

# The Bosnitch Effect— Errupting Lawsuits

By Chris Lawson  
and Kathy O'Brien  
Canadian University Press

**FREDERICTON (CUP)**—Student politics at the University of New Brunswick have far exceeded the ordinary behind-the-scenes shenanigans found on most Canadian campuses.

According to student union president Larry Hansen, "people at UNB have gone lawsuit crazy." While some former councillors are being sued, others have been threatened with suits, and two separate groups claim to be the legitimate student governing body on campus.

Larry Hansen says former council president John Bosnitch has threatened to sue people running in this month's student elections because he considers the elections to be illegal.

Bosnitch, now a graduate student at McGill University in Montreal, has held office as president three times since 1982. Following lengthy disputes with the university administration over jurisdiction of services and gover-

nance, Bosnitch and his executive were locked out of office last April 17, but still claim to be the legal student government.

Bosnitch's executive has also threatened to sue the administration because it has refused to recognize them as the legal student government and to also hand over almost \$200,000 in student fees. In January, a foundation was established by the recognized student council and the administration to collect student union fees, and disperse these funds directly to student organizations.

Because the administration has refused these requests, it is now "essential that we launch a suit against the university," says Tony English, vice-president of finance in Bosnitch's executive.

University officials have been reluctant to comment. President James Downey, who said before the April lockout that Bosnitch had lost student support on campus, was unavailable for comment, while administration vice-president of finance James O'Sullivan declined an interview.

Earlier this semester, Bosnitch's executive appealed to student associations across the country for \$500 to \$1,000 donations to help finance legal costs. Included in each package was an 11-page "summary news release" written by Bosnitch, which charges that the ruling student council was created by Downey to replace his student union.

However, Hansen said the release "is full of inaccuracies and distortions."

The release said Downey's administration "effectively controls the purse strings of the student government" through the foundation, giving the administration "control in deciding expenditures for student activities."

"The student government is the pawn of the university," Bosnitch said.

Hansen, however, said student council "hasn't lost its autonomy." He compares the foundation to an accounting firm, and student councillors wanted the foundation as a safeguard against financial mismanagement.

The main lawsuit was launched by English and two other Bosnitch executive members, Hugh Brown and Michael Bennett, against 13 student councillors for their part in the student union takeover last April.

Not surprisingly, both sides have different accounts of last April's lockout. Bosnitch called the lockout "a palace revolt" which was "completely illegal."

Bosnitch also said he was forced to sign a "gag pact" with the administration, under which he would not take part in student union politics or take legal action against the new student union. In return, the university would not expel Bosnitch.



However, Hansen said "it was John's initiative to sign the gag pact." The university was "proceeding to expel him because council had put libelous posters on campus. They said they'd keep quiet if he didn't run for president again."

Smith said "although John insinuates that it was a university plot to overthrow him," it was the student council and other student organizations who wanted him out of office because the student union "was in crisis."

According to Hansen, council meetings were a "nightmare" because Bosnitch and Bennett, who acted as chair, constantly blocked other councillors' motions. Hansen and Smith say Bosnitch's executive didn't keep adequate financial records and made unauthorized expenditures.

The student union is almost \$150,000 in debt, although Bosnitch denies Hansen's charge that his executive is responsible for most of that debt.

Smith said the lockout was not a sudden move. Council had tried to impeach Bosnitch in early April, but failed to get the necessary two-thirds majority. Smith said it was later discovered that two people who voted against the motion were ineligible to vote.

Also, a campus petition to remove Bosnitch from office was signed by more than 25 per cent of the student body, Smith said. Bosnitch refused to recognize the petition because of a procedural irregularity.

English said it is crucial for the former student union executive to win their lawsuit. "If we lose our case it sets a common law precedent," indicating that an administration "has the power to recognize or derecognize a student government."

"We were willing to negotiate with the administration up to the very end," says English. "Now it's becoming increasingly difficult to do anything but file lawsuits."

For his part, Smith said he's glad he helped overthrow Bosnitch. "John is very charismatic and he's fooled a lot of people. But he's finished here at UNB, and that's why he's going on a national crusade."

According to English, the fundraising appeal has solicited response from student associations in B.C., Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick, although no money has yet been received.

"None of them have delivered yet," he said. "But I guess it's that time of the year."

## Attention College Graduates:

### Your Future Maintains Our Leadership Position

As long as you continue your life as you have for the past 20-odd years, that is. We need strong, able bodies, willing to give up all pleasure for our needs. We need you if you are willing to be satisfac-

fied with meaningless activity. If you are willing to accept our leadership and authority, if you are willing to conform your thoughts to our line. This system has worked hard to produce you as you are today.

You've already shown us your patience - most of you spent your first 18 years in a nuclear family obeying the rules of your parents and teachers. In the university you've experienced more of the same rules and regulations. You've experienced an increasing workload year after year (so that you're too busy for anything else), as well as less and less control over your life. And you've shown remarkable restraint from anger over the petty problems of everyday life that we've placed in your path - finding a place to live, standing in long lines at stores and at registration, finding a job (boring and useless though it was). And now we want to reward you. We'll offer you all kinds of gimmicks - we'll pay off your student loan, we'll offer you a cash bonus, we'll give you professional status (even though we'll make all the decisions for you), anything we can think of to snatch you into our fold.

After all, we're only asking for your life.



Is There Life after a Job?  
an unpaid subvertisement

## Military research drains funding

by James Young  
Canadian University  
Press

Canada spends about \$230 million — 5 per cent of its \$4 billion research budget — for military purposes, a UBC microbiology professor said Mar. 20.

"That number has been going up constantly. It went up 12 per cent in 1985-86," said George Spiegelman, during a noon hour lecture in SUB 205.

Although the Canadian amount may seem tiny when compared to military giants such as the U.S. spend — roughly \$38.5 billion, or 70.1 per cent of its 1986 research budget — the net effect is to drain fund-

ing from other more valuable research, Spiegelman said.

"Research and development spending for the military in Canada has been going up on the order of 10 per cent per year since 198," he said. But research funding for other areas such as the environment, agriculture, health, and welfare has either been constant or going down."

While many Canadians are unaware of the location of military research, the Department of Natural Defense operates eight regional centres and employs about 2,000 people, said Spiegelman.

In Esquimalt, near Victoria, the defense depart-

ment tests anti-submarine warfare systems, including work on underwater acoustics and surveillance for nuclear-capable submarines.

Spiegelman also referred to a DND lab near Medicine Hat, Alberta which operates under an agreement with the U.S., Great Britain, and Australia. He said this facility is "particularly nasty," as it conducts chemical, bio medical, and microbiological research.

Although the lab is only supposedly to be testing defenses against biological and other weapons, this is undermined by the na-

Continued on Page 7