

# Fredericton student paper axed by Council

FREDERICTON (CUP) — Ex-Aquinian editor Peter Boisseau cuts up an old pair of black corduroy jeans to provide another arm band for a waiting supporter. He makes a joke about how the Aquinian office had been turned into "Hollywood" that day as camera crews from the television networks arrive to chronicle the struggle of the Saint Thomas University student newspaper to stay alive.

The student union has made repeated attempts to stop the paper from publishing. It ordered it to cease publishing March 6. It fired the editorial board on March 13. March 14 it opened nominations for students to apply for positions on a new council-appointed Aquinian.

March 15 it sent a request to the student union building director to change the locks on the paper's office door. It even called the Aquinian's printer to try and halt publication.

The STU council claims the paper was shut down because it was \$1,800 in debt and was "editorially dishonest". It refuses to elaborate on those charges to the press.

The Aquinian claims it is in fact in the black with over \$3,000 in receivables and with enough advertising booked to make a profit on its upcoming edition.

Despite the council's best efforts, the Aquinian continues to publish independently and on schedule.

The Aquinian's phone rings continuously. Support for the paper comes in not only from students on campus but from organizations throughout the Atlantic. The small Fredericton student newspaper is the focal point in a major battle over freedom of the press on

campus.

Both moral and financial support has started pouring in. It comes from other student councils from student newspapers, from the local student radio stations, from professors and from students themselves. The paper's also received a surge in student participation as the Aquinian's membership grows under siege.

But despite the strong show of support the council remains entrenched in its position.

On March 20 supporters for the paper went to a council meeting hoping to make their case, but they were repeatedly ruled out of order. So far the council has denied the paper the opportunity to defend itself at council meetings.

Aquinian supporters succeeded in disrupting the meeting through repeated questions, and it ended after two hours.

"We're no further along with the council than we were two weeks ago," said Aquinian staff member Lois Corbett.

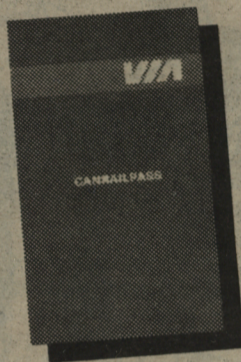
Although council has yet to name editorial board for the paper, the possibility of a council newspaper looks less and less likely amid local opposition. The Brunswickan, the University of New Brunswick student newspaper that provide the production facilities to the Aquinian refuses to let a council-run newspaper use those facilities.

The Aquinian's printer also stated that "it does not have the press time" to run off a council newspaper.

The student union building board of directors has also not only refused to put new locks on the newspaper office doors but has affirmed the Aquinian's right to occupy those rooms.

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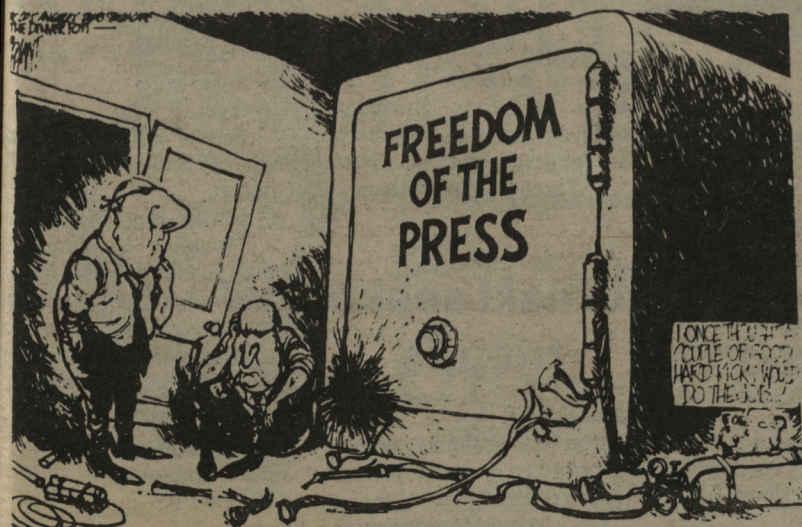


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