talk to me - or ask your Faculty Rep. Our jobs are made

easier and more rewarding when students tell us what they think.

Sincerely,

Tammy Yates

VP-External

&
CFS National Executive Rep (New Brunswick)

A thank you

Dear Editor,

I would like to take this opportunity through your column to thank the Dean of Arts, Peter Kent, and his faculty colleagues in the various departments for providing me the invaluable knowledge and learning experience during these past three years and four months that I have been at UNB.

I would also like to thank the staff members at the Harriet Irving Library. Because of their professional help, I was able to do my assignments and essays. I hope that our graduation project fund will really get some of the needed books for the deprived libraries at UNB.

Finally, I would like to thank my Canadian and International friends for their trouble — giving me delicious meals at their homes. I will definitely miss each and everyone of you.

Take care and God bless.
Till We Meet Again,
Jeanne Nah

Matching program beneficial

Dear Editor,

I would like to publicly thank *The Bruns*, C.A.M.P.U.S., and the UNB Women's Collective for the role each played in the Christmas Matching Program created and orchestrated by the Women's Collective last term. This program was initiated for the purpose of easing the financial strain of university students with children during the holiday season: a time when even after the most careful budgeting many parents' resources dwindle to the very lowest level, and financial demands increase like at no other time of year. Not only do many students with families, like other families, wish to exchange gifts in a traditional manner, travel to be with loved ones, and attempt to make Christmas a special event; they also feel the impact of increased cold weather costs such as heating bills and heavier clothing for children, among others, at this time of year.

Thanks to the efforts of two groups mentioned above, my family was "matched" with a sponsor, *The Bruns*, and became the fortunate and grateful recipients of gift certificates valued at \$300.00 about two weeks before Christmas. To the Bruns: your kind generosity was deeply appreciated and shone brightly amidst a time when things were looking rather bleak and gloomy. It meant a lot — words can hardly express how much. I know that three hundred dollars is a lot of money for groups who also have to operate on compromised budgets.

The Women's Collective coordinated the many groups participating in the program, who together touched the lives of several families in a positive way, demonstrating the spirit of giving that Christmas is so symbolic of. I commend them all for the insight, time, energy and dollars I know it takes to bring about a project of this scale. My thanks to everyone involved, including you Pat, for making our Christmas more comfortable this year.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Jensen